

*Church of the Assumption
Ansonia, Connecticut*

Church of the Assumption Constitution and By-Laws

Preamble

This constitution contains the organization and operation of the Church of the Assumption according to the attached Organization Chart.

Section I: The Parish Council

Name Article I

This body will be called the Parish Council and will be the primary governing body of the Church of the Assumption.

Purposes Article II

The purposes of this Council are as follows:

1. To advise and assist the pastor or co-pastors in the administration and planning for the continued growth and development of the Parish,
2. To promote, encourage and develop lay involvement and participation in the life of the Parish Community.
3. To establish, maintain and serve as a medium of communication between the priest(s) and the laity within the Parish and Archdiocese in all material needs thereof and, where requested, to offer any and all assistance in the spiritual needs of the Parish Community.
4. Along with the Finance Council, to assure the appropriate funding for the operating and capital needs of the Parish.
5. To act together with the priest(s) of the Parish to determine the special needs of the Parish.
6. To cooperate in serving the community at large.

Membership Article III

Paragraph 1

To be a member of the Parish Council one should be:

- A registered member of the parish
- At least 18 years of age by date of appointment or election
- Willing to attend all meetings
- Free of any conflict arising from one's occupation or relationship to the pastor(s) or any condition which membership would bring an inappropriate benefit

- Willing to communicate with other parishioners as well as individuals and groups
- Have an overall knowledge of parish life and sensitive to pastoral values
- A person of integrity who is willing to share his or her insights and listen objectively to those of others
- Willing to do whatever work is required between meetings to carry out the mission of the Parish Council
- With the exception of the School Principal, Parish Facilities Manager, Parish Finance Manager (if there is one), no paid parish employees or their spouses may serve as an elected member on the Council

Paragraph 2

Criteria for Parish Council membership:

1. *Ex officio* Members:
 - Are members because of the office they hold
2. Appointed Members:
 - Are members because of their election by the chairpersons of the ministries that comprise their Commission
 - Are to be appointed because of their competence in the job to which they are to be appointed
3. Elected Members:
 - Are members because of their election as described in Article III, Paragraph 3

Paragraph 3

Membership of the Council shall be as follows:

1. *Ex officio* Members:
 - The priest(s) of the Parish.
 - The deacon(s) of the Parish, whether permanent or transitional
 - Any seminarian(s) who might be assigned to the Parish
 - The two lay trustees appointed by the Council for a four year term with approval of the Pastor(s)
 - The chairperson of the Parish Finance Council
 - The School principal
2. Appointed Members:
 - The chairperson of the following Commissions of the Council:
 - Liturgy
 - Christian Formation
 - Service and Social Activities
 - Administration
 - *Ad hoc* Committee(s)
 - The adult leader of the parish youth group

- Up to two Parishioners appointed by pastor(s) for a particular purpose
3. Elected Members:
- Three members, who are at least eighteen years of age, elected from the Parish at large

Paragraph 4

Election of Elected Members:

1. Election of Elected Members shall be conducted under the supervision of a three member *ad hoc* election committee, which shall be appointed by the Council with advice of the Pastor(s) at its March meeting.
2. The Election Committee shall follow the following schedule in conducting the election:
 - First week of April – meet to select a chairperson, determine if any elected member of the Parish Council or Finance Council eligible for reelection wants to run, and prepare notice for the Bulletin asking for name of those who would like to run for the Parish Council or Finance Council.
 - Second and third weekends of April – run notice in Bulletin
 - Third week of April – meets to determine ballot of at least three names for each Council
 - Fourth week of April – reports to Parish Council the name of the candidates
 - First weekend of May – Names of candidates are published in the Bulletin and arrangements are made to have each candidates picture taken
 - Second week of May – a picture of each candidate is taken and a display is prepared for the Church with each candidate's picture
 - Remaining weekends of May – names are published in the Bulletin and picture display is in Church
 - Last week of May – ballots are prepared
 - First weekend of June – election takes place
 - Second week of June – meet to count votes and notify those elected and those not elected
 - Second weekend of June – Elected Members are announced to the parish
 - Newly elected members begin their term of office at the June meeting
3. The procedure for nomination and election shall be as follows:
 - The Election Committee may solicit candidates from the parish at large as well as suggest candidates it may have in mind

- In the event of a tie for a place in an election of Elected Members, the election committee shall draw straws to determine the higher
- Questions concerning membership in the Parish shall be resolved by the Pastor(s) in accordance with Canon Law and Parish records

Paragraph 5

The term of office of members shall be as follows:

1. *Ex officio* Members
 - Shall be members as long as they hold their office
2. Appointed Members
 - Commission Chairpersons: as long as they are the chairperson of their Commission
 - Youth group leader: as long as he or she holds that position
3. Elected Members
 - Shall be elected for a three-year term. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms

Paragraph 6

Vacancies created by appointed members shall be filled immediately by the Council with advice of the Pastor(s).

Paragraph 7

To fill elected vacancies on the Council, such vacancies shall be filled according to preferential order indicated in most recent parish election. In the event of a tie in the preferential order, a simple majority of the Council members present and voting by secret ballot shall elect from each tied candidates. If an elected member becomes an *ex officio* or appointed member, his or her elected membership will become vacant. Should a Council Member move from the Parish, he or she will immediately vacate his or her seat.

Paragraph 8

Membership on the Council requires attendance at all regularly scheduled meetings of this Council. Any member absent from two consecutive meetings without a valid reason and having notified the Chairperson of the Council in advance of the meeting, shall be immediately dropped from the rolls of the Council and his or her vacant seat filled.

Officers

Article IV

Paragraph 1

The chief officer of the Council shall be the Chairperson, elected by the membership of the Council at the June Meeting, who shall

preside at and conduct all meetings of the Council. The Chairperson shall be elected for one three year term, unless the Council extends the term by majority vote.

Paragraph 2

A Vice-Chairperson shall be elected by the Council membership at the June Meeting and shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected for one three year term.

Paragraph 3

A paid secretary shall be engaged from outside the Council. The duties of the secretary shall be to keep, record, and distribute minutes of the meetings and forward a written account to each member, and be responsible for all correspondence of the Council. The secretary shall send out notification of each meeting two weeks before each meeting and shall include the minutes of the previous meeting. Also, after each meeting the secretary shall prepare for publication in the Parish Bulletin a summary of what went on at the meeting.

Commissions & Committees Article V

Paragraph 1

The standing Commissions of this Council shall be as follows:

1. Liturgy Commission: The purposes of this commission are as follows

- To inspire and to suggest programs so that all members of the Parish Community are able to participate intelligently, conscientiously and actively in the liturgical celebrations according to the spirit of the Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Liturgy and the recommendation of the Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission and with a special view to the needs of the Parish
- To meet frequently with the clergy to implement the objectives of the Conciliar Decree

At least the following shall sit on this Commission:

- the Music Director/Organist
- the chairperson of the following ministries:
 - Readers
 - Altar Servers
 - Children's Liturgies
 - Eucharistic Ministers
 - Decorating
 - Altar Guild
 - Collectors
 - Ushers and Greeters

2. Christian Formation Commission: The concern of the Education Commission shall be the entire spectrum of the vocation of the Parish, to “make disciples of all nations,” by teaching Christ. Within its area of concern comes the Christian education of at least the following groups:

- All elementary students
- All high school students
- All adult Catholics and non-Catholics

At least the following shall sit on this commission:

- the Assumption School principal
- the priest-director of the Assumption School
- the C.C.D. co-coordinator(s)
- the Generations of Faith director
- the Youth Minister(s)
- the chairperson of the School Board
- the director of the RCIA program
- the chairperson of the following ministries:
 - Parish Retreats
 - Scripture Groups

3. Service and Social Commission: The aim of this commission is to encourage involvement by the greatest possible number of parishioners in all forms of Parish service and social activities. This commission is to plan and execute several service and social activities during the course of the year. The chairperson of the following ministries shall sit on this commission:

- Homeless Shelter Meals
- Hospitality
- Home Visitors
- Knights of Columbus
- Hospital Visitors
- Celebrate Life Committee
- Church Store
- Giving Tree Committee
- Parish Nurse
- Rosary Society
- Social Events Committee
- Social Justice Committee

4. Administrative Commission: The purposes of this commission are as follows:

- To advise on policy for use of Parish funds and maintenance of Parish property
- To recommend hiring and firing of personnel for proper maintenance
- To keep an inventory of all personal property of the Parish

At least the following will make up this commission:

- The two lay trustees

- the Facility Manager of the Church and custodian of the School
- the chairperson of the Parish Finance Council
- the spokesperson for the Archbishop's Annual Appeal
- the chairperson of the Buildings and Grounds Committee
- the chairperson of the Safety Committee
- the Communications Director
- the chairperson of the Stewardship Committee
- the Computer Support Director

Paragraph 2

Ad hoc Committees of the Council shall be:

1. Election Committee: This committee shall be appointed by the Council with approval of the Pastor(s) each year to conduct the election of Elected Members.
2. By-Laws Committee This committee shall be appointed by the Council with the approval of the Pastor(s) every two years or whenever the By-Laws need to be reviewed.
3. Any other *ad hoc* Committee may be appointed by the Council with the approval of the Pastor(s) as the Council deems necessary.

Paragraph 3

The chairperson of each ministry shall be chosen by the membership of the committee who shall select several qualified members from the Parish at large to assist in the work of his or her Committee.

Paragraph 4

When there is no membership of a committee, the Council may appoint a chairperson if the Council deems the committee necessary.

Paragraph 5

Each Elected Member must join at least one committee of the Council.

Meetings

Article VI

Paragraph 1

Regular meetings of the Parish Council shall be held on the fourth Monday of January, February, March, April, May (third Monday), June, September, October and November.

Paragraph 2

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Council after consultation with the Pastor(s) with five days written notice to members by the secretary.

Paragraph 3

All regularly scheduled meetings of the Council are open to all parishioners. Special meetings may be closed to parishioners.

Paragraph 4

Formal action taken by the Council at either a regular or special meeting must be communicated to the Parishioners by the secretary through the Parish Bulletin.

Paragraph 5

The Commissions of the Parish Council must meet at least three times a year, at a time to be determined by the Commissions chairperson. Date must be posted on the church calendar.

Paragraph 6

The ministries must meet at least twice a year, at a time to be determined by the ministry chairperson. Dates must be posted on the church calendar.

Paragraph 7

At its September meeting the Council shall set the specific dates for its meetings, the Finance Council meetings, and the schedule for the Election of New Members to both the Parish Council and Finance Council as contained in Section I, Article III, Paragraph 4 (2). Also, notice shall be given to the heads of the Commissions and Ministries to post the dates of their meetings for the year on the church calendar as soon as possible.

Quorum

Article VII

A majority of members of this Council shall constitute a Quorum for all meetings, and no issues requiring a vote may be decided in the absence of a Quorum.

Voting

Article VIII

Each member of the Council shall be entitled to one vote.

Section II: The Finance Council

Name

Article I

This body will be called the Parish Finance Council.

Purposes

Article II

The purposes of the Finance Council are as follows:

1. To advise and assist the pastor(s) on matters pertaining to the business and financial management of the parish.
2. To strive to carry out its mission taking into consideration its Christian faith and in coordination with the policies and priorities as determined by the Parish council.
3. To ensure that the parish is a trusted steward of the temporal goods provided by parishioners.
4. Preparation of and approval of an annual budget for the parish.
5. Approval of the consolidated annual budget for the parish school as submitted by the School Board.
6. Review of monthly parish and school financial reports and monitoring of their financial condition including conformity with annual budget objectives.
7. Review financial reports of major parish fundraisers as determined by the Finance Council.
8. Preparation and distribution of annual financial report to parishioners and to the Archdiocesan Financial Office.
9. Provide a summary on a monthly basis of its activities to the Parish Council; seek its consultation on matters deemed significant and coordinate with the Parish Council on parish policies and priorities.
10. The pastor(s) shall consult with the Finance Council concerning any major expenditure of parish resources that requires the permission of the Archbishop whenever a resolution is required by diocesan statute.
11. The pastor(s) shall consult with the Finance Council regarding the investment of parish funds in compliance with Archdiocesan rule.
12. The pastor shall consult the Finance Council concerning any proposal to buy or sell parish property.
13. The Finance Council shall review, in coordination with the School Board, policies in regard to employee compensation, benefits and other human resource questions that may arise pertaining to all parish employees.
14. The Finance Council shall address any other responsibilities that pastor(s) or the Parish Council may deem worthy of its expertise.
15. The Finance Council may delegate any of the duties and responsibilities shown above to paid parish staff.

16. The Finance Council shall be competent to review all banking arrangements, capital expenditures, long-range contracts, parish building programs or renovations, and to offer its recommendations to the Parish Council.

Membership

Article III

Paragraph 1

To be a member of the Finance Council:
See Paragraph 1, Article III, Paragraph 1.

Paragraph 2

Criteria for Parish Council membership:

1. *Ex officio* Members:
 - Are members because of the office they hold
2. Appointed Members:
 - Are members because of their appointment by the pastor(s)
 - Are members because of their appointment by the Parish Council or the School Board
 - Are to be appointed because of their competence in the job to which they are to be appointed
3. Elected Members:
 - Are members because of their election as described in Article III, Paragraph 3

Paragraph 3

Membership of the Finance Council shall be as follows:

1. *Ex officio* Members:
 - The pastor(s)
 - The two trustees
 - The principal of The Assumption School
 - The parish Facilities Manager (non-voting)
 - The parish Finance Manager, if any (non-voting)
2. Appointed Members
 - One member of the School Board whose representative shall be appointed by the principal and pastor(s)
 - One member of the Parish Council whose representative shall be determined by that body
 - Two members appointed by the pastor(s)
3. Elected Members
 - The parish at large shall elect three members

Paragraph 4

Election of elected members

See Paragraph I, Article III, Paragraph 4 above.

Paragraph 5

The term of office of members shall be as follows:

1. *Ex officio* Members
 - Shall be members as long as they hold their office
2. Appointed Members
 - On a year-to-year basis
3. Elected Members
 - Shall be elected for a three-year term. No member shall serve more than two consecutive terms

Paragraph 6

Vacancies created by appointed members shall be filled immediately by the Council with advice of the Pastor(s).

Paragraph 7

To fill elected vacancies on the Council, such vacancies shall be filled according to preferential order indicated in most recent parish election. In the event of a tie in the preferential order, a simple majority of the Council members present and voting by secret ballot shall elect from each tied candidates. If an elected member becomes an *ex officio* or appointed member, his elected membership will become vacant. Should a Council Member move from the Parish, he or she will immediately vacate his or her seat.

Paragraph 8

Membership of the Council requires attendance at all regularly scheduled meetings of this Council. Any member absent from two consecutive meetings, without having notified the Chairperson of the Council in advance of the meeting, shall be immediately dropped from the rolls of the Council and his or her vacant seat filled.

Officers

Article IV

Paragraph 1

The chief officer of the Finance Council shall be the Chairperson, elected by the membership of the Council at the June Meeting, who shall preside at and conduct all meetings of the Council. The Chairperson shall be elected for one three year term, unless extended by majority vote of the Council.

Paragraph 2

A secretary shall be engaged from outside the Council. The duties of the secretary shall be to keep, record, and distribute minutes of the meetings and forward a written account to each member, and be responsible for all correspondence of the Council. The secretary shall send out notification of each meeting two weeks before each meeting and shall include the minutes of the previous meeting.

Committees

Article V

Paragraph 1

1. Standing Committees
 - Parish Budget Committee
 - School Budget Committee

2. *Ad hoc* Committees
 - Committees formed for projects

Meetings

Article VI

Regular meetings of the Parish Finance Council shall be held on the third Monday of January, February, March, April, May (second Monday), June, September, October and November.

Quorum

Article VII

A majority of members of this Council shall constitute a Quorum for all meetings, and no issues requiring a vote may be decided in the absence of a Quorum.

Voting

Article VIII

Each member shall be entitled to one vote.

Section III: The School Board

Name **Article I**

The body will be called the Assumption School Board.

Purposes **Article II**

The purposes of this Board are as follows:

- To help provide quality Catholic education to the greatest number of children possible
- To advise the pastor(s) and the principal

Membership **Article III**

Paragraph 1

To be a member of the School Board one should:

- Be a member of the parish
- Be eighteen years of age or older
- Have genuine interest in Catholic education
- Have ability to work effectively with others in achieving consensus in decisions for the good of the entire school community
- Have ability and willingness to make necessary and substantial time commitment for thought and study as well as for meetings and related board activities, including development
- Be willing to maintain high levels of integrity and confidentiality
- Be willing to attend periodic in-service programs
- Be willing to support school/archdiocesan philosophy and mission
- Have a sense of future vision for the school
- Be a credible witness of the Catholic faith to the school and beyond
- Not be a paid employee of the school/archdiocesan education program

Paragraph 2

Criteria for School Board membership:

1. Ex officio Members:
 - Are members because of the office they hold
2. Appointed Members:
 - Are to be appointed because of their competence

Paragraph 3

Membership of the Board shall be as follows:

- *Ex officio* Members:

- The priest(s) of the Parish.
 - The School principal
2. Appointed Members:
- Appointed by the principal and pastor(s) with the advice of the Board

Paragraph 4

The term of office of members shall be as follows:

1. *Ex officio* Members
 - Shall be members as long as they hold their office
2. Appointed Members
 - Shall be a member of the Board for a three year term, renewable for three years

Paragraph 5

Vacancies created by appointed members shall be filled immediately by the Principal and Pastor(s) with advice of the Board.

Paragraph 6

Membership of the Board requires attendance at all regularly scheduled meetings. Any member absent from two consecutive meetings, without having notified the Chairperson of the Board in advance of the meeting, shall be immediately dropped from the rolls of the Board and his or her vacant seat filled.

Officers

Article IV

Paragraph 1

The chief officer of the Board shall be the Chairperson, elected by the membership of the Board at the September Meeting, who shall preside at and conduct all meetings of the Board. The Chairperson shall have one three year term.

Paragraph 2

A secretary shall be engaged from outside the Board. The duties of the secretary shall be to keep, record, and distribute minutes of the meetings and forward a written account to each member, and be responsible for all correspondence of the Council. The secretary shall send out notification of each meeting two weeks before each meeting and shall include the minutes of the previous meeting. Also, after each meeting the secretary shall prepare for publication in the Parish Bulletin a summary of what went on at the meeting.

Committees

Article V

Paragraph 1

Ad hoc committees shall be appointed by the Board from time to time to conduct the work of the Board.

Meetings

Article VI

Paragraph 1

Regular meetings of the School Board shall be held on the first Tuesday of September, November, January, March, and May.

Paragraph 2

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Board after consultation with the Principal and Pastor(s) with five days written notice to members by the secretary.

Paragraph 3

All regularly scheduled meetings of the Board are open to all. Special meetings may be closed.

Paragraph 4

Formal action taken by the Council at either a regular or special meeting must be communicated to the Parishioners by the secretary through the Parish Bulletin.

Quorum

Article VII

A majority of members of this Board shall constitute a Quorum for all meetings, and no issues requiring a vote may be decided in the absence of a Quorum.

Voting

Article VIII

Each member of the Council shall be entitled to one vote.

Section IV: Amending

These By-Laws may be amended, altered or replaced by a two-thirds vote of the entire Council. Notice of such proposed amendment, alteration or repeal shall be given in writing to each member of the Council at least five days prior to such scheduled meeting.

Section V: Adoption

This Constitution and By-Laws shall go into effect and the previous Constitution and By-Laws declared null and void as soon as this Constitution and By-Laws are acted upon.

Revised: June, 2008