

SAINT PETER AND PAUL  
ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Approved at our headquarters in  
Englewood, New Jersey, this  
23rd day of August, 1979

/s/

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METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP  
Primate  
Antiochian Orthodox Christian  
Archdiocese of North America

(Archdiocese Seal)

/S/

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GARY G. YOUNES  
Chairman  
Approved by membership  
fifth of June 1979  
Revised-Jul 10, 1979  
Revised-Sep 22, 1983  
Revised-Oct 6, 1985  
Revised-Jun 12, 1988  
Revised-Sep 30, 1990  
Rovised-Oct 6, 1991

ACE  
A. - Fannoney  
Chairman, Jan 3, 1995

CONSTITUTION.

This is the constitution of Ss. Peter and Paul Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church of Metropolitan Washington, and all of the Antiochian Orthodox Churches and/or organizations in North America under the jurisdiction of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, a religious corporation under the laws of the State of New York, with headquarters at Englewood, New Jersey,

PREAMBLE

In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

We, members of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, in the city of Rockville, State of Maryland, desiring the propagation of our faith and its teachings for ourselves and our posterity, do unite together as a parish and church for the receiving of the Holy Sacraments, for the observance of the faith, morals and discipline of Our Holy Church as administered under the authority and jurisdiction of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, and do hereby adopt this Constitution, solemnly pledging ourselves to be governed by its provisions and the Sacred Canons of the Holy Church,

ARTICLE I

Name

Section 1.

The name of this parish shall be the Ss. Peter & Paul Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, both ecclesiastically and in civil law, and for the remainder of this Constitution referred to as Ss. Peter and Paul.

Address

Section 2.

The name of its initial registered office in the State of Maryland is 7605 New Market Drive, Bethesda, and the name of its initial registered agent at such address is Gary Younes.

## Authority

### Section 3.

#### A. Legal

Ss. Peter & Paul derives its legal authority to function as a Religious Corporation by virtue of a charter issued pursuant to the provisions of the Religious Corporation Laws of the State of Maryland.

#### B. Ecclesiastical

Ss. Peter & Paul derives its ecclesiastic authority to function by virtue of a charter issued by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of all North America with headquarters at Englewood, New Jersey. Such a charter shall be issued when a constitution of Ss. Peter & Paul Mission has been approved by the Metropolitan Archbishop. Ss. Peter & Paul owes ecclesiastical allegiance to the aforementioned Archdiocese and such ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction cannot be changed, modified, altered or revoked.

## ARTICLE II

### Purpose.

#### Section 1.

The purpose of Ss. Peter & Paul is to maintain and preserve the spiritual and physical well being and unity of its membership in this community, coordinate religious work or activity with the intent of propagating, practicing and forever perpetuating religious worship services, ministrations, sacraments and teachings in full accord and unity with the doctrines, rules, ritual, canon law, faith, practice, discipline, traditions and usages of the Holy Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church as set forth in the Preamble of this Constitution.

#### Section 2.

Ss. Peter & Paul in fulfilling the purpose set forth in Section 1, of this Article, shall ordain and establish rules and regulations, consistent with the Constitution of the Archdiocese and Sacred Canons of the Holy Church, according to which the members thereof, its clergy, elected officers, Parish Council, committees and organization, shall act and officiate. Ss. Peter & Paul shall provide a place or places and facilitate the means for worship and religious education in accordance with this

Constitution. Ss. Peter Er Paul shall hold title to all properties, endowments, legacies, and all other gifts an contributions.

### ARTICLE III

#### Membership

##### .Section 1.

The membership in Ss. Peter & Paul shall consist of two kinds:

(1) Voting membership and (2) general membership

(1) Voting Membership: The Voting Membership shall consist of all persons eighteen (18) years of age and over, who are accepted in the membership of the Holy Orthodox Church according to its teachings, who accept, profess, and, practice its faith and discipline and who subscribe to the temporal **maintenance of Ss. Peter Paul** through payment of such dues, pledges and assessments as are prescribed by the **Parish Council**.

(2) General Membership (Non-Voting): The General Membership shall consist of all other persons who have been baptized and accepted in the membership of the Holy Orthodox Church according to its teachings who accept and practice the faith and discipline of said Church and profess membership in Ss. Peter & Paul and are under eighteen (18) years of age.

### ARTICLE IV

#### Government

##### Section 1.

The Constitution and Sacred Canons shall be the governing code for Ss. Peter & Paul.

##### Section 2.

All administrative authority is vested in the Parish Council as hereinafter provided for.

##### Section 3.

All legislative authority is vested in the general meeting of the Voting Membership of Ss. Peter & Paul

## ARTICLE V

### Clergy

#### Section 1.

All clergy of Ss. Peter & Paul shall be appointed or removed by the Metropolitan Archbishop with the advice of the Parish Council.

#### Section 2. Pastor

The Metropolitan Archbishop shall appoint and designate the Pastor of Ss. Peter & Paul from the canonical clergy of the Archdiocese. He shall be the official representative of the Metropolitan Archbishop. In all matters involving canon law, spiritual function, priestly rights and duties, the Pastor and any other clergy shall be under <sup>the</sup> direct supervision of the Metropolitan Archbishop and not subject to any rules or regulations of the Parish.

#### Section 3.

In order to dismiss or remove said clergy, a formal petition shall be drawn by the Parish Council setting forth fully the reason for the desired dismissals. Said petition is to be sent to the Metropolitan Archbishop who is to act as sole judge of the merits of said petition for its acceptance or rejection.

#### Section 4.

No member of the clergy has or shall claim any individual rights or ownership to the properties of Ss. Peter & Paul except as otherwise may be permitted by contract.

No member of the clergy or laity may enter into any contractual agreement, or otherwise engage in any business enterprise, which by this nature may jeopardize the assets of Ss. Peter & Paul, or may subject such parish to its claim, lawsuit, or other liability arising from such activity.

## ARTICLE VI

### Parish Council

#### Section 1.

- A. The Parish Council shall consist of the Pastor and three (3) members of the Voting Membership to be appointed by him. One (1) member shall be appointed for a term of one (1) year; one (1) member for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) member for a term of

three (3) years. An additional twelve (12) members of this Council shall be elected by and from the Voting Membership of Ss. Peter & Paul: four (4) for a term of one (1) year; four (4) for a term of two (2) years; and four (4) for a term of three (3) years. On expiration of the appointed or elected terms as set forth, their successors thereafter shall be appointed or elected for a full term of three (3) years.

9/22/83

- B. In addition to the aforementioned members, the elected presidents of the Ladies Club, Men's Club, and Senior SOYO (and hereafter presidents) or their appointed representatives, shall be full voting members of the Church Council. The Superintendent of the Church School and a representative of the Choir shall be ex-officio non-voting members of the Parish Council.
- C. In the event of a vacancy in the Parish Council of an elected member, the Parish Council shall select a person from the Voting Membership within thirty (30) days to serve until the following election. The vacancy will then be filled by an election of the Voting Membership for the unexpired term. In the event of a vacancy in the appointed members of the Parish Council, the Pastor shall appoint within thirty (30) days a person from the Voting Membership to fill the unexpired term.
- D. No elected member of the Parish Council shall be eligible for reelection after he has served one (1), three (3) year term until he has retired from elected membership for a period of one (1.) year. A term as referred to herein shall refer only to a term served after the effective date of adoption of this Constitution. The appointed members of the Parish Council are also governed by the above regulations.

At no time may a person, whether elected or appointed or both, serve more than a three-year term until he has retired for a period of one year.

## Section 2.

- A. Qualifications for election to the Parish Council: A candidate must be 19 years of age or over, have been a Voting Member of the Parish for a period of one (1) year and have fulfilled the Canonical requirements of the Faith.

9/22/83 B, At least two months before the annual meeting of Ss.  
7/10/79 Peter & Paul, the Chairman of the Parish Council shall  
6/12/88 appoint a Nominating Committee composed of the Pastor  
and at least four (4) members from the Voting  
Membership. The Nominating Committee shall nominate at  
least one a half times as many persons as there are  
vacancies to be filled. Those nominated must have  
indicated a willingness to serve if elected.

9/22/83 C. At least thirty (30) days before the annual meeting of  
Ss. Peter & Paul, this Nominating Committee shall place  
its report in the hands of the Chairman of the Parish  
Council. The Chairman of the Parish Council shall  
include the names of the nominees in the announcement  
of the annual meeting.

D. Additional nominations may be made from the floor by  
any Voting Member at the Annual General Meeting,  
provided that such additional nominees have indicated  
their willingness to serve if elected.

9/22/83 E. The elected members of the Parish Council shall be  
elected by secret ballot at the Annual General Meeting.

F. The newly elected members and the newly appointed  
members of the Parish Council together with those of  
the Council whose terms have not expired will  
constitute the new Parish Council and will be installed  
by the Pastor.

### Section 3.

- 9/30/90 A. At the next regular meeting of the Parish Council  
following the election of new council members there  
shall be an election of officers for the coming year.  
The officers so elected shall consist of the Chairman,  
the Vice Chairman, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and  
such other officers as may be provided for in other  
parts of this Constitution and in the By-Laws. For the  
purposes of this election, only persons who will  
continue their terms into the next year and newly  
elected and appointed board members will be allowed to  
vote and be elected into office. Outgoing members of  
the Council will not vote or be elected into office in  
this election. The newly elected officers will not  
take over the functions of their position until the new  
council is installed in accordance with the By-Laws.  
Upon installation of the new council, a list shall be  
mailed to the Metropolitan Archbishop.

B. The Parish Council shall be the representative of Ss.  
Peter & Paul in the administration of its properties

and affairs. It shall be responsible for the receipt and disbursement of all general and special funds.

( The Parish Council shall have the right to promulgate and adopt By-Laws for the conduct of its meetings and affairs, provided, however, that such By-laws must be consistent with this Constitution and the Constitution of the Archdiocese

- D. The Parish Council shall hold one (1) regular meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Nine (9) members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

At the end of each six months of the fiscal year, the Parish Council shall prepare a report containing in detail all receipts and expenditures of Ss. Peter & Paul, including any and all special funds, endowments, etc., held for specific purposes; such report shall be made available to all Voting Members of the Parish and copies thereof shall be filed with the Archdiocese. All other legal organizations shall also submit a similar report at this time to the Parish Council.

F. Committees:

(1) The Parish Council shall create such standing committees as it deems necessary to accomplish the purpose of Ss. Peter & Paul. The Chairman shall appoint members of such committees from the Membership of the Parish after consultation with the Pastor and other members of the Council and designate the Chairman of each.

(2) The Chairman shall create and appoint all other special committees he deems necessary for the accomplishment of any special purpose of Ss. Peter & Paul, after consultation with the Pastor and other members of the Council and designate the Chairman of each.

Section 4. Removal of Parish Council Member

10/6/85

It is the duty of elected and appointed Parish Council members to attend all regular and special Council meetings. Missing three (3) consecutive meetings will constitute grounds for removal from the Council. This section pertains to elected or appointed members only, and does not apply to presidents of Men's Club, Ladies Club, and Senior SOYO.

- B. If a member is absent from two consecutive Council meetings, the Chairman of the Council shall contact the member in person or by telephone to inform him or her

that missing a third consecutive meeting will constitute grounds for removal from the Council. The Chairman will try to ascertain extenuating circumstances for the members' absence and urge him or her to fulfill his or her duties in the future.

- C. If no extenuating circumstances are given and the member misses a third consecutive meeting, removal from the Council will be automatic. The Chairman will so inform the member verbally and in writing.

If extenuating circumstances are presented to the Chairman, the matter will be brought before the Council if the member misses a third consecutive meeting. The Council can override removal by a majority vote.

## Section 5. Finance

### A. - General Fund

The general contributions, pledges, dues, and other general income of Ss. Peter & Paul shall be deposited in a legally recognized banking institution and shall constitute the General Fund.

### B. Special Funds

The Parish Council may create other funds titled under specific or separate accounts for the purposes of receiving and accumulating pledges, gifts, and inheritances which may be designated for the fulfillment of any specific purpose or purposes not inconsistent with this Constitution.

### C. Investing

The Parish Council prudently may invest and reinvest funds which have been accumulated under paragraphs A and B of this section 5 in a manner consistent with the rules relating to trustees.

## ARTICLE VII

### Meetings of Voting Membership

#### Section 1.

9/2/83  
7/10/79

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Voting Membership of Ss. Peter & Paul to be held on the 4th Sunday of September or the 1st or 2nd Sunday of October in each year. The Priest shall be the presiding

officer at the Annual Meeting of the Voting Members: M.p of Ss. Peter & Paul as well as at all special meetings of the voting Membership.

- B. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Parish Council to send out notices of the Annual Meeting by regular mail to all Voting Members of Ss. Peter & Paul, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting. A copy of the agenda and the names of nominees for election to the Parish Council will be included with the notice mailed.
- C. The Chairman of the Parish Council and the Presidents of every legal organization of the Parish shall prepare in writing and present a report of their organization, its finances, its work projects, etc., for the year past. The Treasurer of the Council shall present the Annual Financial Report of Ss. Peter & Paul to the voting membership.
- D. The voting membership may initiate and enact any legislation, rules, special business, etc., not inconsistent with this Constitution, and such legislation, rules, etc., shall be binding on the Parish Council and all organizations of the Parish.

## Section 2. Special Meetings

- A. The Parish Council shall have the power to call special meetings of the voting membership whenever it is deemed necessary for any purpose, on a motion made and duly passed by a majority of the Parish Council at any regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose. The Chairman of the Council shall set the time and place of such meeting. The Secretary shall send by regular mail the notice of such meeting and the purpose for which it is called at least fifteen (15) days prior to the convening of such meeting.
- B. No business may be transacted at any special meeting of the voting membership other than that for which the meeting was called.

## Section 3. Quorum

7/10/79 Seventy-five (75) voting members or 25% of the voting  
6/12/88 membership, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at all general meetings, except that 100 voting members or 40% of the voting membership, whichever is less, shall be required for a quorum to decide questions of constitutional amendments and of acquisition or

disposition of assets an `any amount which: equals : , amours  
of the most recently 'adopted annual budget:'

## ARTICLE VIII.

### Subsidiary Organizations

#### Section 1.

No subsidiary body within Ss. Peter & Paul shall have either a legal or Canonical existence unless such subsidiary hooky shall have filed a copy of its Charter or Constitution or, By-Laws with the Pastor and the Parish Council and-received their approval.

#### Section 2

Such activities as solicitations of monies, social affairs contracts with outside organizations or persons, and acceptance of outside invitations that the aforesaid groups may wish to engage in, shall be done only with the prior knowledge and approval of the Pastor and Parish Council.

#### Section 3.

The accumulated funds of any of the aforesaid groups are to be placed at the disposal of the Parish Council at any time when said Council shall deem it necessary to have such money for the welfare of Ss. Peter & Paul.

#### Section 4.

If for any reason now or in the future any one of the aforesaid groups shall be dissolved, all assets shall forthwith be transferred to Ss. Peter & Paul.

## ARTICLE IX

### The Property of. Ss. Peter & Paul

#### Section 1.

Title to all properties shall be held in the name of Ss. Peter & Paul, as specified in Article II of this Constitution. All titles, deeds and other documents relating to the property shall be kept in the custody of the Parish Council and placed in a safety deposit box.

Section 2.

The Parish Council shall have no right to mortgage lease, transfer, sell or purchase any real property on behalf of Ss. Peter & Paul, unless it has been authorized to do so by a General Meeting of the Parish called for that purpose. A general or special meeting convened for such purpose shall be held on call of the Parish Council issued to the members of Ss. Peter & Paul in writing and such call must contain a specific notice setting forth the purpose of the meeting. No Ss. Peter & Paul property shall be mortgaged, leased, or transferred, sold or purchased, except by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of Ss. Peter & Paul attending such meeting and by approval of the Metropolitan Archbishop.

Section 3.

In the event of the dissolution of Ss. Peter & Paul, all funds, properties, equipment and endowments shall revert at once and forthwith to the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding, the provisions of this Section cannot be amended, altered, changed or modified.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

This Constitution and any By-Laws adopted, except as otherwise herein provided, may be amended, altered, changed or modified at a general or special meeting of Ss. Peter & Paul called for such specific purpose in writing. No amendments shall be binding or effective, except by vote of two-thirds of the members of Ss. Peter & Paul attending such meeting and until such amendment has been approved by the Metropolitan Archbishop. No amendment shall be binding unless it is consistent with the provisions of the Constitution of the Archdiocese.

ARTICLE XI

Upon adoption and following the approval by the Metropolitan Archbishop, this Constitution shall be kept in the archives of the Parish Council and a copy thereof and any amendments thereto shall be filed in the office of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

## BY-LAWS OF SS PETER AND PAUL PARISH

### Membership

1. Voting Membership: The voting membership shall consist of all persons as defined in Article III, Section 1 of the Constitution as adopted by Ss. Peter & Paul who subscribe to the temporal maintenance by making an annual pledge.

To guarantee an adequate cash flow, contributions toward the pledge shall be logged and recorded on a quarterly basis. In order to maintain one's voting privilege, members must have paid his or her previous year's pledge in full; must have paid his or her archdiocese assessment for the current calendar year; and must be up to date with his or her current-year pledge payments as of the quarter preceding the date of any vote, or meeting where a vote may take place.

Any person, 18 years and over, accepted in the membership of the Holy Orthodox Church according to its teachings and who accept, profess and practice its faith and discipline, can become a voting member by his or her declaration to do so, as previously prescribed.

2. Elections: Members of the Parish Council shall be elected by a secret ballot at the Annual General Meeting. All elected vacancies on the Council will be filled by the majority vote system.
3. Installation: The newly elected members and the newly appointed members of the Parish Council shall be installed at the Sunday church services on the first Sunday in January.

At the next regular meeting of the Parish Council following the election of new member the officers of the new Council will be elected in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

The officers to be elected are:

Chairman  
Vice Chairman  
Secretary  
Treasurer

The officers of the Parish Council may succeed themselves in the same office only once.

4. General Meetings: Parish Council meeting shall be open to the parish, however, only voting members of the Parish Council shall be permitted to vote at such meetings.

5. Budget: The Parish Council shall be responsible for the preparation of an annual budget to be presented at the Annual Meeting for the voting membership's approval.  
  
The budget should be prepared and sent to each voting member at the same time as the notices announcing the Annual Meeting.
6. Special Funds: A fund of \$2,500 annually shall be established for the use by the Parish Pastor for acts of mercy which shall be held in a confidential manner. This fund is held accountable to the Parish Council. The Parish Council may adjust this figure by a three-quarter vote of the Parish Council. The amount may not be amended more than once per calendar year.
7. The financial statement of the Parish will be printed quarterly in the newsletter.
8. All organizations can maintain an operating fund of no more than \$3,000. If during the course of the year an organization requires additional funds, they should petition the Parish Council. The Parish Council may adjust this figure by a three-quarter vote of the Parish Council. The amount may not be amended more than once per calendar year.
9. The Ss. Peter & Paul Constitution and By-Laws shall be made available to the Parish on the Ss. Peter & Paul website. A paper copy will be provided upon request.

As amended in 2012.