

ST. JAMES THE GREATER CHURCH
3565 Hubble Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45247

PARISH LAITY ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES

ARTICLE I. ESTABLISHMENT & PURPOSE

Section 1. St. James the Greater Church has been established as a parish of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in order to provide for the pastoral care of the Christian faithful throughout the community of White Oak, Hamilton County, Ohio.

Section 2. The exercise of pastoral care to the St. James Church community through teaching, sanctifying and governing has been entrusted to its appointed pastor by the Archbishop of Cincinnati.

Section 3. The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church calls all the laity to “share diligently in the salvific work of the Church”. To help provide for the realization of that obligation and to assist our pastor in his ministry, a parish Christian Service Council will be established. In addition, a parish Finance Council will be established as set forth in the Code of Canon Law. Lastly, as directed by the Archbishop of Cincinnati, a parish Pastoral Council will be established.

ARTICLE II. PARISH LAY ORGANIZATION MISSION STATEMENT

All St. James the Greater Church affiliated councils, and organizations will strive to: promote the spiritual growth of the parish community; be a visible witness to all people of the message and service of Our Lord Jesus Christ through community and worship; assist our Pastor in whose ministry of Christ we have been called to share.

ARTICLE III. PASTORAL COUNCIL

Section 1. Purpose & Nature As put forth in the Code of Canon Law, Pastoral Council is a consultative body that will investigate, consider and propose practical conclusions about matters of spiritual importance to the Parish.

- A.** Parish pastoral planning is the principal activity of Pastoral Council consisting of:
- Articulating a vision of where the Parish should be going
 - Deciding a method to assess the needs and issues of parishioners
 - Identifying pastoral priorities or goals that address the needs of the Parish
 - Proposing concrete actions and programs that achieve the pastoral goals
 - Determining the personnel, financial and physical resources needed
- B.** As representatives of the members of the St. James Parish, Pastoral Council is the primary means by which the voice of the parish membership is represented.
- C.** Pastoral Council will conduct itself in a spirit of prayerful discernment, dialogue, and consensus building.

- D. Pastoral Council will assist our Pastor in helping all parishioners participate fully in the life and mission of the Parish, and will foster a sense of unity between all commissions, ministries, committees, organizations, and parish members, as we work together for the good of the Parish.
- E. Pastoral Council will work to ensure that all parish activities are in alignment with the Parish Lay Organization Mission Statement spelled out in Article II.

Section 2. Membership Criterion, Designations & Expectations

A. Membership Criterion

- 1) All members of Pastoral Council must be baptized persons, confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church, and in good standing with the Church.
- 2) All Council members must be registered members of St. James the Greater Church for a minimum of one year prior to their election or appointment and in addition must be regular active participants in the sacramental life of St. James, supporting the Parish through their gifts of time, talent, and treasure.
- 3) No paid employee of St. James the Greater Church may serve as a Voting Member of Pastoral Council.
- 4) Any member of the Parish Pastoral Council may be removed by majority vote of the Council due to repeated unexplained absence or for actions deemed gravely opposed to the integrity of the Parish.

B. Membership Designations

- 1) The Archbishop of Cincinnati, the Pastor and all clergy assigned by them to serve the Parish shall be *Ex-Officio* members of the Pastoral Council by virtue of their office. Because these members share the responsibility to receive recommendations of the Council and to decide on their implementation, they will not vote at Council meetings.
- 2) *Voting Members* of Pastoral Council shall number twelve and consist of six men and six women to be elected from the parish membership for a term of three years in accordance with Section 6 below.

EXPECTATIONS OF PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- **willing to listen and respect the ideas of others**
- **willing to consider the needs of the *whole* Parish**
- **willing to give time to prepare for and attend meetings**
 - **willing to serve in a consultative capacity**
- **committed to work in a spirit of prayer, dialog, consensus-building and planning**

Section 3. Leadership & Officers

- A. By virtue of his office, the Pastor presides over Pastoral Council and its meetings. The Pastor will actively listen and participate in the Council's discussions and deliberations.
- B. The principal officer of the Pastoral Council is the Chairperson. Once a year, immediately following parish elections, Pastoral Council shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from its own number by simple majority of members present and based upon the slate recommended by the Pastor. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall serve a one year term, and may be reelected for a second one year term. The Chairperson shall manage the

discussion at Pastoral Council meetings and the Vice-Chairperson will do so in his/her absence.

- C. A Recording Secretary of the Pastoral Council shall be appointed by the Pastor and will be responsible for keeping custody of the official record of monthly agendas and approved minutes of Council meetings. The Recording Secretary will not be a member of Pastoral Council and will therefore not participate in discussion or vote.

Section 4. Committees

- A. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Pastor, the Chairperson, and the Vice-Chairperson. The Pastor may, at his discretion, appoint additional Pastoral Council members to the Executive Committee on a temporary basis. The Executive Committee is responsible for developing an annual plan for Pastoral Council, including goals and methods of achieving them. The Executive Committee is also responsible for preparing and distributing an agenda in advance of each Council meeting along with the minutes of the previous meeting to all members of the Council.
- B. Nominating & Elections Committee - Once a year, in preparation for Pastoral Council elections, Pastoral Council shall establish a four member Nominating & Elections Committee for the purpose of identifying and electing future Council members as set forth in Section 6 below. The Nominating & Elections Committee shall consist of four St. James parishioners recommended by the Pastor and shall be chaired by a Pastoral Council member.
- C. Ad Hoc Committees may be suggested by the Pastor or a member of the Pastoral Council at any time, and established with simple majority approval of the Council. Each of these committees will remain in existence until its work is concluded or until the Committee is discontinued by the Council or the Pastor. Each of these committees shall be chaired by a Pastoral Council member appointed by the Council Chairperson and may include others who are not Council members.

Section 5. Meetings

- A. Pastoral Council shall meet monthly; except in July and December and meetings will be limited to two hours. Special additional meetings may be called by the Pastor or the Executive Committee. Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, and for good cause, a regularly scheduled meeting may be dispensed with.
- B. Each meeting of the Pastoral Council shall begin and end with prayer offered by one or more members of the Council.
- C. The members of Pastoral Council should strive for consensus in making recommendations to the Pastor. Resolutions and motions proposed by the Council will be approved by a majority vote of those present and voting. The Chairperson will have the responsibility to ensure the orderly progress of each meeting, and may limit discussion of a particular agenda item when necessary to complete the agenda.
- D. Pastoral Council is required by the Archbishop of Cincinnati to “receive and recommend” the annual parish budget and to approve any non-budgeted expenditures of \$10,000 or more. In order to comply with these requirements, a parish Finance Council report will be provided to Pastoral Council no less than once a year.
- E. Because of the important role played by the parish school in our mission, our principal will be invited to address Pastoral Council once a year at its May meeting.

- F. The Pastor is to fulfill the primary role in ensuring coordination and communication between parish organizations. In order to help ensure that ongoing process, the parish Christian Service Council chairperson shall present to Pastoral Council an annual report from each of the parish service organizations it coordinates. (see exhibit A)
- G. All regular monthly Pastoral Council meetings are open for attendance by any member of the Parish. Any non-member of the Council who wishes to address the Council should seek inclusion on the agenda by contacting the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson in a timely manner.

Section 6. Nomination, Election of Members & Vacancies Nomination and election of Pastoral Council Voting Members will take place annually and result in the election of two women and two men to serve for a term of three years.

- A. Nominations for all vacancies that are to be filled by election will be made annually by the Nominating & Elections Committee, usually in March. They will solicit recommendations for nominees from the Parish at large by way of announcement in the weekly parish bulletin. They will also work to identify other candidates so as to bring forth a Pastoral Council that allows for participation of the entire parish community.
- B. The Nominating & Elections Committee shall be responsible for educating all potential nominees as to the responsibilities of Pastoral Council membership.
- C. The final slate, in its entirety, of nominees for Pastoral Council membership shall require approval by simple majority of the seated Pastoral Council members prior to election.
- D. Election of members to Pastoral Council shall be conducted by the Nominating & Elections Committee at a particular weekend's liturgies in May. Voting shall be on written ballots and absentee ballots will be made available upon request.
- E. Eligible electors shall all be registered parishioners who are at least eighteen years of age.
- F. The unexpired term of a Pastoral Council member created by either resignation or removal from office, shall be filled by approval of a simple majority of Council members of an unelected nominee from the most recent previously held election. If no such candidate is available or the balance of women to men members is not achievable, the vacancy will be filled through the process outlined in A. through E. above at the next Council election.

ARTICLE IV. FINANCE COUNCIL

As put forth in the Code of Canon Law, the parish Finance Council is to assist our Pastor in his prescribed obligation to properly administer the goods of the Parish. As called for by the Archbishop of Cincinnati, Finance Council shall operate independently from Pastoral Council on matters pertaining to the business and financial management of the Parish. Finance Council shall carry out its work with full consideration of the parish pastoral plan and spiritual priorities that have been developed with direction from Pastoral Council. Finance Council shall be appointed and presided over by the Pastor.

ARTICLE V. CHRISTIAN SERVICE COUNCIL

The Christian Service Council shall serve to coordinate the ongoing work of all parish service organizations so as to assist our Pastor in promoting the spiritual renewal of the Parish as called for by the Second Vatican Council and the Sixth Synod of Cincinnati. The Christian Service Council shall consist of a chosen representative from each of the parish ministerial oversight committees that have been appointed by the Pastor and are in place to direct and monitor our many parish service organizations. (See exhibit A)

The Christian Service Council shall act as the liaison between areas of ministry, seeking the greatest level of cooperation and mutual support between individual organizations and shall meet four times per year in order to facilitate communication between those organizations and the Pastor or his delegate.

The Christian Service Council shall request a brief individualized written mission statement, which is faithful to the Parish Lay Organization Mission Statement in Article II above, from each parish service organization. The Council will make an annual report to Pastoral Council outlining accomplishments in each ministerial area along with plans for ongoing parish ministry work that furthers the parish pastoral plan and spiritual priorities that have been developed with direction from Pastoral Council.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

This document may be amended only at a regularly scheduled Pastoral Council meeting by a favorable vote of no less than two-thirds of the total Council membership and the approval of the Pastor. A copy of any proposed amendments must be presented to Pastoral Council at least one month prior to a scheduled vote on their adoption.

This Parish Laity Organizational Practices document was approved by St. James the Greater Pastoral Council on April 20, 2005 and represents a restatement in total of all other formerly adopted St. James the Greater Church Pastoral Council governance documents.

EXHIBIT A

	Pastor		
	Vicar	Staff	
Stewardship	Pastoral Council	Finance Council	
		Festival Capital Improvements	

Christian Service Council

Worship Committee	Parish Life Committee	Education Committee	Social Outreach Committee	Youth Committee	Spirituality Committee	Administrative Committee
Adult Bell Choir	Bingo	CCD	Giving Tree	American Heritage Girls	Bereavement	Mailers
Adult Choir	Blood Bank	PTO	Grace Place	Athletic Association	Catholic Men's Fellowship	Money counters
Art & Environment	Bridge - Ladies	School	Habitat for Humanity	Boy Scouts	Cursillo	
Baptismal Preparation	Daytime		Loaves & Fishes	Brownies	Daughters of Isabella	
C.I.O.W.	Bridge - Men		Medical Appliance Exchange	Cub Scouts	Father's Ministry	
Cantors	Bridge - Couples		People Working Cooperatively	Girl Scouts	Foresters	
Children's Choir	Circle of Care		Prison Ministry	High school social events	Hospital Visitation Team	
Contemporary	Friday Night		Scarves for the Homeless	Venture Crew	Just for Moms	
Ensemble	Women's Softball		St. Vincent de Paul		MOMs	
Coordinators	Ladies Golf League		St. Monica-St. George Food Pantry		Natural Family Planning	
Eucharistic Adoration	Ministry Fair				Natural Family Planning	
Eucharistic Ministers	Oldtimer Baseball				Prayer Chain	
Liturgical Dancers	Parish Picnic				Right to Life	
Marriage Preparation	Seniors				Rosary Makers	
R.C.I.A.	Special Events				Nursing Home Visitors	
Readers	Sunday Hospitality				Shepherds of Christ	
Servers	Volunteer dinner				St. Mary's Ladies Society	
Ushers	Wednesday Ladies Softball					
Youth bell Choir	WIDS					
Youth Choir	Women's Volleyball					