

Church of the Assumption, Bellingham, WA

Altar Society

Constitution & Responsibilities

Last Revised

7-1-2024

Constitution

Article 1 - Name

This organization shall be known as the ALTAR SOCIETY of the Church of the Assumption of Bellingham.

Article 2 – Purposes

Section 1. The societal purpose of the Society shall be:

- a. Promoting the spiritual welfare of the men and women, by assisting them to participate more intimately in the life of the Church and to grow in discipleship.
- b. Promoting the social welfare of the men and women, by joining them to a group of parishioners who will know them and care for them individually.
- c. Specifically, holding regular gatherings, either spiritual or social, for the edification of the men and women.

Section 2. The altar-focused purpose of the Society shall be supporting the liturgical mission of the parish through:

- a. Maintaining a dignified house of worship through regular cleaning of the parish church and liturgical items, and organization of the sacristies.
- b. Ensuring the dignified offering of the Mass by cleaning the linens and keeping the sacristy well-stocked with necessary items.

- c. Beautifying the parish church with decoration appropriate to the liturgical day or season.
- d. Promoting necessary capital improvements to the parish church and decoration.

Article 3 – Members

Any parishioner registered at the Church of the Assumption may request membership.

Members must contribute one or more hours of volunteer service each month to the purposes of this Society.

Article 4 – Officers

Section 1. Ex-Officio. The Pastor, either personally or through his delegate¹, shall be, ex-officio, an officer of this Society.

Section 2. Elective. The President and Vice-President shall be the elective officers of this Society.

Section 3. Appointive. The Chairmen of the Standing Committees shall be the appointive officers of this Society.

Article 5 – Standing Committees

Section 1. The Standing Committees shall be: The Sacristy Committee, the Art and Environment Committee, the Candle

¹ Every reference to the “Pastor” also implicitly includes his delegate.

Committee, the Cleaning Committee, and the Programming Committee.

Section 2. The Society shall establish such additional committees or abolish them as its welfare and progress demands.

Article 6 – Executive Board

The Ex-officio, Elective, and Appointive officers of the Society shall constitute the Executive Board.

Article 7 – Government

The Government of the Society shall be vested in the majority of its members present at anyone meeting, but all of its actions shall be subject to the approval of the Pastor.

The Executive Board shall prepare the matters brought before the members at the regular meeting.

Article 8 – Meetings

Section 1. The Executive Board shall meet at least every other month.

Section 2. The full membership shall meet at least twice each year.

Section 3. Each Standing committee will meet 6 times per year and as needed based on the Liturgical season.

Article 9 – Elections and Appointments

Section 1. Elections.

- a. The President and Vice-President shall be elected to a two-year term by the membership at the annual meeting.
- b. A majority of ballots cast shall decide an election.
- c. The tenure of office shall be two years, and no officer shall be elected for more than two successive terms.
- d. The officers elected shall take office on July 01 of each year.
- e. Candidates may self-nominate or be nominated by other members.
- f. In the event of the death or resignation of an officer, a successory shall be appointed by the Pastor.

Section 2. Appointments.

- a. The Chairmen of the Standing Committees shall be appointed by the President, subject to confirmation by the Pastor.
- b. The tenure of the Chairman of the Standing Committee shall be three years.

Article 10 – Amendment

Section 1. This Constitution can be amended by the Pastor, after taking an advisory vote of the membership.

Section 2. An amendment must be proposed at one meeting of the membership, but the advisory vote can only be taken after at least one month at a subsequent meeting of the membership.

Responsibilities

Article 1 – Duties of Officers

Section 1. The Pastor shall: work with the Society Officers to carry out the mission of the Society and shall communicate the liturgical needs of the parish to the Society. All the actions of the Society shall be subject to his approval.

Section 2. The President shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings of the Society and the Executive Board.
- b. Appoint the Chairmen of the Standing Committees.
- c. Plan the meetings and activities of the Society and hold the several officers responsible for the activities entrusted to them.
- d. Sign all official documents and papers of the Society.
- e. Perform such other duties as usually attached to the office of President.

Section 3. The Vice-President shall:

- a. Have all the powers and perform all the duties of the President in the absence of the latter.
- b. Carry out the duties normally reserved for a secretary, namely, keep the membership list, communicate with the membership, and produce minutes when appropriate.

- c. Carry out the duties normally reserved for a Treasurer, namely, forwarding collected funds to the parish office and making purchase requests from the parish office when necessary.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall:

- a. Supervise and promote the activities of the Society.
- b. Prepare the meetings of the Society.
- c. Work to strengthen participation in Standing Committees that are struggling.

Section 5. The Chairman of the Standing Committees shall:

- a. Recruit and train the members of their committees.
- b. Direct the work entrusted to the Committee and present a report of their activities to the Executive Board.
- c. Submit budget requests as needed.

Article 2 – Sacristy Committee

Section 1. The Sacristy Committee shall:

- a. Determine an appropriate system for the organization and cleaning of the church sacristies and prepare proper labels or documentation for this system.

- b. Regularly organize the sacristies according to this system.
- c. At least monthly check the quantities of sacristy supplies (excluding candles) and report any deficiencies to the parish staff for purchase.
- d. Organize the cleaning of the altar linens.
- e. Arrange for the cleaning of vestments, altar cloths, and tablecloths when necessary.

Section 2. The Sacristy Committee shall consist of a Chairman, at least three other members, and all sacristans (ex-officio).

Article 3 – Art and Environment Committee

Section 1. The Art and Environment Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for the decoration of the altar, the banners, the flowers, and any seasonal displays (artwork, nativity scenes, etc.).
- b. Change the decoration of the parish church when a change in season or an upcoming feast day requires it.
- c. Procure flowers for all the seasons throughout the liturgical year, especially at Christmas and Easter, for major events, and for funerals and weddings when requested.

Section 2. The Art and Environment Committee shall consist of a Chairman and at least three other members.

Article 4 – Cleaning Committee

Section 1. The Cleaning Committee shall:

- a. Clean out and reorganize the hymnal baskets and movable kneelers at least once per week.
- b. Clean out the statue's niches, tabernacle chapel, and other areas of the church of flowers and other devotional items which have already served their purpose.
- c. Arrange for the cleaning and refreshing of holy water fonts weekly.
- d. Organize the semi-annual deep cleaning of the parish church before Christmas and Easter, or quarterly if possible.
- e. Work to address any areas in need of special attention throughout the year (e.g. marked up hymnals, wax spots, paint chips, pew etchings, etc.).
- f. Regularly inspect the building and report to the parish staff areas in need of dusting, vacuuming, cleaning, etc. that may have been overlooked.
- g. Spot clean when appropriate or helpful.

Section 2. The Cleaning Committee shall consist of the Chairman and at least two other members.

Article 5 – Candle Committee

Section 1. The Candle Committee shall:

- a. Be responsible for maintaining and organizing the necessary supply of candles and reporting any deficiencies to the parish staff for purchase.
- b. Change out the devotional, pillar and altar candles weekly or as needed.
- c. Clean the candlesticks, candelabras, and followers of any wax or residue regularly.
- d. Polish the candlesticks quarterly.
- e. Arrange to have the tabernacle candle replaced as needed.
- f. The Pascal Candle and Advent candles are ordered annually as special orders from ex-officio. Seasonal, tapered and baptism candles ordered as needed throughout the year.

Section 2. The Candle Committee shall consist of the Chairman and at least two other members.

Article 6 – Grounds Committee

Section 1. The Grounds Committee shall:

- a. Maintain the garden and grounds around the church and parish office.

Section 2. The Grounds Committee shall consist of a Chairman and at least two other members.

Article 7 – Programming Committee

Section 1. The Programming Committee shall:

- a. Arrange at least one event each year for the full membership of the society, either spiritual or social, or one event each if possible.

Section 2. The Programming Committee shall consist of a Chairman and at least two other members.