

# **An Overview of the Parish Council of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church**

*rev. 7-17-09*

*The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.<sup>1</sup>*

## **I. Primary Function**

The Parish Council is constituted in order to implement the parish mission, vision and goals in cooperation with the Vestry and Rector.

This is our stated Mission (2004): *We embody Christ's mission by reaching out to receive with open hands and to share with open heart the Word of God, the bread of life.*

Our Vision, as expressed in 2006:

*We envision our parish community invigorated in the next few years by reaching out*

- ♦ to increase our participation in outreach events throughout the year which serve our community nation and world*
- ♦ to bolster our strong youth program and support a paid youth minister*
- ♦ and, experiencing such a sense of abundance and joy, to give more freely of our time and substance to God's work.*

Our goals are revised from year to year.

Just as our mission, vision and goals (what we do) reflect our core values (who we are), so will the actions of the Parish Council reflect those core values.

The Parish Council will plan, coordinate and evaluate parish events, programs and activities (not already under the authority of the vestry) in light of the parish mission and goals. The Council is especially well positioned to handle the coordination and interfacing of the various Teams which comprise it.

The Council is to represent the whole body of Christ and is to exhibit a broad, open, listening posture and attitude. The Council focuses upon the "big picture," the totality of our common life.

## **II. Relationship to Vestry**

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<sup>1</sup> I Corinthians 3:8-9

The Council is not authorized to act in areas which fall within the province of the Vestry; namely, parish administration, finance, stewardship, building and grounds, and personnel. Council members are authorized and expected to oversee the funds allocated to their in the annual budget and to make budget requests to the Vestry for the upcoming year. During the year, the Chair may adjust the amounts spent on particular line items, so long as the total amount budgeted for the Team (the bottom line) is not exceeded.

The Vestry will elect a Vestry Liaison who will attend Parish Council meetings and present a summary written report of the Parish Council activities to the Vestry. This report is offered as information only, except for funding, which requires Vestry action.

All fundraisers sponsored by St. Timothy's require the approval of the Vestry. Fundraisers which are regularly repeated only need approval on the first occasion.

### **III. Relationship to Rector**

The canons of the Episcopal Church vest the Rector with responsibility for *the conduct of worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the parish.*<sup>2</sup> The Rector is thus responsible for appointing the members of the parish council, all of whom will share in this "spiritual jurisdiction." The appointments are to be confirmed by the Vestry. The Rector is expected to advise the members of the parish council and to hold them accountable. Their mutual ministry simply builds upon a *foundation...that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.*<sup>3</sup>

### **IV. Organization**

The Parish Council is a means for the organization and functioning of our common life in the parish. We proclaim that God the Word at one time became flesh in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. In a similar way today Christ is given hearts and hands and the Holy Spirit is given room to move through human organizational structures.

1. The Parish Council is composed of the Rector, the Vestry Liaison and the chairs of seven Teams: Christian Formation, Evangelism, Fellowship, Members & Ministry (M&M), Outreach, Pastoral Care and Youth Ministry.
2. The Worship Planning Team is chaired by the Rector and functions in an advisory capacity to the Rector, in accordance with the canon. A member of the Worship Planning Team may sit on the Parish Council and the Team reports to the Parish Council through either the Rector or its representative.
3. The other seven Teams-- Christian Formation, Evangelism, Fellowship, Members & Ministry (M&M), Outreach, Pastoral Care, and Youth Ministry --are chaired separately. Appointment is for a two-year term. The term may be extended to a third year if agreed upon by the chairperson and rector.

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<sup>2</sup> Title III, canon 14, section 1

<sup>3</sup> I Corinthians 3:11

4. Each Team includes a number of areas of activity and responsibility. It is understood that each chairperson will recruit and assign these responsibilities to other people who must commit and dedicate themselves to the assignment and attend meetings required by each chairperson. The majority of detail work is to be done in the small committee sub-groups. The Council then receives summary reports and requests.
5. No action of the Council shall be contrary to canons of the Episcopal Church or the Diocese of Texas or the by-laws of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church.
6. One person may serve on more than one Team. Vestry persons may serve as members of the council and as Team chairs.

## **V. Meetings**

The Parish Council will meet no less than four times a year; however, circumstances will generally require meeting more often. The meetings will be chaired by the Rector (or his or her designee) and will be open to any members of the parish. In addition to reporting on the activities and plans of their respective committees Teams, the Council members are encouraged to raise issues which concern coordination of their activities with other Teams. The Council will adopt norms for the conduct of their work together and these norms will be updated at least annually.

## **VI. Teams of the Council**

**1. Christian Formation**--to offer opportunities for people of all ages to be transformed by the living Word of God through study, reflection and spiritual practice.

### Adult Formation:

1. Cursillo
2. Education for Ministry (EFM)
3. Inquiry and Soundings
4. Lenten Series
5. McIlhenny Dabney Memorial Library
6. Safeguarding God's Children
7. Small Groups
8. Special speakers, workshops, and retreats
9. Sunday morning Christian Formation

### Children and Youth:

1. Bags and Packets
2. Baptism Preparation
3. Blessing of the Animals
4. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
5. Children's Library

## 1. **Christian Formation**—Children and Youth—con’t.

6. Communion Meditations and Retreat
7. Nursery
8. Special Events
  - Advent and Lenten Events
  - Vacation Bible School (VBS)
9. Sunday morning Christian Formation
10. The Living Nativity (with Evangelism and Youth)
11. The Triangle—supporting children with different abilities

**2. Evangelism**--to embody the motto “The Congregation is the Evangelism Team” by empowering the congregation in the shared responsibility to welcome and invite people to become a part of the community of God here at St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church.

1. Hospitality and Welcome
  - Greeters
  - Newcomers
  - Shepherds
  - Newcomer Socials
  - Nametags
  - Tract Rack
2. Ongoing Ministries
  - Living Nativity (shared with Christian Formation and Youth)
3. Communications (shared with Members and Ministry)
  - Newsletter
  - Website
  - Publicity

**3. Fellowship**—to plan coordinate, and oversee activities and special events that promote and encourage the nourishment of parish community in Christian fellowship.

1. Brown Bag Bunch
2. Coffee Hour
3. Kitchen
4. Lenten Suppers
5. Parish Picnic (with Youth)
6. Receptions

**4. Members & Ministry (M&M)**--to coordinate St. Timothy’s efforts to enable members to get connected, stay connected, and do ministry.

1. Church directories

#### 4. Members & Ministry (M&M)—con't.

2. Communications
  - Bulletin boards
  - Sticks and Stones newsletter
  - Website
3. Gifts for Ministry
4. M&M Spot
5. Ministry Information Guide
6. Person-to-Person (making periodic contact and follow-up with households on parish rolls)

**5. Outreach**—to respond to the Christian imperative that the hungry be fed, the naked clothed, the homeless housed, and that others who are less fortunate share in the Good News of the Gospel.<sup>4</sup>

1. Angel Tree/ Christmas Partners Blessing Children
2. Blood Drives
3. Brazosport Cares
4. The Bread Basket
5. Brotherhood of St. Andrew
6. The Dream Center
7. Faith In Action (with Youth)
8. Fix It Ministry
9. The Hall
10. Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program
11. Men and Boys Retreat
12. Nursing Home Ministry
13. Prison Ministry
14. Salvation Army Bell ringers
15. Special Projects

**6. Pastoral Care**—to seek, through prayer and service, to bring comfort, healing, and support to fellow parishioners.

1. Compassionate Callers
2. Daughters of the King
3. Flower Ministry
4. Friendship Guild (meals for individuals or families experiencing ill health or loss)
5. Grace Group
6. Greeting card ministry (St. Gabriel's Guild)
7. Healing Prayer Group
8. Prayer Circle
9. Transportation to Church

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<sup>4</sup> adopted from the mission statement of the diocesan Outreach Ministries

**7. Worship**—to assist the Rector in shaping transformative worship services which contribute to restoring our unity with God and one another in Christ. We not only receive joyfully the Word of God and the bread of life, but are also inspired to share these gifts with our neighbors.

1. Acolytes
2. Altar Guild
3. Chalice Bearers
4. Eucharistic Visitors
5. Music
  - Children’s Choirs
  - Handbell Choir
  - The Joiful Noyse
  - Senior Choir
6. Readers
7. Ushers

**8. Youth Ministry**—to mentor youth to enable them to live into the Baptismal Covenant, to develop Christian community that is a sanctuary for youth, to integrate all youth into the full life of the parish and to support our families as the center of spiritual formation for youth.

1. Diocesan Events
  - Christian Leadership Conference (CLC)
  - Happening
  - YES
2. Faith In Action (with Outreach)
3. Parish Garage Sale
4. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
5. The Living Nativity (with Christian Formation and Evangelism)
6. Wednesdays at Church (WAC)
7. Youth Council
8. Youth Group (EYC-Episcopal Youth Community)
9. Youth Ministry Team
10. Youth Mission Trips
11. Youth Outreach Projects
12. Youth Worship Team
13. Youth Events