

# PARISH CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS



Holy Spirit Ecumenical Catholic Church  
Largo, Florida  
2010 Revision

# Parish Constitution

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## **PREAMBLE**

We, as members of  
the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ,  
responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel,  
desiring to unite together  
to proclaim the Word,  
celebrate the Sacraments,  
and carry out God's mission,  
do hereby adopt this Constitution  
and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions.  
In the name of God the Father, the Source of All Being,  
and of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **I. NAME**

The name of this parish shall be: Holy Spirit Ecumenical Catholic Church.

For purposes of the Constitution and accompanying by-laws, "Holy Spirit Ecumenical Catholic Church" is hereinafter designated as "this faith community" or "parish."

This faith community is and shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida and operates as a Not-for-profit Religious entity as defined under Section 501(c)(3) under United States Internal Revenue Code.

This parish in the Diocese of Florida of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion accedes to the Constitution, Bylaws and Canons of Ecumenical Catholic Communion herein referred to as the "ECC" or "The Communion".

### **II. MISSION AND VISION**

#### **A. Mission Statement**

We, the Community of Holy Spirit Ecumenical Catholic Church,  
believe that all people are created in the image of God  
and are unconditionally loved by God.  
All persons are free to enjoy God's gifts of love, joy and intimacy.  
We are determined that our life together will be fully inclusive.  
We strive in our words and actions  
to uphold each person's right to respect, dignity and justice.  
Together, we are called to holiness,  
and to act as full participants  
in the life, membership and leadership of this church.

Hearing God's word and strengthened by the Eucharist,  
we commit ourselves anew to live and share our faith boldly  
so no one need fear that they are separated from  
God's steadfast love, in Christ.

Together, we build the community we believe God calls us to create.  
We pray for God's Spirit to guide us on our journey.

## **B. Vision Statement**

Celebrating *all* with dignity and love.

## **III. MEMBERSHIP**

Individuals enhance their commitment to their spiritual life by participating in the parish liturgies, social and educational events.

Those adults, 18 years of age and older, who wish to deepen their participation in our faith community may choose to become Registered Members. Registered Members shall be initiated Christians, who are entitled to vote on issues referred to them by the Pastor or the Parish Council. Registered Members are also eligible for service or leadership roles in the parish and/or the ECC, for example, Ministry Leaders, Councilors or Synod Delegates. Registered Members, embracing this community, participate in a membership orientation and actively embody the tenets of the Member Covenant with the Parish Community (*see Appendix A*). The Covenant makes a commitment to:

- A. Preserve the unity of the parish.
- B. Share in the responsibility of the parish.
- C. Serve in the ministry of the parish through the use of each one's unique gifts.
- D. Support the mission of the parish through regular attendance and giving of time, talent and financial support.
- E. Active and conscious participation, through voice and vote in the parish, Diocese and Communion.

Those not wishing to become Registered Members are always welcome to participate in parish liturgies, attend parish social and educational events and support the parish with their contributions.

## **IV. CLERGY**

The Clergy are the Pastor and other ordained individuals (deacons and priests) who are spiritual leaders for the faith community.

### **A. Clergy**

It shall be the responsibility of all Clergy to:

1. Maintain ministerial faculties and good standing within the ECC and Diocese.

2. Act in communion with the Presiding Bishop of the ECC and the Local Ordinary of the Diocese.
3. Provide spiritual leadership to the parish faith community he or she serves.
4. Encourage the healthy development and growth of the faith community according to the polity and tenets of the ECC and Diocese.
5. Support and participate in the fulfillment of parish goals and objectives.
6. Support and participate in the liturgical programs of the parish.
7. Support the work and decisions of the Parish Council and Synods.
8. Assist in the budgeting and business planning of the parish.
9. Serve, if necessary, as the ministerial representative of the parish in the Synods.

#### B. Pastor

The Pastor is an ordained priest who is the spiritual leader of the faith community. The Pastor is in communion with the Presiding Bishop of the ECC and the Local Ordinary of the Diocese, and is responsible for the spiritual life of the faith community. The Pastor shall:

1. Maintain ministerial faculties and good standing within the ECC/diocese.
2. Oversee and guide the activities of all clergy in their parish responsibilities.
3. Oversee and approve the liturgical programs of the parish.
4. Serve as a member, ex officio, of the Parish Council.
5. Assist in the budgeting and business planning of the parish and maintains signature authority as outlined in Article IV, Parish By-Laws.
6. Develop and maintain pastoral relationships with all the members of the faith community.
7. Reserve the right to veto the appointment of any parishioner to a Parish Ministry Team or Council without explanation. This protects the privacy of the parishioner, while allowing the Pastor to exercise privileged information (internal forum) in the best interests of both the person and the parish.

While the Pastor is responsible for the general well being of the parish, the areas of the Pastor's particular authority in the parish are theological, spiritual and liturgical. The temporal affairs of the community are normally assumed by the Parish Council and its delegated Parish Ministry Teams. The Pastor maintains oversight of these entities. The Pastor is a special advisor to these entities and they shall defer to the Pastor in theological, spiritual and liturgical matters.

## V. PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council is the responsible parish leadership and decision-making body dedicated to fulfill the mission of this faith community. Authority is irrevocably delegated to the Council from the Pastor; however, the Pastor retains authority with respect to issues of theology, spirituality and liturgy. The Parish Council shall normally meet at least once a month. The Council shall be responsible for making and implementing decisions on, but not limited to:

- A. The physical needs of the Parish center and environment.
- B. The legal, financial and budget needs of the Parish.
- C. Acquisitions and purchases for the Parish.

- D. Parish fundraising.
- E. Promoting community life and activities in collaboration with the Pastor.
- F. Providing religious education in collaboration with the Pastor.
- G. Liturgy and Music.
- H. Public Relations.
- I. Hospitality.
- J. Outreach Ministries.
- K. Hiring and firing of paid staff and other issues related to volunteers and human resources subject to the signature authority as described in the Parish By-Laws, Article IV, Signature Authorities.

The Parish Council shall identify, form and advise Ministry Teams from the community to help develop and implement these areas of Church life. Each of these Ministry Teams is accountable to the Parish Council.

Procedures for Council operation, member selection and membership duration are defined in the Parish By-Laws.

## **VI. PARISH MINISTRY TEAMS**

The purpose of the Parish Ministry Team is to address a specific area of parish life. Each Ministry Team implements parish priorities and goals in its own areas of responsibility, under the guidance of the Parish Council, in the collaborative spirit of working together to accomplish the mission of the parish. All ministry work leads to building a faith community, proclaiming the Word of God, calling people to prayer and motivating people to serve others. *(For Scope and Function of Ministry Teams see Article II,E of the Bylaws).*

## **VII. PARISH DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

A. Ordinary Parish decision-making authority is distributed as follows:

1. Pastor  
Subject to approval of the Bishop, the Pastor is the decision-maker in these areas:
  - a. Management of the Parish Clergy. The Pastor shall have authority to dismiss any Parish Clergy and shall make recommendations to the Bishop and Parish Council for the ordination and/or incardination of candidates.
  - b. Approval and oversight of liturgical programs and initiatives within the Parish.
  - c. Initiate or modify activities within the Parish as necessary in order to maintain and enhance the spiritual and theological direction of the Parish.
  - d. Is a voting member of the Parish Council, ex-officio.
  - e. Has authority to decline particular nominations to the Parish Council and Parish Ministry Teams, because of internal forum.

2. Parish Council

The ordinary decision-making responsibilities of the Parish Council are specified in Article V of the Constitution. These matters shall be decided at the council meetings with participation of its members either in person or by proxy.

B. Special decision-making provisions.

Under extraordinary circumstances, special decision-making processes are required. These are detailed in the following Articles, as needed.

## VIII. COMMUNION AFFILIATION

The ECC is a confederation of independently incorporated faith communities, which is governed by the House of Laity, the House of Pastors, the Office of the Presiding Bishop, and the Episcopal Council.

A. Communion Membership

To seek membership in the Communion, all the following conditions must be met:

1. Two-thirds majority vote of the full Parish Council, in favor.
2. Assent of the Parish Pastor.
3. Upon approval of the Parish Council and Pastor, a special meeting shall be called to all Registered Parish Members. Of the members attending the meeting, a two-thirds majority vote, in favor.

B. Expectations of membership shall include:

1. Following the Communion Constitution, Canons and Polity.
2. Financial support of the Communion at a rate established by the current Communion Synod.
3. To receive a bi-annual episcopal pastoral visit unless otherwise determined by mutual agreement between the Parish Pastor and the Bishop.
  - a. The parish shall cover all costs associated with the episcopal pastoral visit.

C. Separation from the Communion

If issues develop between the Parish and Communion which cannot be reconciled, the Parish may decide to leave the Communion observing each of the following three conditions:

1. Two-thirds vote of the full Parish Council, in favor of leaving the Communion.
2. A special meeting, with two-week notification, shall be called to all Registered Parish Members. Of the members attending the meeting, a two-thirds majority vote in favor of leaving the Communion.

3. The Parish Council will have an exit interview with a representative of the Presiding Bishop of the Communion.

If all three conditions are not met, the Parish remains in the Communion.

## **IX. SELECTION OF SYNOD DELEGATES**

### **A. House of Laity**

The parish shall elect from its registered adult membership delegates for the Synod(s) of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion and the Diocese.

1. The parish shall select and send the appropriate number of voting laity to the Synod.
2. Delegates are active, registered adults and cannot be ordained clergy.
  - A. Delegates should be committed to the vision and mission of the ECC.
  - B. Delegates should be passionate about the community of this parish and take an active role in the life of the church.
  - C. Delegates must be able to be physically present at the celebrations of the national and diocesan Synods.
  - D. Delegates must have access to email.
3. Delegates are elected for a term of two years, with the possibility of successive terms.
4. Delegates, if unable to fulfill their role, are succeeded by an elected alternate delegate, if no elected alternate, then one appointed by the Parish Council.
5. The parish shall send at least one (1) voting delegate to the House of Laity. An additional voting delegate for each unit of fifty (50) currently registered adult members in the parish would also serve in the House of Laity. However, the number of voting delegates representing the parish in the House of Laity shall not exceed one third (1/3) of the total number of delegates of the House of Laity.
6. Mirroring the process for the selection and election of Parish Councilor, candidates for the House of Laity will ordinarily present their intention by October and be elected at the Annual Community Meeting in November for service for the subsequent two Synods.

### **B. House of Pastors**

The House of Pastors is comprised of all Pastors and designated ministerial representatives from the participating faith communities of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion.

1. The Pastor shall be a member of the House of Pastors for as long as the Pastor serves the parish in that capacity.
2. The Pastor must attend the Synod.
3. In addition to the Pastor, the Parish Council shall select one ministerial representative from among the ECC clergy/seminarians of the parish to serve as a voting member of the House of Pastors. If there

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are no other clergy/seminarians of the Communion within the parish, an alternative representative may be selected from the laity to serve as the additional ministerial representative of that parish. The term of office is two (2) years with the possibility of successive terms.

4. When the Pastor is also Bishop, a designated vicar shall serve in lieu of the Pastor as the pastoral representative of the parish at the Synod. Such a designated vicar shall be selected by the Pastor and other clergy of the parish.

## **X. SELECTION OF A PASTOR**

The steps in selecting a new Pastor are as follows:

- A. The Parish Council appoints a Selection Committee of lay members and clergy.
- B. Selection Committee performs the search for and the due diligence on the potential candidates from qualified ECC or other clergy.
- C. Selection Committee presents their candidate to the Parish Council. A two-thirds majority vote of the full Parish Council is required.
- D. Approved candidate is presented by the Parish Council to the Diocesan Bishop and the Diocesan Leadership Council for confirmation.
- E. Confirmed candidate is then presented to the parishioners at a special meeting. A two-thirds majority vote of attending registered adult members is required.
- F. The Ceremony of Installation of the new Pastor is then arranged with the Diocesan Bishop.
- G. The selection and presentation of other ordained clergy as pastoral associates in the community follows an identical process with the exception that no Ceremony of Installation will take place. Rather the Pastor and the community will welcome and affirm them at an appropriate celebration.

## **XI. REMOVAL OF A PASTOR**

The Bishop, or delegated representative of, shall be a non-voting observer of these proceedings, to insure due process. In the case of complete deadlock, arbitration may be required. If the Pastor is voted out of the Parish, the Bishop shall remove the Pastor from his/her position in the Parish.

- A. Criteria/Grounds  
In the event that all attempts at reconciliation have failed, the following criteria apply:
  1. Incompetence.
  2. Unconstitutional behavior.
  3. Abuse of pastoral authority.
  4. Serious physical or mental health issue that affect the ability to pastor.
  5. Doctrinal misconduct.
  6. Conviction of criminal conduct or sexual assault.
  7. Conviction of homicidal threat or attempt.

8. Conviction of sexual misconduct.
- B. Conditions
- To remove the Pastor, all the following conditions must be met:
1. Two-thirds vote of the full Parish Council, in favor of removing the Pastor.
  2. A special meeting shall be called of all Registered Parish Members. Of the Members attending the meeting, a two-thirds majority vote in favor of removing the Pastor.
  3. Removal or termination must be reported to the appropriate episcopal authority, Diocesan or Communion.
  4. In the event of a criminal conviction the action of the Parish Council and follow-up with the appropriate Bishop is adequate for removal. The Council, however, is responsible to the Faith Community for debriefing and to facilitate healing of the Faith Community.
  5. The removal of an ordained pastoral associate follows an identical process.

## **XII. CONDUCT OF CLERGY, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

- A. Clergy and staff are required to maintain standards in accordance with the Code of Ethical Conduct, as outlined by the Ecumenical Catholic Communion.
- B. The Parish is the employer of record for its clergy, staff and volunteers, with the responsibility to hire, recruit and terminate all clergy and staff and volunteers, practice pre-employment inquiries of sexual misconduct and conduct criminal background checks.
- C. The Parish is committed to and responsible for prompt reporting, full disclosure and cooperation with civil authorities in the investigation of allegations of misconduct by its clergy, staff and volunteers.
- D. Concomitant with civil reporting, allegations of misconduct shall be reported, according to established guidelines of the Communion, to the Presiding Bishop and the Episcopal Council for review.

## **XIII. SEPARATION OF MEMBERS FROM THE PARISH**

Denial of the Christian Faith, conduct unbecoming a member of the Church or persistent trouble-making in this parish are sufficient causes for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, the matter will be brought up before the Parish Council and reconciliation will be attempted, proceeding through these successive steps in accordance with the Gospel of St. Matthew 18:15-17:

- A. Private admonition by the Pastor.
- B. Admonition by the Pastor in the presence of two Parish Council members.
- C. If the above steps fail, the Pastor will ask the member to leave the Parish.

- D. Criminal activity shall be reported with full disclosure and cooperation to civil authorities.

Reinstatement to the community may be considered by the Pastor and the Parish Council.

#### **XIV. DISSOLUTION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS**

In the event that the Parish is dissolved as an entity, its assets are dispersed as specified by the Parish Articles of Incorporation: once all debts and obligations are paid, the remainder of the Parish assets must be donated to a similar non-profit entity. The Pastor and Parish Council shall decide where to donate the remaining assets as follows:

- A. If less than half of the Parish Council remains, the decision shall be made by the Pastor.
- B. If the Pastor is no longer involved, the decision shall be made by a simple majority vote of the remaining Parish Council.
- C. If agreement cannot be reached between the Pastor and a majority of the remaining Parish Council, the decision shall be made by the Parish Council if they have a two-thirds consensus of the remaining members. Otherwise, the decision shall be made by the Pastor.

#### **XV. AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

- A. Submission  
Amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws shall be submitted by a Parish Council member to the full Parish Council one month prior to the Council meeting in which the amendment(s) shall be voted on.
- B. Voting  
Adoption of an amendment shall require a favorable vote of two-thirds of the full Parish Council. Votes may be made in absentia by proxy.
- C. Implementation  
An adopted amendment shall take effect immediately unless otherwise resolved by the Parish Council.
- D. Ratification  
Initial ratification of the Constitution and Bylaws, or complete replacement of the Constitution and Bylaws, shall require a favorable vote of two-thirds of the full Parish Council, and the assent of the Pastor.

## Parish By-Laws

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## **I. PARISH COUNCIL**

The Parish Council is the parish leadership and decision-making body dedicated to fulfill the mission of this faith community. Authority is irrevocably delegated to the Council from the Pastor; however, the Pastor retains authority with respect to issues of theology, spirituality and liturgy. The Council has authority to delegate its tasks and decisions to committees or individuals within the parish while maintaining oversight and accountability for those functions. The Council consists of eight elected councilors and the Pastor serves as a member, ex-officio.

### **A. Eligibility:**

The minimum requirements to serve on the Council are:

1. Active registered member of the parish.
2. Has participated in a new member orientation class.
3. Has been active in the life and service of the community and is regularly present at the liturgy.
4. Spouses, partners, immediate family members may not serve on the Council at the same time.

Compensated Parish Clergy and Parish Staff are excluded from serving on the Council, with the exception of the Pastor. Also excluded from Council service are the spouses, partners, and immediate family members of a compensated Parish Staff member and Parish Clergy.

### **B. Responsibilities:**

1. Participates in Parish Council orientation prior to their term.
2. Attends and participates in all Council monthly meetings or gatherings and notifies the Council Chair in advance if unable to participate
3. Review, amend and approve Council minutes prior to each meeting.
4. Is available to support and provide counsel to Parish Ministry Teams. Each council member facilitates the formation and growth of a particular Parish Ministry and serves as their representative to the Council.
5. Must be physically present to and morally supportive of the parish, particularly through regular participation in parish liturgies and gatherings.

### **C. Term:**

Councilors serve a two-year term. The terms are staggered among the eight elected councilors such that two to three councilors complete their term and are replaced each year. Upon completing a term, one is eligible for re-election to a successive term. There is no limit to the number of terms one may serve. Exiting councilors shall end their term with the last Council meeting of the year (November). Newly elected councilors shall begin their term at a Council orientation meeting held prior to the first Council meeting of the new year (January).

### **D. Election of Council Members:**

Councilor selection is performed according to the following steps:

1. On the first Sunday of September, the upcoming Council vacancies will be announced to the parish community in writing and the application period opened to the community to submit their desire to serve on Parish Council. Eligibility

requirements for service on Council will be published in conjunction with this announcement.

2. Parishioners may submit their applications to serve on council to the Parish Council Chair prior to the first Sunday of October, when the application period is closed.
3. Prior to the October Council meeting, the candidates will meet with the Pastor and the Council Chair for dialogue about Council ministry.
4. The candidates will be announced to the parish in writing on the second Sunday of October. The parishioners will have the ability to express reservations or concerns to the Pastor about a particular candidate in advance of the annual parish meeting.
5. On the Sunday in November, nearest to the civil election day, the Annual Parish Community Meeting will be convened, at which the parish community will vote to elect the Councilors from the presented candidates. The non-elected candidates will become Council alternates available, in the order of votes received, as replacements for any non-election council vacancy.

E. Election of a Council Chair:

At the January Council meeting, each Councilor shall elect a candidate for Vice-Chair from among the elected Councilors, using written ballots. Prior to the balloting, each of the councilors shall be allowed to withdraw their names from consideration. The Chair shall count the ballots, and the councilor with the most ballots shall be the new Vice-Chair for the current year. The newly elected Vice-Chair shall then assume the duties of Chair in the subsequent year.

F. Duties of Council Chair:

The Council Chair, responsible for, but not limited to:

1. Moderates and facilitates the Council meetings by helping councilors work together, participating fully in discussions and decision-making through consensus, and does the same for all community-wide meetings.
2. Monitors implementation of all Council recommendations and decisions.
3. Oversees applications and elections for new Council members.
4. Facilitates the annual Council orientation/formation following the Annual Parish Community Meeting.
5. Conducts election for Vice-Chair.
6. Assists the next Chair in understanding the Council's history, responsibilities and resources. Transfers all Council materials to the new Chair.

G. Duties of Council Vice-Chair:

The Council Vice-Chair, responsible for but not limited to:

1. Prepares and schedules Council workshops, retreats as needed.
2. Coordinates orientation meeting for new Council members with the Chair.
3. Conducts meetings and moderates responsibilities in the absence of the Chair.
4. Becomes Chair in the event of vacancy.
5. Performs duties consistent with the office as the Chair or the Council may direct.

H. Duties of the Council Secretary:

The Council Secretary, responsible for by not limited to:

1. Prepares the meeting agendas in consultation with the Pastor and other Councilors. The agenda is published in the parish bulletin the Sunday prior the

- meeting or posted for the Parishioners to review. Submits the agenda to the Councilors at least 3 days before the meeting.
2. Oversees the accurate recording of minutes of each meeting and sees to it that the minutes and agenda are made available to the Councilors, committee chairs, and the Parish. Provides an informative summary of the meeting for publication in the parish bulletin.
  3. Takes attendance at meetings and records absences.
  4. Maintains official list of all Council and standing ministry/committee officers and members and their terms, the list of all ad hoc committee chairs and members and keeps these lists current.
  5. The secretary works with the parish web manager to keep public information accurate.
  6. Handles all communication and correspondence for the Council, including agendas, minutes, notification of regular and special meetings, notes of thanks, etc.
  7. Performs such duties consistent with office as the Chairperson or council may direct.

#### I. Duties of the Council Treasurer

The Council Treasurer, responsible for by not limited to:

1. The Treasurer serves God and ministers to the parish as its financial representative to the larger community as well as to the banking, investment and business communities.
2. The Treasurer monitors, coordinates and maintains the budget and business planning of the Parish, mindful of and proactive toward fiscal health and responsibility for the Parish.
3. The Treasurer, along with other authorized members of the Parish, has the duty of paying bills and making deposits into the parish bank accounts and acts as a signature authority for the Parish.
4. For compensated staff, the Treasurer ensures that all applicable taxes are withheld and submitted to the appropriate government agencies in a timely manner.
5. The Treasurer is responsible for the monthly reconciliation of parish bank accounts and ledgers. Prepares and distributes annual donation statements to members. Because the Treasurer has access to financial information; integrity and confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
6. Prepare, review and publish monthly reports to the Parish Council and quarterly and annual financial reports to the Parish Community.
7. The Treasurer is a Council member and calls and leads the Parish Finance Ministry.
8. Performs such duties consistent with office as the Chair or Council may direct.

J. Vacancies:

Vacancies on the Council shall be filled using one of the alternates. The new Councilor will serve the remaining term of the exiting Councilor. The Council shall make their selection at the first Council meeting after the vacancy occurs. The Pastor and/or Chair shall approach the selected alternate before the next Council meeting. A selected alternate who agrees to serve shall attend that next Council meeting. The selected alternate shall not serve a successive term on the Council unless elected.

K. Frequency of Meetings:

The Parish Council shall normally meet on the third Thursday of each month, with exception of December. Meetings may be added or rescheduled by the Chair or Pastor, with appropriate notice and communication to the Councilors.

L. Meeting Procedures:

At least ten (10) days prior to each meeting, the Councilors shall notify the Council Secretary of any issues they wish to discuss at the meeting. The Secretary shall prepare a meeting agenda to be published in the Sunday Bulletin the Sunday prior to the Council meeting and submits it to the Council at least three (3) days prior to the meeting. The Chair shall conduct the meeting according to the agenda. Decisions are made according to the discussions of the meeting with the consensus of the Councilors.

Formal decisions: legal, corporate or contractual, in order to be recognized, require that a quorum of the Council, either in person or by proxy, be present. A quorum is 2/3 of the Council members (6 votes). A proxy must be submitted, preferably electronically, to the Chair, Vice-Chair or Secretary, who will then announce the absence and the proxy at the beginning of the meeting.

M. Order of Business:

Council meeting agendas shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Opening prayer.
2. Approval of prior meeting minutes..
3. Financial reporting.
4. Old Business.
5. New Business.
6. Reports from the Parish Pastor, Ministry Teams and Committees.
7. Closing prayer.

N. Removal of a Councilor:

1. A Councilor may be relieved of his/her duties pursuant to Article XII of the Constitution and Article 1, Section B of the Bylaws.
2. In addition, a Councilor may be removed for cause including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. Behavior that is not consistent or representative of the Mission, Constitution and Bylaws of the Parish.
  - b. Behavior that is in direct opposition to the vision of the Council; continuously undermining the objectives of the Council.
  - c. Absence (each without responsible communication to the Chair, Vice-Chair or Secretary) in excess of three (3) meetings per year.

3. The Council Chair and Pastor shall be responsible for dialogue with the involved Councilor regarding the above issues. If the Chair is the Councilor in question, then the Vice-Chair and Pastor shall be responsible for the dialogue with the Chair.
4. Removal of a Councilor requires a 2/3 vote (6 votes) of the Council. The seat shall be filled according to the By-Laws Article I, Section J, Vacancies.

## **II. MINISTRY TEAMS**

### **A. Scope and Creation of a Ministry Team:**

All ministries function as an extension of the Council and therefore are accountable to the Council. Ministry teams have delegated authority to make decisions within the team as appropriate to the scope of the ministry. Other committees, groups and organizations that may be part of Holy Spirit ECC should relate to the Council through the following established ministries, and be accountable for carrying out their service as expressed in the mission of the parish.

When a Ministry is deemed necessary, the Council shall create a Ministry Team by consensus of the Council.

### **B. Responsibilities of Ministry Teams:**

The following responsibilities apply to all Ministry Teams. Additional responsibilities may be included under the specific Ministry.

1. Fulfill the purpose of the Ministry as defined in these Bylaws.
2. Prepare and submit a proposed annual budget to the Finance Ministry.
  - a. Provide accurate accounting for all events and expenses.
  - b. Submit all expenses/costs not in the approved budget, in advance, to the Finance Ministry for approval.
3. The results of all funding initiatives are to be deposited into the parish funds.
4. Funds are allocated to a Ministry based upon budget proposals, within the parameters of the Annual Parish Budget.

### **C. Appointment and Term of Ministry Team Chair:**

Each team must designate a Chair each year. It is up to each team to determine the best process to accomplish this requirement, within the guidelines of these Bylaws.

### **D. Removal or Resignation of Ministry Team Members:**

1. A Ministry team member may be relieved of his/her duties pursuant to Article XII of the Constitution.
2. In addition, a Ministry team member may be removed for cause including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. Behavior that is not consistent or representative of the Mission, Constitution and Bylaws of the Parish.
  - b. Behavior that is in direct opposition to the vision of the Council; continuously undermining the objectives of the Council.

3. Removal of a Ministry team leader requires a consensus of the Council. Removal of a Ministry team member requires consensus of that Ministry team.

#### E. Functions of Ministry Teams

The basic functions of each standing ministry of Holy Spirit ECC are to:

- Identify needs of the parish within its area of responsibility and in keeping with the parish mission.
- Establish priorities among the needs and communicate how these needs can realistically be addressed and where inter-ministry collaboration might be effective.
- Formulate long-range and short-term goals and objectives.
- Submit the proposed program to the Council for support.
- Communicate with the Council leadership about implementation and specific concerns or needs.
- Maintain positive communication with the parish community concerning programs, encouraging active support and involvement.
- Maintain communication with respective Communion and diocesan entities for resources and guidelines.
- Provide on-going formation of ministry members in its area of responsibility through workshops, study materials, etc.
- Determine budget priorities in the area of the ministry's responsibility and make recommendations to the Council through the Financial Management Ministry.
- Periodically review and evaluate existing programs and activities related to the area of responsibility.
- Provide dialogue Council through regular, oral or written communication of the work of their ministries.

### III. STANDING PARISH MINISTRY TEAMS

#### A. Community Care Ministry

This standing ministry of Holy Spirit ECC concerns identifying the needs of current parish membership with regard to retention of members, active concern for the sick, needful and absent members of the parish community. It identifies appropriate means, celebrations and resources that give careful attention to the parishioners of Holy Spirit, to deepen their relationship with the parish.

The activities and recommendations of this ministry are firmly rooted in the concept of Christian Community. This ministry works closely with the Council and is supportive of all other ministries and their committees. This ministry does not decide priorities for the parish - that is the responsibility of Council.

#### B. Financial Management Ministry

This ministry of Holy Spirit ECC concerns all aspects of parish financial planning and budget matters related to personnel compensation, accounting, reporting, and maintenance of the parish center and makes recommendations to the Council concerning the above. The activities and recommendations of this ministry are

firmly rooted in the concept of stewardship. This ministry works closely with the Council and is supportive of all other ministries and their committees. This ministry does not decide priorities for the parish - that is the responsibility of Council. This ministry works closely in collaboration with the Parish Treasurer.

C. Outreach and Growth Ministry

This standing ministry of Holy Spirit ECC concerns increasing and maintaining church membership through outreach, community activities and participation.

This standing ministry of Holy Spirit ECC has a two-fold component:

1. To discern the needs of other persons in the wider community, especially the poor and identify resources to respond to those needs by enlisting the active service of parishioners.
2. To seek out those who may identify with the mission and vision of Holy Spirit, especially those marginalized, denied pastoral ministry from other churches as well as the segment of the population that is de-churched. Then, identify resources to realize and develop their membership within this parish community.

This ministry works closely with the Council and is supportive of all other ministries and their committees. This ministry does not decide priorities for the parish - that is the responsibility of Council.

D. Fundraising and Development Ministry

This standing ministry of Holy Spirit ECC concerns all aspects of parish stewardship, capital campaigns, creating projects and events, and fundraising for the parish. This ministry makes recommendations to the Council concerning the above. The activities and recommendations of this ministry are firmly rooted in the concept of stewardship creating projects and events which financially benefit Holy Spirit ECC thus increasing the parish's public visibility. This ministry works closely with the Council and is supportive of all other ministries and their committees. This ministry does not decide priorities for the parish - that is the responsibility of Council.

E. Worship and Education Ministry:

This standing ministry of Holy Spirit ECC is concerned with two components: liturgy and education. In its liturgical component, it supports and gives direction to the liturgical life of our parish. They provide opportunities for parishioners to deepen their faith through meaningful prayer experiences and liturgical celebrations. They identify the spiritual needs of the parishioners and maintain an on-going program of training and education for liturgical ministers.

In its education component, this standing ministry is to develop awareness that the parish community has the responsibility for on-going Christian formation and education. Christian formation is a life-long process aimed at personal growth in faith. This ministry is responsible for the design, implementation and evaluation of

the Christian educational/formation programs of the parish, which include: sacramental preparation, adult ministry, child and youth ministry.

The activities and recommendations of this ministry are firmly rooted in the concept of intentional discipleship. This ministry works closely in collaboration with the Pastor and with the Council and is supportive of all other ministries and their committees. This ministry does not decide priorities for the parish - that is the responsibility of Council.

**F. Dissolution of a Standing Ministry Team**

When a standing ministry is deemed unnecessary or duplicative, the Parish Council shall dissolve the ministry by a consensus of the Council.

**IV. SIGNATURE AUTHORITIES**

A. The following shall have signature authority on parish banking accounts:

1. Pastor
2. Council Chair
3. Parish Treasurer.

B. A double signature with two of the above signature authorities is required for any single amount of \$250.00 or more.

C. A double signature with two of the above signature authorities is required for entry into any contract for service(s), lending, purchasing, etc. in the name of the Parish.

D. Hiring or firing of any staff is subject to the signature authority of the Pastor and one of the signature authorities above.

**V. AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS**

Refer to Article XV of the Parish Constitution for the amendment of the Parish By-Laws.

**VI. ACTIONS REQUIRING SPECIAL PROCEDURES**

The following are procedures relating to special circumstances, which may come to the attention of the Parish Council. They are not deemed to be all-inclusive.\*

\* For child protection issues, see Section IV Child Protection Policy

A. Investigation of Accusations within the Parish:

1. Upon notification of an accusation an Ad-hoc Investigation Team shall

be commissioned consisting of at least 2 Council members. Special consideration should be given to maintaining a team that is impartial and removed from the party(ies) involved.

2. This team shall conduct a fair line of questioning that is consistent with the accusation, involving all necessary parties/witnesses.
3. Interviews and actions shall be conducted with at least two members of the investigation team present, as to insure the presence of witnesses.
4. All information shall be documented for the record.
5. Legal consultation is strongly recommended.
6. The findings of the Investigation Team shall be presented to the responsible party [either the Pastor or the Council] and a fair decision shall be made accordingly (and a decision shall be made in accordance with the evidence presented), in the best interests of the strength and spiritual development of the community.
7. A sitting Council member, whose spouse, partner and/or immediate family member is subject to a disciplinary or conflict of interest action, must abstain from voting on the measure or matter.
8. Consideration shall be given to a public disclosure of such events, in keeping with transparent and accountable conduct. No public disclosure shall be made without written prior approval of the Parish Council and the Pastor.

## APPENDIX A

### Member Covenant with the Parish Community

**HAVING ACKNOWLEDGED MY BAPTISMAL CALL TO FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND IN THE SERVICE OF MY SISTERS AND BROTHERS, I, (*MY NAME*), NOW FEEL LED BY GOD'S SPIRIT TO UNITE WITH THIS COMMUNITY OF FAITH, HOLY SPIRIT ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC CHURCH. IN DOING SO, I WHOLEHEARTEDLY COMMIT MYSELF TO GOD AND TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THIS PARISH TO THE FOLLOWING:**

**1. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY PARISH:**

- **BY ACTING IN LOVE TOWARD OTHER MEMBERS.**
- **BY REFUSING TO GOSSIP.**
- **BY RESPECTING THE DIVERSITY OF LIFE AND OPINION OF OTHER MEMBERS.**

**2. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY PARISH:**

- **BY PRAYING FOR ITS GROWTH.**
- **BY INVITING OTHERS TO ATTEND, PARTICULARLY THOSE SEEKING A COMMUNITY OF FAITH.**
- **BY WARMLY WELCOMING THOSE WHO VISIT MY PARISH.**

**3. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY PARISH:**

- **BY DISCOVERING MY GIFTS AND TALENTS.**
- **BY DEVELOPING A SERVANT'S HEART, PARTICULARLY FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED.**
- **BY WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE MISSION AND MINISTRY OF MY PARISH.**

**4. I WILL SUPPORT THE LIFE OF MY PARISH:**

- **BY CELEBRATING WORSHIP FAITHFULLY, AND OPENING MYSELF TO GOD'S GRACE THROUGH THE SACRAMENTS.**
- **BY LIVING A GOSPEL-ORIENTED LIFE.**
- **BY GIVING PROPORTIONALLY, CONSISTENTLY AND GENEROUSLY IN STEWARDSHIP OF MY TIME, TALENTS AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES.**