

**BYLAWS OF
SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS BULGARIAN ORTHODOX MISSION
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA
ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON**

PREAMBLE

The purpose of the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Orthodox Mission is to preach, cultivate, and advance the teachings of Christianity as expressed through the Orthodox Church, and provide for the general welfare of all people, primarily those of Bulgarian and other ethnic origins, who reside in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Sts. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Orthodox Mission shall live and act according to the teachings of the Holy Scripture of our Lord Jesus Christ and holy canons and traditions of the Orthodox Church, and the religious tenets, doctrines, observances, and culture associated with that faith.

As the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Orthodox Mission community, it is affiliated and canonically recognized as part of the Archdiocese of Washington, which is under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA).

The members of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Orthodox Mission hereby declare and enact that the affairs of the Mission shall be regulated by the following Bylaws unless superseded by the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America.

**ARTICLE I
NAME AND LANGUAGE**

1. The name of the religious body organized hereunder is, and shall be Saints Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Orthodox Mission, a mission community of the Orthodox Church in America, Archdiocese of Washington.
2. The official languages of this Mission shall be Bulgarian and English.

**ARTICLE II
PURPOSE OF THE PARISH**

The purposes of this Parish shall be:

1. To provide, maintain, and promote religious life in accordance with the doctrines, teachings, and worship of the Orthodox Christian Faith;
2. To provide and maintain a place of worship and facilitate social, physical, civic, and educational events, as well as moral and religious instruction for its members and their families and to any other Orthodox Christians;

3. To provide assistance and render charitable aid to the needy; and
4. To encourage auxiliary organizations within the Parish, which will promote and advance the objectives of the Parish, as well as their own welfare, and which will assist the Parish Priest and the Parish Council in meeting their responsibilities.

ARTICLE III PARISH ADMINISTRATION

1. The Parish Priest (Rector) as head of the Parish, by virtue of the ecclesiastical authority vested in him, shall guide and oversee the total Parish program, and is ultimately responsible with the Parish Council to the Bishop for the life and activity of the Parish.
2. The Parish shall be administered by the Parish Priest and the Parish Council cooperatively.
3. If a problem should arise between a Parish Priest and the Parish Council, the matter shall not be brought before the Parish at a Parish Meeting. The Parish Priest or the Parish Council shall have the right to refer the matter to the District Dean according to the current "Deanery Guideline." However, in matters of appeal the decision of the Diocesan Bishop shall be deemed final.
4. Non-clergy employees will be appointed by the Parish Council and serve at the pleasure of the Council, consistent with appropriate labor laws. Terms of employment, including but not limited to remuneration, benefits, and expected duties, will be communicated to such employee in writing annually by the Parish Council.

ARTICLE IV THE PARISH PRIEST

1. Assignment
The Parish Priest/Rector is assigned, transferred or removed by the Diocesan Bishop by virtue of the Authority of his office and in accordance with the Canons, ecclesiastical procedure and the needs of the Parish and the Diocese. The Parish Priest can not be removed without the specific permission of the Diocesan Bishop. The Parish shall be responsible for the support and welfare of its Parish Priest until such time as he is removed from his position by the Diocesan Bishop.
2. Vacancy
Upon the death, disability, retirement, or transfer of the Parish Priest, the vacancy may be filled on a temporary basis by appointment by the Diocesan Bishop until the office is filled on a permanent basis..

3. Responsibility

The Parish Priest of the Parish shall:

- a. Serve the liturgical and sacramental needs according to the Typikon of the Orthodox Church in America;
- b. Instruct current and prospective members of the Parish in the tenets of the Orthodox Faith and piety;
- c. Implement and be responsible for the religious education of the Parish and stimulation of church growth;
- d. Strive to raise the level of spirituality and morality of the members of the Parish;
- e. Preside at all Parish Meetings;
- f. Keep the Parish records of baptisms, chrismations, receptions into the faith, marriages and burials; issue copies of the same, and report the statistics annually to the Diocesan Bishop;
- g. Report as may be required by law to civil authority marriages performed;
- h. Be the intermediary between the Parish and the Dean and the Diocesan Bishop;
- i. Keep the church seal;
- j. Be responsible for the well-being of the Parish;
- k. Implement the decisions of the All-American Councils, of the Diocesan Assemblies, of the Diocesan Bishop, of the District Dean, of the Annual and Special Meetings of the Parish, and of the Parish Council;
- l. Check and sign the Minutes of the Annual and Special Meetings of the Parish and of the Parish Council Meetings.
- m. Be responsible for the supervision of additional clergy who are appointed by the Diocesan Bishop; and
- n. Be an ex officio member of all Committees of the Parish Council.

4. Compensation

To be free from material preoccupation and wholly committed to his sacred ministry, the Parish Priest must be compensated by the Parish. The amount and terms of such compensation shall be determined prior to the time of his assignment and shall conform to the then current Orthodox Church in America Guidelines concerning compensation and benefits for the clergy. The amount of compensation shall be reviewed at least once annually by the Parish Council for submission to the Parish Annual Meeting.

5. Additional Clergy

Additional clergy, as appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, shall assist the Parish Priest.

The provisions of Article IV, Item 1 shall be applicable to them. In addition to the general pastoral duties, such additional clergy shall be responsible for those specific duties assigned by the Parish Priest.

**ARTICLE V
PARISH MEMBERSHIP**

1. Qualifications for membership:
 - a. An individual is qualified for membership if he or she is eighteen (18) years of age or over, who has been baptized in the Orthodox Church;
 - b. Candidates for new membership should submit a written application to the Parish Priest with a copy to the Parish Council.

2. The voting membership of this Parish shall consist of “members in good standing.”

3. A member is considered in good standing when observing the duties, rights, and privileges specified below:
 - a. A member is morally bound before God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Christian conscience to support the Mission, to attend services, to receive Holy Communion, to lead a life in conformity with the Orthodox precepts, and to encourage his family to do likewise; a member must partake of the Mysteries of Holy Confession and Communion at the Parish, at least annually, during Great Lent or at the direction of the Parish Priest, although frequent reception of the Holy Mysteries is encouraged, under the guidance of the Parish Priest, as the norm of Orthodox Christian life. The person must fulfill the financial commitments as established and administered by the Parish Council. These include those needed for the well-being of the Parish, the Diocese and the Mission, and they must be fulfilled by the end of the Parish’s calendar year.
 - b. He or she holds and abides by the Bylaws of this Parish and fulfills any spiritual and financial obligations set forth by the Parish Council or the Diocese.
 - c. It shall be the duty of each voting member to assist in all Parish undertakings, to attend Parish membership meetings, and to accept responsibility for the management of Parish affairs by means of elective or appointive office.

4. Though a communicating member of the Orthodox Church at large, an Orthodox Christian may be a voting member of only one Parish.

ARTICLE VI REVENUE

1. Unless exempted, each person or family, upon acquiring membership in the Parish, shall accept the Parish and its requirements of regular financial support for the welfare of the Mission, the material growth of the Parish, and the fulfillment of its goals and purposes.
2. The financial support shall be derived from regular membership dues, OCA and Archdiocesan assessments, programs, projects, candle offerings, voluntary contributions, grants, legacies, and such other philanthropic deeds.
3. The dues and fees shall be determined by the Parish Council. Assessments shall be determined by the OCA and the Archdiocese.
4. Members in good standing have the right to vote at any Parish meeting except the Parish Council meetings and may be nominated for any office of the Mission.
5. Single members shall pay half of the family dues. Members over 70 years of age and members aged 18 to 25 years, who are students, shall pay half the single member dues.

ARTICLE VII PARISH COUNCIL

1. The Parish Council shall consist of seven members: the President, Vice- President, Treasurer, Secretary, three members, and the Parish Priest. The members shall be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting of the Parish for a term of one year and shall remain in office until the election, confirmation, and installation of their respective successors.
2. The Parish Council shall meet at least once a month at a scheduled time. The presence of four members, in addition to the Parish Priest, shall constitute a quorum for conducting business. All Council meetings shall be open to members of the Parish. Only Parish Council members may vote at a Council meeting.
3. The Parish Priest is the Chairman and presiding officer at all Parish meetings unless he designates a substitute Chairman.. At the Annual Membership Meeting, he shall present a report of the activities of the congregation during the previous year.
4. The Parish Priest or the President may call special meetings of the Council, provided that all members have been notified either verbally or in writing three days before the meeting.
5. The Vice-President shall assist the President in his duties, and shall act in the place of the President during the absence or disability of the President.

6. The Secretary shall maintain the non-financial records of the Parish and minutes of Council meetings and be charged with the conduct of Parish correspondence, in accordance with the instructions of the Parish Council.
7. The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the Parish and receive, deposit, and disburse Parish funds, in accordance with instructions of the Parish Council.
8. The Parish Council shall establish qualifications, duties, and responsibilities and shall select, appoint, or employ such necessary Parish officials as Choir Director and Church Custodian, who are required to maintain properly and adequately Parish life and to assist the Parish Priest. Such officials will be under the supervision of the Council through the President and the Parish Priest.

ARTICLE VIII PARISH MEETINGS

1. The Parish Meetings, presided over by the Parish Priest, or if so designated, the President, shall decide upon all non-religious matters.
2. The number of members required for a quorum of the Annual Membership Meeting shall be thirty percent (30%) of the members in “good standing” present at this meeting. No proxy votes will be accepted.
3. The Parish Council shall hold twelve Monthly, one Annual Membership Meeting, and any Special Meeting for the purpose of transacting the business of the Parish.
4. Notice of the Monthly Meeting, the Annual Membership Meeting, and any Special Parish Meeting shall be in writing to all voting members at least two weeks prior to such meeting, and they must be announced by the Parish Priest from the ambo at the Divine Liturgy on three (3) consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. If the meeting is held on a Sunday, that Sunday, with regard to announcements from the ambo, will be considered the third Sunday.
5. Special Parish membership meetings may be called by the Parish Council or by petition to the Council of 30% of the voting Parish “members in good standing.” Such a meeting must be held within 30 days of the date of petition. Announcement of this event will be made in writing to all voting members at least one week in advance of said meeting and at least once during the church service by the Parish Priest.
6. Only business directly related to the purpose of the special meeting shall be transacted by the special meeting of the Parish.
7. The Parish Council shall submit a budget to the annual membership meeting for its approval.

ARTICLE IX

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

1. Election of the seven members of the Parish Council shall take place at the Annual Membership Meeting of the Parish from among members in good standing and for a term ending upon the installation of the next Parish Council.
2. The terms of office for the members of the Parish Council shall begin on the date of their installation.
3. The Parish Council shall elect their officers at the first Parish Council Meeting following their installation.
4. The Parish Council officers shall be; President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary.
5. The members of the Parish Council shall not be eligible for election to more than two successive full terms. Exception will be made if a position(s) cannot be filled, then the present member(s) may be nominated to serve another term.
6. If the office of President should become vacant before the end of the term, the Vice-President shall succeed as President until a successor is elected at a specially scheduled Parish membership meeting. The new President shall then complete the original term of office.
7. Vacancies in the rank of officers of the Parish Council shall be filled on an interim basis by nomination of the President and confirmation by a majority vote of the Parish Council until successors are elected at a special Parish membership meeting. The new officers of the Parish Council shall then complete the original term of office.
8. Vacancies in the rank of members of the Parish Council shall be filled until the end of the term by the Alternate Parish Council member elected at the Annual Membership Meeting.
9. Subject to the approval of the Parish Council and the Parish Priest, the President shall appoint a nominating committee at least 30 days prior to the Annual Membership Meeting. This committee shall seek nominees for members of the Parish Council. It shall present its report to the Annual Membership Meeting. Only "members in good standing" may qualify for election.
10. Nominees for Parish Council will be presented by the Nominating Committee at the Annual Membership Meeting. These nominees need not be present, but their intention to be nominated must be known in writing. Other nominations can be presented at the Annual Membership Meeting. They must be seconded, and declinations shall be made at the time of nomination. Once the nominations are closed, a majority of votes cast shall be required to elect the Parish Council

members. The top seven vote-getters will be the Parish Council nominees and the eighth vote-getter will be the Alternate Parish Council Member. In case of a tie, a run-off shall be held between the two candidates receiving the most votes.

11. Each Parish member will vote by secret ballot. Once all ballots have been received, the seven nominees receiving the greatest number of votes shall be elected members of the Parish Council.
12. Parish Council members-elect shall be installed by the Parish Priest upon receipt of the Bishop's blessing to seat the members. Any member not receiving the Bishop's blessing may not be seated.

ARTICLE X AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS, CLUBS, AND COMMITTEES

1. Auxiliary organizations, clubs, and committees shall be formed by a majority vote of the Parish Council, and they shall be subject to the Bylaws of the Parish and authority of the Parish Council. The books of these entities shall be audited by the Parish auditors. At no time can the Council demand any monies from any one of these entities in order to offset any financial responsibility incurred by the Council in the operations of the Parish.
2. All auxiliary organizations, clubs, and committees shall submit to the Parish Council an annual statement of activities for the past year and their plan for the upcoming year. This report shall be submitted within 30 days of the end of the calendar year.

ARTICLE XI AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. Members in good standing shall, at the Annual Membership Meeting, elect the auditors. The Audit Committee shall consist of three members. The term of office shall be for two years with the members rotating so that no more than two members are to be elected in any year. No member of the Audit Committee shall hold any other office on the Parish Council, nor be a Treasurer or Secretary of any auxiliary organization, club or other committee.
2. The Audit Committee shall audit the Parish books, including those of the various auxiliary organizations, clubs, and committees, after they have been closed for the fiscal year, so that a report can be presented at the annual meeting. The Treasurer must turn over the books to the auditors no later than three weeks before the annual meeting. The auditors shall return said books to the Treasurer within 30 days of receipt.

ARTICLE XII PARISH PROPERTY

1. The Parish property consists of all the real or personal property devised, bequeathed, or donated to the Parish for general or specially designated uses and of all real or personal property purchased, leased, constructed, or otherwise acquired by the Parish.
2. The Parish property shall be acquired, administered, and disposed of for the general benefit of the Parish and its subordinate organizations. Contributions may be made for social, welfare, charitable, and other community causes as authorized by Parish membership meetings or the Parish Council.
3. The Parish shall be incorporated under the appropriate civil legal jurisdiction for the purpose of acquiring, holding, and administering the Parish property.
4. All actions taken at a Parish membership meeting for the purchase or disposal of Parish property shall require an affirmative vote by two-thirds of those present and voting.
5. In the event that the Parish is abolished or disbanded, the Parish Council and the Parish members have the right to dispose of the property in whatever manner is decided upon by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in deference to paragraph (6).
6. The dissolution of the Parish and all its assets shall be done according to the laws of state governing such actions and Article X, Section 9 of the Statutes of the Orthodox Church in America, which declares that:
 - a. The Parish or Parish corporation is the sole owner of all Parish property, assets, and funds. In administering them, however, the Parishioners and the officers elected by them must always remember the religious nature, purposes, and goals of the Parish and act as trustees of God's, not man's property. The Parish, as the whole Church, serves God and cares for God's work in the world, and all decisions concerning Parish property must be inspired by that care and by the spiritual needs of the Church.
 - b. If the Parish is abolished, its property is disposed of following the provisions of the Parish bylaws. If no such provision exists, the property is at the disposal of the Diocesan authority. Upon dissolution, all sacred and untouchable items: such as the Holy Antimension, the Tabernacle, and the Sacred Vessels, must be surrendered to the Diocesan Bishop. These sacred items, including also sacred utensils, winding sheets, chrism, and relics, will be surrendered immediately and without fee or charge.

**ARTICLE XIII
AMENDMENTS**

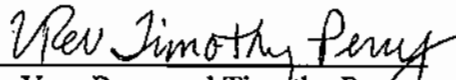
1. Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at any duly convened meeting of the Parish members by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and voting, provided the text of the proposed amendment has been given in writing to the Parishioners at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting at which the amendment is to be acted upon.

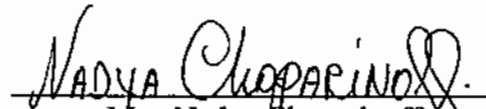
Note: "Robert's Rules of Order, (A Manual of Parliamentary Procedures)," by General Henry M. Robert with a Guide and Commentary by Rachel Vixman, Pyramid Books, New York, 1976, shall be the guide for all Parish Council and Parish meetings. Where Robert's Rules are in conflict with these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

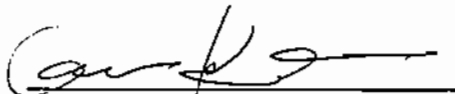
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, The Parish Council and Archdiocesan authority:

I. Parish signators:

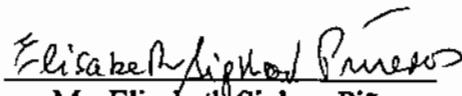
Dated: 3/18/10



Very Reverend Timothy Perry
Priest-in-Charge/Rector


Mrs. Nadya Choparinoff
President


Mr. George Kochev
Vice-President

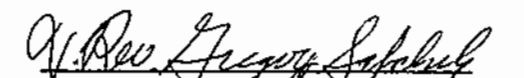

Mrs. Elena Murphy
Treasurer


Ms. Elisabeth Sipkov-Piñeros
Secretary


Mr. Larry Woods
Member

II. Archdiocesan signator:

Dated: 3/11/2010


Very Reverend Gregory Safchuk
Chancellor, Archdiocese of Washington