



St. Michael Parish Council Charter

Last Revised September 2024

This charter aims to provide a clear and mutual understanding of roles and expectations, build on and develop good working relationships between us, and promote co-operation and partnership.

2024-2025 Pastoral Council Positions

- ✦ **Chair: Bob Solorio**
- ✦ **Vice Chair: Michael Morley**

Commission Liaisons

- ✦ **Peace and Social Justice Commission**
 - ✦ Lisa Codo & Barb Anderson
- ✦ **Spirituality and Worship Commission**
 - ✦ Alice Lewinski & Connie Solorio
- ✦ **Education & Formation Commission**
 - ✦ Linda Kinzer & Barb Judge
- ✦ **Parish Life Commission**
 - ✦ Nancy Finley & Martha Kozub
- ✦ **Stewardship Commission**
 - ✦ Lou Bufano & Mick Adamson

Components of the Team Charter

- **Team Vision**
- **Anticipated Team Outcomes**
- **Team Operating Guidelines**
- **Team Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Team Norms and Ground Rules**
- **Charter Endorsement**

Team Vision

➤ Purpose

The purpose of the Pastoral Council is to assist the Pastor with our various talents and skills in administering to the spiritual and human needs of the parishioners. The council is consultative; it visions with the Pastor to seek out ways to more effectively enable parishioners to grow in the Catholic Faith and practice their faith in their daily life. The council must work together as a team.

➤ Values

Our values include Respect (openness, consideration, and empathy), Prayer (Faith), Integrity (trustworthy, honesty, confidentiality, and dedication), Collaboration (goal-oriented, and participatory), and Communication (listening, consensus, and welcoming). Confidentiality is critical for any topics that are considered sensitive. Transparency is key for the Pastoral Council and is reflected by the published monthly minutes.

Our team vision describes what our ideal team looks like, our assumptions regarding purpose, authority, and responsibility, and sets the standards that are important to the way we function.

Anticipated Team Outcomes

➤ Key Responsibility Areas

- The Pastoral Council's primary goal is to gently guide and evaluate the work efforts of the five Commissions:
 - Spirituality & Worship
 - Education & Formation
 - Parish Life
 - Peace & Social Justice
 - Stewardship
- The Pastoral Council Commission Liaisons should also work with Ministries to ensure orderly transition of Ministry Leads occur
- The Pastoral Council also has the responsibility to promote the ongoing development of the parish

Our team outcomes spell out the specific results the team must accomplish in order to be successful.

Anticipated Team Outcomes

Peace and Social Justice Commission

~ Liaison: Barb Anderson

Associate Liaison: Lisa Codo

The Pastoral Council will develop, charter, and assess the Peace and Social Justice Commission so that the work of charity and justice is not divided. It will also assist the various charitable and social justice efforts of the parish, to respond to the Pastoral Strategic Plan, and to ensure open communication between the groups under the umbrella of this commission.

SMART Goal

- (Develop) Bi-annual meetings with the commission (Target November and May)
 - Task 1: Confirm Commission Members or representatives – The Commission must meet as a group, not individually
- (Charter) The liaison will re-initiate the charter process by December 1, 2024
 - Task 1: Initiate conversation of relatedness of the different ministries
 - Tasks 2: Develop/review the one-page charter (Mission and Purpose)
- (Assess) The liaison will lead the commission in an ongoing assessment of their activities in relation to the Pastoral Strategic Plan

Anticipated Team Outcomes

Spirituality and Worship Commission

~ Liaison: Alice Lewinski

Associate Liaison: Connie Solorio

The Pastoral Council will support, improve, and assess the ongoing work of the Spirituality and Worship Commission to meet the spiritual needs of the parishioners, not only liturgically, but also through devotional, and formational opportunities to further strengthen the parishioner's relationship with the Lord.

SMART Goal

- (Support) Attends the meeting monthly or bi-monthly (usually 1st Monday of month)
- (Improve) The liaison will review with the commission the devotional and formational opportunities identified previously
 - Task 1: Facilitate brainstorming on the spirituality aspect of the commission and prioritize what additional work is needed
 - Task 2: Update Commission Charter
 - Task 3: Review Strategic Plan at least twice a year and develop activities to support Strategic Plan Goals
- (Assess) The liaison will lead the commission in an ongoing assessment of their activities in relation to the Pastoral Strategic Plan

Anticipated Team Outcomes

Education & Formation Commission

~ Liaison: Linda Kinzer

Associate Liaison: Barb Judge

The Pastoral Council will facilitate, assess, and direct the formation of the Education and Formation Commission to promote communication among the various committees in order to foster a common direction and understanding; to encourage a unified effort in the education and formation of children and adults

SMART Goal

- (Facilitate) Continue regular meetings with the commission twice per year (Fall/Spring)
 - Task 1: Continue to confirm Commission Members or representatives – The Commission must meet as a group, not individually
- (Assess) Review the baseline of current activities and plans during Fall/Spring meetings
 - Task 1: Use the Pastoral Strategic Plan (Review accomplishments and current activities)
 - Task 2: Use each Strategy from the Strategic Plan as an agenda item in the meetings to lead a discussion on the status of each item (Our focus is to think collaborative)
 - Task 3: Review past meeting minutes for the purpose of moving each ministry/activity forward in accomplishing each action documented in the Pastoral Strategic Plan.
 - Task 4: Confirm target dates for existing actions on the plan, and identify any new actions that should be added along with target dates
- (Direct) Continue to jointly align the work of the commission to the Pastoral Strategic Plan

Anticipated Team Outcomes

Parish Life Commission

~ Liaison: Nancy Finley

Associate Liaison: Martha Kozub

The Pastoral Council will develop, charter, and assess the Parish Life Commission to facilitate the cooperation of parish life events/ministries to build community within the parish while promoting Catholic family values.

SMART Goal

- (Develop) Bi-annual meetings with the commission
 - Task 1: Confirm Commission Members or representatives – The Commission must meet as a group, not individually
- (Improve) The Commission should start to develop improvement activities
 - Task 1: Facilitate brainstorming on Parish Life activities to support Goals in the Strategic Plan
 - Tasks 2: Prioritize ideas and assess progress
- (Assess) The liaison will lead the commission in an ongoing assessment of their activities in relation to the Pastoral Strategic Plan

Anticipated Team Outcomes

Stewardship Commission

~ Liaisons: Lou Bufano

Associate Liaison: Mick Adamson

The Pastoral Council will research, assess, and establish the framework for a Stewardship Commission to promote a strong sense of stewardship amongst the parishioners regarding their faith in action. Slowly and surely educate us all on what Stewardship is and to inspire others participate

SMART Goal

- **(Support) Continue to attend re-occurring Commission meetings**
- **(Improve) The liaison will review with the commission the current strategic plan and develop activities to support the plan**
 - **Task 1: Grow the Commission by 3 members/year**
 - **Task 2: Brainstorm with Communications Coordinator to develop ideas and processes to improve sense of Stewardship amongst the different groups of parishioners (e.g. young parishioners, youth and elderly)**
- **(Assess) The liaison will lead the commission in an ongoing assessment of their activities in relation to the Pastoral Strategic Plan**

Team Operating Guidelines

➤ Meeting Structure

The Pastoral Council meets monthly, usually on the second Monday (except for July) for either business or team building. The agenda for our meetings will be open to our suggestions and will be finalized by the Pastor with the Council Chair. The term for each member is three years with a limit of two consecutive terms. Terms are staggered on the Pastoral Council with four places being left vacant each year. Parish Deacons and Associate Pastors are ex officio. The minutes of each Council meeting will be posted on the Parish web-site after they are approved via email with all of the members of the Council and the Pastor. Typically posted within one week of the meeting. The minutes report conclusions reached and the primary points that led to the decision, not a word by word presentation. The Pastor, or his delegate, must be present at each meeting.

➤ Problem-Solving Process

Refer to Problem Solving Process from Good Shepherds Good Leaders in Appendix

➤ Decision-Making Process

The council is consultative, it visions with the Pastor to seek out ways to more effectively enable parishioners to grow in the Catholic Faith and practice their faith in their daily life. At times, the Pastor seeks advice and insight on matters that are confidential and they are to be kept confidential by the Council members. Decisions are reached by a process of consensus with the Pastor. The Pastor, as well as each member, is expected to fully support decisions reached by consensus. If a member has a strong objection to any decision, it is expected that objection will be voiced early in the process. A quorum (two thirds of the council members) must be present for all decisions. No decisions will be revisited due to absence of members. All necessary resources (people or information) will be made available for the council to make its decisions. Decisions are considered final within a reasonable amount of time, unless new pertinent information becomes known.

Team Operating Guidelines

➤ Conflict Resolution Procedures

- Our values include Respect (openness, consideration, and empathy), Prayer (Faith), Integrity (trustworthy, honesty, confidentiality, and dedication), Collaboration (goal-oriented, and participatory), and Communication (listening, consensus, and welcoming). Confidentiality and transparency are also key values. These values are also placed onto our monthly agendas as a reminder to all council members. Any member of the council can call to task a perceived breach in these values.
- The responsibilities of the parties who are in the conflict are to uphold the values.
- Conflict is acceptable within the parameters of our values, however, when the values are breached, then the conflict is unacceptable.

Team Operating Guidelines

➤ Additional Guidelines

- There will be a review of the Pastoral Strategic Plan in the spring of each year to update outcomes, goals, and expectations.
- The charter will be reviewed and revised as necessary during the yearly Pastoral Council retreat in August/September. A brief review of the Pastoral Strategic Plan will also occur. The Chair responsibility includes setting the time and place for Pastoral Council Retreat prior to discernment process.
- The effectiveness of the Pastoral Council can be measured by (1) the success of each commission, (2) achievement of key responsibilities in guiding the commissions, and (3) responsibility to promote the ongoing development of stewardship in the parish.
- The expectation of members is to be at every meeting. A guideline for attendance is that no member should miss more than three meetings in any given year. See Vice-Chair responsibilities.
 - After the second absence, the Vice-Chair will contact the member to advise him/her of the Pastoral Council guidelines.
- **Managing Change**
 - The Chair appoints two individuals to act as a Transition Team who work together. One individual will coordinate the welcoming activities for new Pastoral Council members. The other individual will conduct the exit interviews for members leaving the council. Exit interview information gathered will be shared at the annual Pastoral Council Retreat with a focus on continuous improvement.
 - During the April meeting of the year, an agenda item shall be added to the meeting to request feedback from all individuals. The purpose of the feedback is to assess from them what has worked well with the Council, and where can improvements be made to the Council structure.
 - Additionally, an exit interview shall be conducted with members leaving the Council to assess their perspective.
 - If a Pastoral Council member is unable to fulfill their complete term, a vacancy will exist until the next Discernment, or to be filled at the Pastor's discretion. If the position is not filled, the next Discernment should select the appropriate number of new members to complete the full council membership. The additional member will assume the term of the unexpired term. The person chosen would only assume the remainder of the vacancy.

Team Operating Guidelines

➤ **Problem-Solving Process**

- Refer to Problem Solving Process document (Appendix A)
- Vice Chair would drive the process going forward; Very specific responsibility different than Chair; Person must be a good observer; VC should identify if values have been breached

➤ **Chair**

- Term 1-Year
- Focus on results (Product)
- Tracks action items
- Develops agenda
- Communicate w/ pastor to discuss agenda (1 week prior)
- Query other Pastoral Council members
- Secure all tools (i.e. projector)
- Check mailbox and distribute as required
- Check email

➤ **Vice-Chair**

- Term 1-Year
- Focus on process
- Ensure the Pastoral Strategic Plan, Pastoral Council Charter, and all individual commission charters are collected and most current version delivered to Communication Director for posting to the website (This will be considered the Control Document)
- Acts as an Observer/Time Keeper to assure all agenda items have the opportunity to be addressed
- Problem solving responsibilities
- Monitor attendance

➤ **Recording Secretary**

- May be a non-Discernment position, with no specific term limits
- Should be present at all meetings. Upon absence of Secretary, the Chair will designate someone to take minutes
- Transcribe summary minutes and distribute to Chair for distribution to Pastor and entire council for review and approval before publication. Review and approval period is 7-10 days.

Team Operating Guidelines

➤ **Liaisons**

- **Liaisons guide their commission ministries to stay within the documented strategies of the parish**
- **He/She acts as a connection or relationship between each Commission and the Pastoral Council and is the communication link**
- **The liaison's job is to ensure that everyone is working together towards the same goals**
- **He/She works with each commission to facilitate communication and cooperation**
- **The liaison must ensure that commission activities are aligned with documented goals**

It is not expected that the liaisons report a status of the commissions on a monthly basis as this information is readily available the weekly bulletins

Team Norms and Ground Rules

- Ground Rules for Interpersonal Conduct
 - Balance the workload
 - Come prepared
 - Stay current with Parish news and events
 - Respect your time
 - Stay focused
 - Be open to new ideas
 - Give the benefit of the doubt
 - Don't talk about team members outside the meetings
 - Make and keep commitments
 - End with process
 - Have fun!

Additional Team Members

- ✦ **Bob Solorio – Chair**
- ✦ **Michael Morley – Vice Chair**

Appendix A – Problem Solving

1. Define the problem
 - What is the difference between the real and the ideal?
 - Why is the problem a problem?
 - What happens because of it?
 - Who is affected and how?
 - Who is not affected and why?
 - What are the root causes of the problem?
 - Is “something” causing some undesirable effect?
2. Define the Objective(s) and Goal(s)
 - What is a specific and measurable outcome to be achieved?
 - What are the motivating factors that will prompt someone to take action?
 - Is the goal achievable based on past performance and future realities?
 - Is this goal relevant to other initiatives or priorities?
 - Is this goal achievable within a reasonable time frame?
 - Will the result justify the cost?
 - Is it consistent with basic policy, practice and the Pastoral Plan?
 - Is accountability for results clearly established?
3. Generate Alternative Solutions
 - What are the alternative ways the problem can be solved?
 - Are there both short and long term alternative to be considered?
 - What assumptions are being made that limit your alternative?
 - What alternatives might be considered if there were no constraints?
4. Develop Action Plan(s)
 - Has the Council actively considered all the alternatives?
 - What are the positive consequences of the alternatives?
 - What are the negative consequences of the alternatives?
 - What are the time factors of the alternatives?
 - What are the cost factors of the alternatives?
 - What are the “political” considerations of the alternatives?
 - Which alternative(s) appear to be the best solution?
 - Why does the choice seem right?
 - Is there a way to “pilot” the choice?
 - Is there anyone who cannot support this choice in the group?
 - What are the consequences of no decision?
 - What actions must be taken?
 - In what order?
 - By when? By whom?
5. Troubleshoot
 - Are the objectives of the plan sound, desirable and understood?
 - What is the likelihood that the proposed of action will achieve the objectives?
 - Are the staffing plans adequate to carry out the action?
 - What other benefits might result from the implementation of this plan?
 - Have plans been made to capitalize on these possible results?
 - Is the plan that needs to be communicated to others detailed enough so that the support will be generated and all those affected will know what to expect?
 - What are the disadvantages of the proposed action?
 - In what ways can the course of action fail?
 - Why do anything at all? Why do this?
 - Is the time frame realistic and feasible?
 - Is there a better time to act?

Appendix A(continued) – Problem Solving

- Are the special conditions that may have been overlooked that could throw the plan of action into jeopardy?
- Why do it this way? Is there a better way?
- Is the course of action truly cost-effective? If this were your own money is this how you would spend it?
- Does anything about the proposed course of action make you feel at all uneasy or uncomfortable?

6. Communicate

- Which individuals or group might affect the success of the action planned?
- What is the best method for giving them the information necessary to ensure success of the action plan?
- Has the Council marshaled our facts and arguments so that the Council can communicate the idea in a detailed and hard-hitting presentation?
- Has the Council created a formal presentation to present (no matter how informal the relationship with the recipient)?
- Has the Council included benefits to the recipients of the proposal which will help them to more likely respond favorably and help carry out the intended course of action?
- Has the Council made sure that anyone who might need to approve the course of action has been consulted and approval been given?
- Has the Council established a clear two-way communication to receive feedback that the initial message was received and understood in the context intended?
- Is there a mechanism for feedback and testing

7. Implement and Evaluate

- What will be accepted as proof of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the solution?
- How will data be collected?
- By whom and how frequently? How consistently?
- Do all involved know what they are being delegated to do, what they are being held accountable for, and what their extent of their individual accountability is?
- Is only one person being held accountable for a specific result area (joint or dual accountability is no accountability)?
- Has adequate authority been delegated along with the responsibility for attaining outcomes?
- Is there an agreed-upon reporting system so that the Council will know how things are progressing?
- Have milestones and target dates for the accomplishment of specific results been assigned?

Appendix B – Transition Team

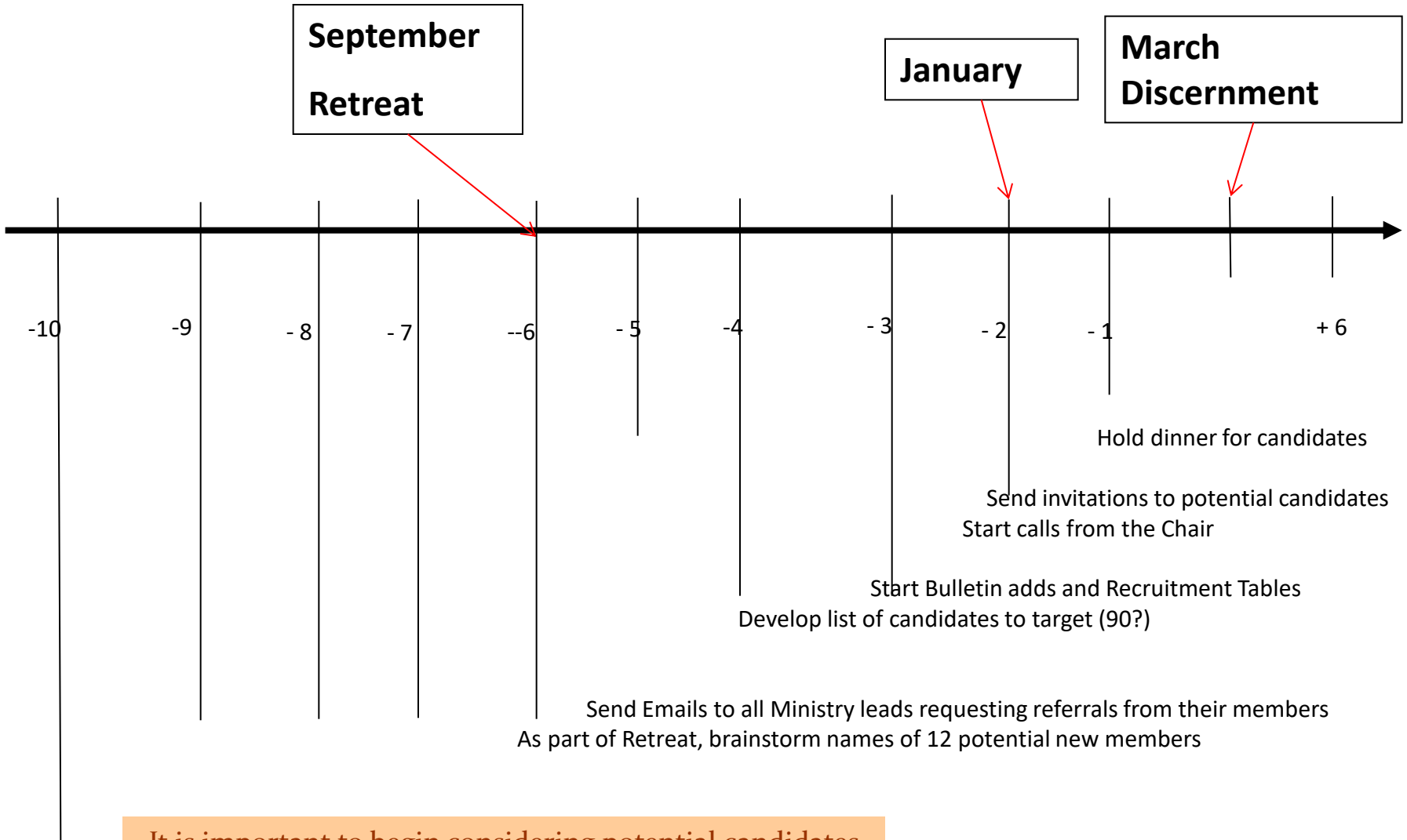
Items to cover for New Members

- ❖ Calendar - Monthly meetings from August to June (picnic)
- ❖ Term of councilpersons - 3 year commitment
- ❖ Review Charter and Strategic Plan
- ❖ Structure of Parish Ministries
 - Pastoral Council/Finance Council
 - Stewardship Commission
 - Peace and Social Justice Commission
 - Parish Life Commission
 - Education and Formation Commission
 - Spirituality and Worship Commission
- ❖ Structure of Council
 - Pastor
 - Chairperson and Vice Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Councilmembers
- ❖ Councilmember responsibilities
 - Liaisons to Commissions
 - Advise/Support Pastor in parish decision-making
 - Attendance requirements
- ❖ Significant activities
 - Synod Action item implementation
 - St. Michaels Feast Day Coordination
 - Web site documentation of minutes and plans
 - September Council Retreat

Items to cover for Retiring Members

- ❖ What were your favorite Council activities?
- ❖ What do you believe were the Council highlights while you served?
- ❖ What do you believe the Council does well and should keep doing?
- ❖ What doesn't the Council do well and should stop doing?
- ❖ Where do you think the Council can improve most on its mission?

Appendix C – Discernment Time line



It is important to begin considering potential candidates to invite to discernment as soon as possible

