

## **Appendix 4**

### **Background History of the Development and Amending of the Good Shepherd Parish Council Charter**

It is the intent of this appendix to provide a description of the development of the Good Shepherd Parish Council Charter.

#### **1. 1993-1995: Preamble to the Good Shepherd Parish Council Constitution**

##### Rationale for Amending Charter of Parish Council

The constitution of the Parish Council of Good Shepherd Church was ratified in 1987. Since that time 7 years ago the Parish has experienced dramatic growth; we have also undertaken a commitment to parish spiritual renewal beginning with the initiation of the “Christ Renews His Parish” process in 1988. This in turn has inspired a renewed interest in defining a spiritual vision and pastoral direction for our parish community.

The Parish Council first began working on the spiritual vision in 1990 and has been dedicated to its definitions since that time. In the summer and fall of 1992 the entire parish was invited to participate in a series of retreats to begin clarifying the pastoral direction. Stated succinctly, this pastoral direction calls for the parish to be transformed into a “community of small communities, centered in the Eucharist, and dedicated to involving all parishioners in ministry”. This is no more than the realization of the decrees of the 2nd Vatican Council and the commission of Jesus to the early church.

A further outgrowth of these parish vision retreats was the mandate to transform the leadership groups of the parish (especially the Parish Council) into pastoral communities. This process began with the discernment and commissioning of a “Coordinating Community”.

The Coordinating Community is comprised of a small group of parishioners along with the pastor. In the early part of 1993, the Coordinating Community began meeting regularly as a small Christian community. Soon after the Parish Council unanimously agreed to adopt a pastoral model, incorporating the elements of a small Christian community into its regular meetings and adopting a “shared wisdom” model of decision-making and spiritual discernment. By the end of 1993 the Pastoral Staff also began meeting regularly in community.

These changes, while largely consistent with the current charter of the Parish Council, require a revision of the charter. The current constitution (charter) has a pastoral intent but relies more on a business model of membership, meeting procedures and decision-making processes which are not conducive to building Christian community.

The proposed changes seek to maintain the pastoral tone of the current constitution along with the general structure of the parish's organization, while at the same time offering a direction more in keeping with the spiritual vision, and pastoral direction of the parish community. Specifically, the three areas of membership selection, meeting procedures, and decision-making processes need to be revised, along with parts of the introduction.

Note: The Parish Council made changes to the Council Constitution, not the least of which was to change its name from Parish Council to Pastoral Council. These changes were adopted in final form in 1995.

## **2. 1999-2000 - Revision of the Good Shepherd Pastoral Council Charter**

As Good Shepherd Parish approached the new millennium, it became increasingly clear that there was a need to review the Pastoral Council Constitution and revise the Constitution so that it might reflect the manner in which the Council was conducting its activities. Organized along the model of the parish as a series of ministry commissions, the 1993 - 1995 Constitution presented the major function of the Pastoral Council as coordinator of these ministries and ministry commissions. However, because of the manner in which these ministries were operating, their ministry authorization, and other features, this coordinating function for the Pastoral Council was difficult at best for the Council to fulfill. This was true not just for Good Shepherd, but for Parish Councils across the United States that had instituted a similar model for parish organization. Parish Councils appeared to be shifting their role from parish coordination to pastoral planning. In this emerging model, the pastoral Council, as the pastoral planning body for the parish, works closely with the Pastor to accomplish the Parish vision. The Council is subordinate to the Pastor who has ultimate authority in the parish. While the Good Shepherd Council was increasingly led to see its role as the pastoral planning body for the parish, this was not well reflected in the Parish Constitution. It was clear that the 1995 Constitution needed to be revised.

As part of its long-range vision and parish direction, the Good Shepherd Parish embarked upon a long-term commitment to organize itself as a community comprised of small Christian communities. This pastoral direction calls for the parish to be transformed into a "community of small communities, centered in the Eucharist, and dedicated to involving all parishioners in ministry". These parish-wide small Christian community activities are led and coordinated by the Coordinating Community, appointed by the Pastor of Good Shepherd. Any revision of the 1995 Constitution needed to continue to support and promote this vision, and perhaps, improve upon or more clearly articulate how that vision was to be put into place at Good Shepherd.

In 1999, the Pastor of Good Shepherd appointed a Task Force to examine the Pastoral Constitution and develop recommendations for revision of the Good

Shepherd Pastoral Council Constitution. The 1999-2000 Charter Revision Task Force Members included: Fr. Michael Foley, Pat Beckett, Maggie Dellenbach, Deacon Marcus Hepburn, Sue Pugh and Tim Warfel.

The recommendations from the Task Force were forwarded to the Good Shepherd Pastoral Council in December 2000 and adopted in March, 2001.

### **3. 2006 - Review and revision of Pastoral Council Charter following the Sharing the Vision process**

In February and March, 2006, the Pastoral Council coordinated the Sharing the Vision process which included a survey of the parish and two Parish Assembly Days. The process was initiated by the diocese. As a result of the Sharing the Vision process, new terminology and processes for Pastoral Planning were used. In 2006, Pastoral Council adopted the goals set by parishioners who attended the Sharing the Vision Parish Assembly Days.

In September, 2006, The Pastoral Council decided that it was time to review the Pastoral Council Charter to incorporate the terminology used in the Sharing the Vision process, as well as provide a better description of the way the Council was actually operating. A Task Force was appointed by the Pastoral Council Coordinator and included Pastoral Council members, Dee Lopez, Charlie Bohan and Debbie Calabro, former Pastoral Council Coordinator, Ed Hill, Deacon Marcus Hepburn and Pat Beckett, Pastoral Associate. Review of the Charter included a review of the Parish Organization. Since the Commission structure was not operating as described, parish ministries were reorganized by the Task Force into new categories that were meant to be more easily understood by parishioners and more reflective of the current operating structure. The Charter was simplified so that redundant information was removed and placed either in the body of the Charter or in an Appendix.

The Charter was forwarded to Pastoral Council for review in November, 2006 and approved in December, 2006.