

**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
OF THE
CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA**

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CONSTITUTION OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCH OF THE
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, MINNESOTA

Constitution of the Pastoral Council
Of The
Church of the Immaculate Conception
Columbia Heights, Minnesota

Preamble

The parish community of the Church of the Immaculate Conception of Columbia Heights, Minnesota, established the Parish Council to provide consultative support and assistance to the Pastor and/or canonical administrator appointed by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Ever mindful of the presence of Jesus Christ, the mission of the Parish Council is to consult with the Pastor and/or Canonical Administrator in the arenas of identifying and meeting the pastoral, spiritual, and temporal needs of the parish community through participation and discernment based upon Catholic faith, love, trust, and openness.

Article I **Name**

The organization is called the Parish Pastoral Council of the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

It will be referred to as the "Parish Council" in this document.

Article II **Purpose**

The Parish Council is an advisory and consultative body which holds, in collaboration with the Pastor, the responsibility for the design, sponsorship, and oversight of decision making processes.

The Parish Council is an advisory and consultative body to the Pastor with respect to the administrative, financial, ministerial and operational aspects of the parish.

The Pastor seeks advice from the Council but it does not vote democratically to set a direction.

The Parish Council shall be a vehicle by which each parishioner gives expression to those gifts of the Holy Spirit, uniquely granted at baptism, and necessary to accomplish the mission of the Church.

The Parish Council will formulate parish policy, foster good communication, and provide leadership by clarifying parish vision, establishing goals, and witnessing the Gospel message in the larger community and the world.

The Parish Council will provide the leadership to enable Immaculate Conception to become and then subsequently sustain itself as a Discipleship parish by surrendering itself through grace and choice to Jesus Christ and by adhering to four essential elements of Discipleship as follows:

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A. Time

- Prayer
- Reflection (listening to God speak to us)
- Celebration (worshiping as a community)

B. Thanksgiving: To prioritize God over our material needs and to continue Christ's work on earth, returning to God the first portion of all He gives us.

C. Ministry: Serving others by sharing our God-given gifts of ability, empowered within us by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of building God's Kingdom on earth.

D. Witness: Being willing to speak our beliefs as Catholics, sharing with others the Good News of our faith.

The Parish Council shall cooperate with other parishes and with archdiocesan offices and agencies, to carry out its work. The Council shall contribute to the formation of Archdiocesan goals and policies.

Article III Duties and Authority

The Parish Council shall function as an advisory and consultative body, supporting the Pastor, who is the legal administrator of the Parish in both canon and civil law. With the authority delegated to it by the Pastor, the Parish Council shall be called upon to share in the decision making processes agreed on in the Bylaws, which assists the Pastor in carrying out the leadership role that is his with the parish. This is with respect to policy, operation, and oversight of matters pertaining to the pastoral, spiritual, educational, social, financial, and advancement aspects of the parish. The Pastor has authority over any decision making process or choices made by the Parish Council. The Parish Council shall have access to all data and information of the parish that could be required in the performance of its duties. The Parish Council will consider all data confidential and handle it in a manner that will not violate the privacy of any individual.

The Parish Council shall serve as the voice of the parish in regard to pastoral needs and operational oversight. The members of the Parish Council shall interact, consult and participate with parish commissions, committees, groups, organizations and parishioners through constructive dialogue, assessment and visioning to initiate and endorse strategies, planning, programs and ministries for the common good of the parish. It should research the needs, the ideas, the hopes, the life and activity of the parishioners so that the whole community can effectively carry out the mission of the parish and fully participate in the on-going conversion that is critical to the sustainability of Immaculate Conception Parish.

Article IV Parliamentary Ruling

Except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws, any question of parliamentary order arising during the course of special or regular Council meetings shall be resolved pursuant to the latest revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

Article V Membership

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To serve on the Parish Council, the following criteria must be met:

- A. Be fully initiated in the Catholic Church (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) and in full communion with the Church and not restricted by from full sacramental participation or otherwise under canonical penalty or censure.
- B. Be registered in the Parish.
- C. Be dedicated to the welfare of the entire parish and universal Church.
- D. Agree to actively serve as the liaison to one of the five parish commissions listed in Article X.
- E. A parish council member may not be a current parish or school employee or an immediate family member of an employee.

Composition

Membership on the Parish Council should be truly representative of the parish and terms be limited to assure that there is genuine rotation of membership on the council.

The Parish Council shall consist of the following members:

- A. **At-Large Parish Members**
Six (6) members from the parish for 3 year terms, selected through an open and endorsed discernment process.
- B. **One Parish Trustee**
- C. **Ex-Officio Members**
 - 1. Pastor
 - 2. Business Administrator
 - 3. School Principal

Terms

- A. Terms for members shall be three years in length.
- B. Members shall serve a three-year term and may be appointed to a second term.
- C. Terms shall begin with the August Parish Council meeting following the appointments.
- D. No person will serve more than two terms.
- E. The terms of the Parish Council shall be staggered so that the terms of an equal number of members will expire annually each June 30th.
- F. Members unable to complete their term shall offer a written resignation to the Chair or the Pastor.
- G. Members who fail to attend three unexcused consecutive meetings may be replaced by the Pastor at his discretion.

Article VI **Nominations, Discernment and Appointment**

Nominations, discernment and appointment of members to the Parish Council shall be conducted in May and June of each year as appropriate to the appointment schedule. A discernment process shall be used for the selection and appointment of members.

Article VII **Vacancy and Recall**

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A. Vacancy

Vacancy on the Parish Council for the remainder of the open term shall be filled by the Pastor.

B. Removal

Any member of the Parish Council is subject to recall whenever the conduct or action of that individual violates the teachings, principles and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church, the Mission and Constitution of Immaculate Conception, and/or civil law. The Pastor has the authority and the responsibility to remove council members for just cause.

Article VIII Council Officers

The officers of the Parish Council shall consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair and a Secretary. Other such officers may be appointed by the Parish Council on an as-required basis. Discernment process for Parish Council Officers shall be held each year at the August meeting. The Chair shall preside over the discernment process.

Officers shall be elected by a majority of the voting members present. Ex-officio members may not be elected to these offices.

A council member shall not serve in one officer position for more than two years. A council member may serve two years in one position and then be elected to a different position.

The officers and their roles are defined as follows:

Chairperson

The Chairperson shall:

- A. Set and distribute the agenda.
- B. Conduct all the meetings of the Council.
- C. Be the responsible signatory for the Council.
- D. Notify members who have been deemed to have resigned from the Council because of the failure to meet attendance requirements.

Vice Chairperson

The Vice-President shall:

- A. Perform all the responsibilities of the Chairperson in his/her absence.
- B. Assist the Chairperson.
- C. Review the Bylaws on an annual basis and bring proposed changes before the Council for discussion.
- D. Work with the Chairperson to prepare an agenda for the Council meetings.

Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- A. Work with the President to prepare an agenda for the Council meetings.

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- B. Record minutes of the meetings and keep an official record of the minutes as a history of the Council.
- C. Distribute the minutes to the members of the Council for review within one week following the meeting.
- D. Once approved by the Council members, ensure the minutes of the regular meetings and any special meeting be published and made available to the parish.
- E. Be responsible for Council correspondence in conjunction with the President.
- F. Take attendance at the meetings and maintain a record thereof.
- G. Maintain an organizational chart of the Council members.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of three (3) elected Council Officers, the Parish Trustee and the Pastor, or in his absence, a Parochial Vicar. The Executive Committee acts in emergency situations.

In the event of an Executive Committee meeting, the Council President shall provide a brief summary of said meeting at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

Article IX Meetings

A regular meeting shall be held once a month August through June.

Special meetings may be held as considered necessary by the Parish Council.

All meetings shall be published and open to all parishioners.

An agenda for the regular meeting shall be made available to the parish prior to the meeting.

The minutes of the regular meeting and any special meeting shall be published and made available to the parish.

The official proceedings of the Parish Council shall be kept on record in the Parish Office.

Article X Commissions

Each parish council member will be assigned by the Pastor to work with, consult with, and provide leadership to one of the five parish commissions as follows:

- A. Administration
- B. Liturgy
- C. Pastoral Ministry
- D. Catholic Education
- E. Growth and Development

A comprehensive chart of the five commissions is included as Attachment A.

Article XI Bylaws

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The Parish Council shall establish a set of bylaws which define in greater detail the conduct of the Parish Council business.

The Bylaws shall be adopted by a 70% approval vote of the voting members of the Parish Council. A proposed change shall be presented to the Parish Council at a regular meeting prior to the planned adoption meeting.

Amendments to the Bylaws shall be adopted in the same manner as the original Bylaws. A revised copy of the Bylaws shall be published within 60 days after approved changes have been made.

Article XII **Constitution Adoption**

The Constitution for the Parish Council of the Church of the Immaculate Conception shall be adopted by an 80% vote of the Commission and At-Large members of the Parish Council. The adoption shall occur at a regular monthly meeting.

Article XII **Constitution Amendment**

Any amendment to the Constitution shall be presented to the Parish Council at a regular monthly meeting prior to the planned adoption meeting.

Any amendment shall be adopted by an 80% vote of the Commission and At-Large members at a regular monthly meeting.

A revised copy of the Constitution shall be published 60 days after approved changes have been made.