CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Parish Pastoral Council of

St. Columba Church

Diocese of Harrisburg

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

MISSION STATEMENT

The Parish Pastoral Council of St. Columba Church is a ministry of leadership and service to the entire faith community. Those who serve on Council answer a call to give unselfishly of their time and talents. This service should be devoted to stewardship and evangelization in our Christian community.

The Parish Pastoral Council shall abide by the Spirit of Christ as revealed to all in the Gospels, and follow the teachings of the Church, as put forth in the Second Vatican Council, and in the pastoral instructions of our Bishop.

Members resolve to strive earnestly for their own spiritual good, and that of the people of God. They serve to prayerfully discern the will of God and to direct their actions towards its fulfillment in the parish.

This document shall serve as a guide towards the organization and direction of the Parish Pastoral Council.

PREAMBLE

In union with the Pastor, the Parish Pastoral Council is the primary consultative body, which shares responsibility for the life and welfare of the parish.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

ORGANIZATION

Section 1 -Name

The name of this organization shall be known as the Parish Pastoral Council of St. Columba Church, hereinafter called the Council.

Section 2 - Establishment

This Council is established according to the guidelines of the Diocese of Harrisburg and will function in accordance with and pursuant to this Constitution and its by-laws.

ARTICLE 2

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and its appendices and by-laws may be amended at any regular meeting, or at any special meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds vote of the entire Council, provided that: (1) the proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the members at a regular or special meeting held not less than two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote is to be taken; (2) notice that the amendment is to be voted upon is contained in the meeting agenda or the minutes of a prior meeting.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1- Qualification for Lay Membership

Any member of the parish who is a practicing Catholic as adjudged by the Pastor and eighteen (18) years of age or older as of the date of election is qualified for election or appointment to the Council.

- Be a member of the parish (i.e., live within the parish boundaries or be registered in the parish for one year minimum).
- Possess a willingness to grow in an understanding of Church by taking advantage of opportunities for continuing education in Church doctrine and documents.
- Can work with others in a spirit of openness and trust.
- Understand that membership in Parish Pastoral Council is one of service to the People of God.
- Agree to uphold the teachings of the Church and the norms established by the diocese for Parish Pastoral Council.

Section 2- Elected Members

There will be twelve (12) voting members of the Council elected at large by the entire parish; one-third of whom shall be nominated and elected for a period of three years, one-third for a period of two years, and one-third for a period of one year. Thereafter, Council members will be elected to three (3) year terms. (Attachment C)

Section 3- Ex-officio and Appointed Members

The Pastor and Associate Clergy assigned to the Parish shall be ex-officio non-voting members of the Council. This member will serve a one-year term and can be re-appointed to additional terms. Every year after the Council election, the Pastor may nominate and appoint up to three (3) voting members to serve on the Council for a one (1) year term. This nomination and appointment shall be effective simultaneously with the seating of the newly elected members.

Section 4- Vacancies on Council

Whenever a vacancy occurs among the elected members of the Council, the Council shall designate the person who, in the last election, received the greatest number of votes after those elected, to fill the vacancy. In the event that a candidate declines, the remaining candidates in descending order of votes received will be offered the opportunity to fill the vacancy. If no one is available through this process, the Council by majority vote may appoint a replacement. At the next regularly scheduled election, the Parish shall vote to fill the unexpired term of the vacancy. Vacancies among appointed members will be filled immediately for the unexpired term by the Pastor pursuant to the previous section.

Section 5 - Resignation

Any member of the Council may resign by filing a written resignation with the Council Chairperson.

ARTICLE 2

NOMINATION ELECTION AND SEATING OF MEMBERS

Section 1 - Nomination and Election Committee

They will appoint at the regularly scheduled March meeting a Nomination and Election Committee of three (3) parishioners, at least one of whom is a Council member not standing for election. The Committee's responsibilities are:

1. To inform the parishioners of the various duties and responsibilities of a Council member prior to any commitment of the candidates to have his or her name placed on the ballot.
2. To secure the commitment and qualifications of those people who desire to be elected to the Council.
3. To provide applications to perspective candidates which include:
    a. Name
    b. Date of application
    c. Short paragraph space for the candidate to be used on the ballot describing themselves, family, and reason for seeking the position.
    d. Distribution of the application
    e. Date received completed application (Attachment A)
4. To present the nominees and their qualifications during the month of April.
5. To conduct the election by secret ballot and securing the collected ballots until counting can occur.
6. To count ballots and publish the results of the election.
7. Maintain a list of all ballots received by each candidate to be used as indicated in Article 1 Section 4.

Section 2 -Timing of Election

- Elections will be held on the second and third Sundays of May each year at all Masses. Ballots will be inserted in the Bulletin the first and second Sundays of May. Parishioners may fill out the Ballots at home and return them to the church on the election days. Baskets and/or Collection Baskets will be available and labeled.

Section 3- Seating

Newly elected members will be installed at the regularly scheduled June meeting and take office with the first item of business at the regularly scheduled September meeting or at any special meeting called after July 1 of the year of their election.

Section 4 - Voter Eligibility

1. Any registered member of the parish who eighteen (18) years or older is eligible to vote in a Council election.
2. No write-in votes will be accepted.

Section 5 - Term of Office

Except as provided by Article 1, Section 3 and 4, elected members shall serve for a period of three (3) years. No member may hold an elected position on the Council for more than two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms. Appointed members may serve on Council using the same criteria as the elected members.

ARTICLE 3

OFFICERS

Section 1- Election

At the regularly scheduled June meeting or at any special meeting called after July 1, the Council will elect its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson who will begin serving their positions/terms at the regularly scheduled September meeting. At the same meeting the Chairperson will nominate and appoint, with the concurrence of a majority of the Council in attendance, a secretary.

Section 2 – Terms

Officers, both elected and appointed, serve for one (1) year and may be elected or appointed to serve for up to three years in the same office. No officer may serve a fourth consecutive year in the same office.

Section 3 - Duties

The officers will have the duties customarily associated with the office.

President:	The Pastor is the President of the Council, an officer and a fully participating member.
Chairperson:	The Chairperson shall facilitate the Council meetings and be responsible for all appointments to special Committees as established by the Council.
Vice-Chairperson:	The Vice-Chairperson shall have the particular responsibility for coordinating the work of these special committees and shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the latter's absence.
Secretary:	The Secretary will see that appropriate minutes are taken of all Council meetings; copies of these minutes are distributed to all members of the Council and that all Council correspondence and publicity is carried out.

ARTICLE 4

MEETINGS

Section 1- Time

Council meetings will be held at 6:00 P.M. on the Thursday before the first Friday of each month, except for the months of July and August.

Section 2 - Attendance

The Council President, Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson shall contact any member absent from two (2) consecutive meetings to discuss the reason for those absences and to encourage attendance and participation in the business of the Council. Should the member be absent from one additional consecutive meeting (for a total of 3 consecutive missed meetings), any member present at the third consecutive missed meeting can offer a motion to remove the missing member from Council. Upon a second and a majority vote of those members present, the absent member will be removed from Council membership. Upon such removal, a replacement will be chosen pursuant to the provisions set forth in Article 1, Section 4 of these By-Laws.

Section 3- Quorum and Conduct

Attendance of half (rounded off to the next highest number if necessary) plus one of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. Parliamentary procedure following Roberts' Rules of Order shall be used in the conduct of meetings, wherever applicable. Council meetings will open and close with prayer.

Section 4 - Open Meetings

All members of the parish will be encouraged to attend Council meetings. Their views and comments will be heard at a time deemed appropriate by the Council Chairperson.

Section 5 - Decision Making

The Council reaches its conclusions by prayerful discernment and consensus decision making, while respecting the canonical authority of the Pastor.

Section 6 - Parishioners & Guests

Parishioners & Guests are invited to all meetings and will have the opportunity to address the Council. Time will be provided at the end of the meeting. If specific questions are needed, they need to be submitted two (2) weeks prior to the meeting, to the office.

Section 7 – Agenda

The agenda should be available to all Council members one (1) week prior to the meeting via email. Copies should be available for members, parishioners, and guests. The agenda format is provided in Attachment B.

ARTICLE 5

PARISH AFFAIRS BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Section 1 - Committees or Boards Established by the Council

The Council may establish standing and special committees or boards to carry out the tasks and programs necessary for the good of the parish. When necessary, the duties of the Standing Committees will be set forth in an appendix hereto.

Section 2 - Intra-parish Organizations Not Established by Council

To facilitate communication between intra-parish organizations and Council, the Council will invite a representative from each parish group or ministry to share their activities and needs with Council at a chosen meeting of convenience to each group.

Revised 10/2026

ONE WHO SERVES
Diocese of Harrisburg
Norms and Guidelines for Parish Pastoral Councils

- The One Who Serves presents areas of mission, including a description of each mission's field of activity, how they are constituted and which committees, organizations and boards are under the mission. Pgs. 25-36
    - Suggestion to establish a document to track the current and future Missions to ensure each area of Mission is covered.
    - Suggestion to evaluate future Missions by these criteria.
    - Suggestion to consider activities offered in the Parish that do not appear to match the criteria of a Mission be considered as a "club" or similar.

Evangelization	Education	Pastoral Ministry
Angels for life Knights of Columbus Men's Group- That Man Is You Women's group- SHE Perpetual Adoration Young Adult Group Youth Group ReligiousArt Opportunity	Adult Formation Catholic Campus Ministry CYE RCIA Vacation Bible School	Finance Committee Flower Ministry Funeral Luncheons Parish Mailing Team Parish Office Website and Bulletin Parish Fundraising Committee
Liturgy	**Social Concerns and Outreach**	**Ecumenism and Interfaith Concerns**
Altar Society Altar Servers Children's Liturgists Cantors and Musicians Liturgy Committee Extraordinary Ministers Greeters Lectors Ushers Bell Choir	Angel Tree Project Biddy Basketball Food Cupboard Parish Picnic Committee Volleyball Warmth From the Heart Winterfest	Boy Scouts Cub Scouts Marriage Mentor Program

Ballot Counting Form (Attachment A)

Weekend Dates of the Election including year: _____

Number of open seats needed to Parish Council: _____

Candidate's Name	Number of Votes	Rank by Number of Votes

Candidates recommended open seats:

Candidate's Name	Rank

Candidates ranking for replacements:

Candidate's Name	Rank

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____

Agenda Format (Attachment B)

St. Columba Church

342 Iron Street
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-1824
Phone: 570-784-0801

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL AGENDA

Date: XX-XX-XXXX

Opening Prayer –

Parishioner's & Guests – Agenda Items only

Pastor's Report –

Financial Report –

Old Business –

New Business –

Parishioner's & Guests – Any Subject (with request documentation - Attachment D)

Closing Prayer –

Submitted by: _____

Elected Council Members Log (Attachment C)

Date of Election	Number of Terms	Candidate Name	Step-down Date	Elected or Appointed

Parishioner / Guest Request to Address Pastoral Council (Attachment D)

Name: _____

Question(s) for Pastoral Council: _____

_____
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Date Submitted: _____