**Parish Council Leadership Covenant**

*Roles, Responsibilities and Behaviors*

We, the Parish Council of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, adopt the following set of expectations and responsibilities in order to:

* Establish a sense of excellence in the parish
* Strengthen the leadership role of our parish council.

We pledge to do our personal and collective best to fulfill these duties.

*In collaboration and cooperation with and under the guidance of the Parish Rector, we will:*

**Implementation Suggestion:**

1. Discuss at a parish council meeting
2. Pare down the list to only include the most important, valuable items to your parish.
3. Adopt the list as your leadership covenant at first meeting of Parish Council
4. Identify 1-2 areas of particular emphasis for the coming year.
5. Review the areas of focus quarterly. “How are we doing?” How can we do better?
6. Review the entire document annually.
7. **Model Orthodox Christian Behavior** – Realizing that we are seen by other parishioners as stewards and parish leaders, we will…
	* Model good Christian behavior.
	* Come to church! Vespers, feast days and (virtually) every Sunday.
	* Maintain ourselves in good sacramental standing.
8. **See Ourselves Not As Owners But Stewards** – We will behave not as *owners* of this parish but as *stewards --* managing the resources, gifts and mission of the parish in service of our Master Jesus Christ. We see the church as the Body of Christ - not a business or even a non profit institution.
9. **Offer Generous Financial Support** – We will support the parish with a meaningful, generous, financial pledge. We will help parishioners to understand the fundamentals of good Christian stewardship and the responsibilities, financial and other, associated with parish membership.
10. **Attend Meetings and Be Prepared** – We will attend all parish council meetings and be prepared to contribute to meeting discussions and to act upon the decisions before us.
11. **Best Interests of the Church** - We will express our opinions and consider the opinions of others. We will cast our assent or disagreement for proposals based not on our personal desires but in support of the long term health and mission of the parish and Christ’s Church.
12. **Stimulate Growth and Change** -- We will stimulate and drive helpful, useful, effective change—aimed at lifting the parish to do Christ’s work, to live the Gospel, and to express the hope that is in us as an Orthodox Christian community.
13. **Express Vision and Priorities--** We will work to express a vision for the parish’s lived future as a Christian community. We will stimulate a dialogue, multiple perspectives and consensus on this vision. In the context of our overarching vision we will articulate a clear set of parish prioritiesthat will guide our actions.
14. **Strengthen Ministry –** We will stimulate, build, create and oversee ministries & essential programs that ring out the Good News and mirror parish priorities.
15. **Promote Peace** - We will work to build trust, not factionalism – among the priest, the parish council, and the parish. We will nurture a sense of love and community within the parish.
16. **Communication** - We will provide parishioners with timely information necessary to make informed decisions.
17. **Oversee Assets & Resources -** The financial and real assets and resources of the parish will be properly used. Reports and summaries will be consistent, transparent and coherent. We will ensure that the attractiveness and functionality of our facilities make a positive statement about our parish and how we see ourselves as a community of faith.
18. **Ensure Safety** – We will enact and implement policies that maintain a safe environment in the parish and its facilities.
19. **Avoid Conflict of Interest** – We will enact policies that avoid conflict of interest.
20. **Operate in the Context of the Larger Church** - Our parish is under the jurisdiction and authority of our Bishop and we receive our mandate and prerogative to exist from him. We will fulfill our responsibilities to other parishes, to our Diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. We will work to build up the Church and to implement decisions of larger Church Assemblies and Councils.

***The above is a starter list. You may add, delete or modify as best fits the parish.***

Adopted: Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parish Rector

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Parish Council Member

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Parish Council Member

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| *In collaboration and cooperation with and under the guidance of the Parish Rector…* |
| **Personally we will…** | **Collectively we will…** |
| 1. **Model Orthodox Christian Behavior** – Realizing that we are seen by other parishioners as stewards and parish leaders, we will…
	* Model good Christian behavior.
	* Maintain ourselves in good sacramental standing
	* Attend worship services regularly including feast days and vespers whenever possible.
2. **See Ourselves Not As Owners But Stewards** – We will behave not as *owners* of this parish but as *stewards --* managing the resources, gifts and mission of the parish in service of our Master Jesus Christ.
3. **Offer Generous Financial Support** – We will support the parish with a meaningful, generous, financial pledge. We will help parishioners to understand the fundamentals of good Christian stewardship and the responsibilities, financial and other, associated with parish membership.
4. **Attend Meetings and Be Prepared** – We will consistently attend parish council meetings and be prepared to contribute to meeting discussions and to act upon the decisions before us.
5. **Express Best Interests of Church** - We will express our opinions and consider the opinions of others. We will cast our assent or disagreement for proposals based not on our personal desires but in support of the long term health and mission of the parish and Christ’s Church.
 | 1. **Stimulate Growth and Change** -- We will stimulate and drive helpful, useful, effective change—aimed at lifting the parish to do Christ’s work, to live the Gospel, and to express the hope that is in us as an Orthodox Christian community.
2. **Express Vision and Priorities--** We will work to express the total mission of our parish in concrete terms and actions, dealing always with the question of what is expected of us as a Christian community in this place and in this time. In the context of our overarching vision we will articulate a clear set of parish prioritiesthat will guide our actions.
3. **Strengthen Ministry –** We will stimulate, build, create and oversee ministries & essential programs that ring out the Good News and mirror parish priorities.
4. **Promote Peace** - We will work to build trust, not factionalism – among the priest, the parish council, and the parish. We will nurture a sense of love and community within the parish.
5. **Dialogue** – To build parish consensus we will seek feedback, value multiple, diverse perspectives and develop an ability to dialogue about matters of importance.
6. **Oversee Assets & Resources -** The financial and real assets and resources of the parish will be properly used. Reports and summaries will be consistent, transparent and coherent. We will ensure that the attractiveness and functionality of our facilities make a positive statement about our parish and how we see ourselves as a community of faith.
7. **Ensure Safety** – We will enact and implement policies that maintain a safe environment in the parish and its facilities.
8. **Avoid Conflict of Interest** – We will enact policies that avoid conflict of interest.
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10. **Operate in the Context of the Larger Church** - Our parish is under the jurisdiction and authority of our Bishop and we receive our mandate and prerogative to exist from him. We will fulfill our responsibilities to other parishes, to our Diocese and the Orthodox Church in America. We will work to build up the Church and to implement decisions of larger Church Assemblies and Councils.
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