

**By-Laws  
of  
St. Mark's  
Orthodox Church**

**Orthodox Church in America  
Wrightstown, PA**

**Approved  
dd May 2017**

# BY-LAWS OF ST. MARK’S ORTHODOX CHURCH

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1 *IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AMEN*

2 BE IT KNOWN, that the By-Laws hereinafter set forth have been prepared and duly approved by the initial  
3 Parish Council of St. Mark's Orthodox Church, a Pennsylvania non-profit Corporation, in accordance with  
4 the provisions of Article VI of the Articles of Incorporation, for the orderly administration and peaceful life  
5 of our Parish.

## 6 **ARTICLE I THE PARISH**

### 7 **SECTION 1 PURPOSE and NAME**

8 The parish is a local Orthodox Eucharistic community canonically established by and subject to the authority  
9 of the Diocesan Bishop.

10 The name of the Parish is St. Mark's Orthodox Church.

### 11 **SECTION 2 INCORPORATION**

12 The Parish is incorporated as a non-profit Corporation under the provisions of the Non-profit Corporative  
13 Law of 1972, November 15, 1972, Section 7301, No. 271, 15 Pa. C.S.A. Section 7301, as of March 20, 1978,  
14 by virtue, inter alia, of the filing of the Articles of Incorporation said date with the Department of State of the  
15 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

### 16 **SECTION 3 JURISDICTIONAL AFFILIATION**

17 The Parish acknowledges itself to be a member and component part of the Orthodox Church in America, an  
18 Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and its successors and assigns, which has headquarters presently at Route  
19 25-A, P.O. Box 675, Syosset, New York, 11791, and as such accedes to, recognizes and accepts The Statue,  
20 Canons, Doctrines, Discipline and Worship of the Orthodox Church in America, and its successors and  
21 assigns. The Doctrines, Discipline and Worship of the Orthodox Church in America are those of the One,  
22 Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church as taught by the Holy Scriptures, Holy Tradition, the Ecumenical and  
23 Provincial Councils, and the Holy Fathers.

### 24 **SECTION 4 ADMINISTRATION**

25 The administration of the Parish shall be conducted under the control and guidance of the ~~Metropolitan and~~  
26 ~~Diocesan Authorities, the Rector, the Parish Meeting, and the Parish Council. The term "Metropolitan~~  
27 ~~Authority" when appearing in these By-Laws shall mean the Primate and all central governing and~~  
28 ~~ecclesiastical bodies and authorities of the Orthodox Church in America; and the term "Diocesan Authority"~~  
29 ~~when appearing in these By-Laws shall mean the Diocesan Bishop and all central governing and~~  
30 ~~ecclesiastical bodies and authorities of the Diocese of the Parish.~~

31 The Diocese is the basic Church body which unites parishes and institutions, usually in a defined  
32 geographical area, under the authority of a Diocesan Bishop.

33 In all matters, the decisions and pronouncements of the Diocesan Bishop are final, except insofar as they are  
34 subject to appeal as provided in the Sacred Canons and this Statute.

## 35 **ARTICLE II THE RECTOR**

### 36 **SECTION 1 LEADER OF THE PARISH**

37 The Rector of the Parish, as duly assigned by the Diocesan Bishop, shall be the leader of the Parish in its total  
38 life. According to the teachings of the Church, the Rector is the spiritual father and teacher of his flock and  
39 the celebrant of the liturgical worship established by the Church, and the Rector shall teach and edify the  
40 People of God entrusted to his spiritual care with no partiality. The Rector possesses the rights and exercises

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41 the responsibilities stipulated by the Sacred Canons, the Statute, and the directives of the Holy Synod and the  
42 Diocesan Authority.

## 43 SECTION 2 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RECTOR

44 The Rector as pastor of the parishioners, is entrusted by the Diocesan Bishop with the duties (i) of teaching  
45 the parishioners the Orthodox Faith, (ii) of celebrating divine services and rites according to the ecclesiastical  
46 order, (iii) of administering the Holy Sacraments, (iv) of guidance in Christian life, and (v) of being  
47 responsible before God and the ~~Metropolitan and~~ Diocesan Authorities for the whole life and activities of the  
48 Parish, its spiritual growth and enlightenment, its orthodoxy, and its moral progress. Besides his pastoral and  
49 liturgical duties, in the execution of which he is guided by his priestly office and conscience and is controlled  
50 through the District Dean by the Diocesan Authority, it is the responsibility of the Rector (i) to look after the  
51 decorum in church and the beauty of the edifice, (ii) to establish and update a Parish library, (iii) to organize  
52 and supervise a church school and an adult educational program, iv) to take an active part in the work of the  
53 Parish Council, (v) to keep exact and complete metrical records and such other records as may be required by  
54 the ~~Metropolitan and~~ Diocesan Authorities and civil authorities, and (vi) to serve as in intermediary in affairs  
55 of the ~~Metropolitan,~~ Diocesan and Deanery Authorities with the Parish on all Parish matters. The Rector  
56 cannot vacate his parish, change his status, or seek to transfer to another parish or Diocese without the  
57 permission of the Bishop.

## 58 SECTION 3 PARISH REGISTERS

59 The Rector shall maintain Parish registers containing the following information, which shall be kept current  
60 as best as possible, regarding parishioners: (a) baptismal name, middle name or patronymic, and family name  
61 (b) address and telephone number; (c) dates of birth, baptism and marriage (d) family data; (e) place of birth;  
62 ~~(f) annual attendance at confession and communion;~~ ~~(g)~~ dates of entry into the Parish and leaving; and ~~(g)~~  
63 date of death.

## 64 SECTION 4 CHAIRMAN OF MEETINGS

65 The Rector shall preside over all Parish and Parish Council Meetings, although the Rector, if he so desires,  
66 may authorize the Parish Warden to preside over same.

## 67 SECTION 5 COMPENSATION OF RECTOR

68 The salary of the Rector and all other benefits paid or made by the Parish to or on behalf of the Rector shall  
69 be clearly established according to established Diocesan procedures and norms and agreed upon with the  
70 District Dean at the time of the appointment of the Rector and shall ~~be~~ reviewed each year by the Parish  
71 Council.

## 72 ARTICLE III THE PARISH MEETING

### 73 SECTION 1 HIGHEST PARISH GOVERNING BODY

74 The Parish meeting shall be the highest governing body of the Parish and all major decisions of the Parish,  
75 not within the exclusive authority of the ~~Metropolitan or~~ Diocesan Authorities or of the Rector, shall be made  
76 by the Parish Meeting.

### 77 SECTION 2 ANNUAL, SEMI-ANNUAL AND SPECIAL PARISH MEETINGS

78 A Parish Meeting ("Annual Parish Meeting") shall be held each year in January, at which time, among other  
79 things, the lay members of the Parish Council and the Parish Auditors shall be elected to office. A  
80 Semi-Annual Parish Meeting may also be called by the Parish Council in any year if the Parish Council, in its  
81 discretion, deems same necessary. A Special Parish Meeting shall be held within thirty (30) days after  
82 request of the Rector, or a majority of the members of the Parish Council, or the petition of twenty (20%) per  
83 cent of the Full members of the Parish.

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## 84 SECTION 3 PURPOSE AND AGENDA OF SPECIAL PARISH MEETING

85 A Special Parish Meeting may be called only for specific purposes, and the said purposes must be stated in  
86 the required notice to the Parish members regarding the Special Parish Meeting. The agenda of any Special  
87 Parish Meeting shall be limited to the purposes stated in the notice pertaining to same.

## 88 SECTION 4 NOTICE OF PARISH MEETINGS

89 The Rector shall give notice from the pulpit of the date, time and place of any Parish Meeting on three (3)  
90 consecutive Sundays, including the Sunday on which the meeting has been scheduled, prior to the time of the  
91 meeting. The Recording Secretary shall also give notice of any Parish Meeting to all members of the Parish  
92 by mail at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the meeting. The said notice by mail shall be determined to  
93 be delivered when deposited in the United States Mail and addressed to the members at their addresses  
94 appearing on the Parish membership' register.

## 95 SECTION 5 RIGHT TO VOTE AND PARTICIPATE

96 Only Full Members of the Parish as defined in Section 4 of Article VII of these By-Laws shall have the  
97 privilegeright to vote and participate in discussions at any Parish meeting.

## 98 SECTION 6 QUORUM

99 The presence of twenty (20%) per cent of the Full Members of the Parish at any Parish meeting shall  
100 constitute a quorum; provided, however, that no Parish Meeting shall be held without the presence of the  
101 Rector, unless the Rector or the Diocesan Bishop has first given his written approval to the Parish Meeting's  
102 being held in the Rector's absence. If a quorum is not present at any scheduled Parish meeting, the meeting  
103 shall be adjourned by the Chairman to the following Sunday, at which time the presence of any number of  
104 Full Members shall constitute a quorum. The Full Members present at a duly convened Parish Meeting may  
105 continue to do business at the meeting, not with standing the withdrawal during such meeting of enough Full  
106 Members to leave less than a quorum present.

## 107 SECTION 7 VOTE NECESSARY ON QUESTIONS AND ISSUES

108 At a duly convened Parish Meeting, the majority vote of the Full Members present shall decide any question  
109 or issue brought to a vote before such a meeting, except as otherwise mandatorily required by ecclesiastical  
110 or civil law. Each Full Member present may cast one vote on any question or issue, and no voting shall be  
111 permitted by proxy. The Chairman at the time of any vote shall vote only when necessary to break a tie vote  
112 on any question or issue. The election of the Parish Council and the Parish Auditors shall be by a ballot vote,  
113 and a ballot vote shall also be used on any other question or issue (a) if so requested by any Full Member and  
114 approved by a majority vote, or (b) if deemed proper and necessary in the sole discretion of the Chairman.

## 115 SECTION 8 PRIVILEGERIGHT TO SPEAK

116 The agenda of every Annual or Semi-Annual Parish Meeting shall always include the opportunity for any  
117 Full Member to speak on any matter deemed pertinent to the harmony, progress or welfare of the Parish.

## 118 SECTION 9 AUTHORITY OF PARISH MEETING

119 No Parish Assembly, either annual or special, shall take any action which is contrary to or not in accord with  
120 these By-Laws. Should there be any such conflict; the By-Laws shall prevail. Should there be a question  
121 whether an action of a Parish Assembly is valid or lawful under these By-Laws; the issue shall be submitted  
122 to the Diocesan Authority for determination.

123 The following matters or subjects shall be under the general authority of the Parish Meeting:

- 124 (a) To buy, sell, mortgage pledge, or otherwise encumber or dispose of the real property of the Parish;
- 125 (b) To amend, modify and make additions to the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Parish;
- 126 (c) To elect all lay members of the Parish Council and the Parish Auditors;

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- 127 (d) To review any action or decision of the Parish Council; and  
128 (e) To consider and act on all other major matters affecting the general welfare of the Parish or its  
129 membership, which are not within the exclusive authority of the ~~Metropolitan or~~ Diocesan  
130 Authorities or of the Rector.

## 131 **ARTICLE IV THE PARISH COUNCIL**

### 132 **SECTION 1 EXPLANATION**

133 The Orthodox Church teaches that there is to be an active cooperation between the clergy and the laity on all  
134 levels of Church life, and the Parish Council is the main Parish organ of such cooperation. The function and  
135 responsibility of the Parish Council is to assist the Rector in the administration of the Parish and normally  
136 meets under his presidency. The Parish Council shall also be responsible for the spiritual and material needs  
137 of the Parish and for the Parish's unity and contact with the Diocese and the Orthodox Church in America, for  
138 each parish is called to be a living cell and a member of the Body of Christ, and each carries responsibility  
139 for the whole Church.

### 140 **SECTION 2 COMPOSITION**

141 The Parish Council shall consist of the Rector, five (5) officers (Parish Warden, Assistant Parish Warden,  
142 Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer and three (3) Trustees; and the Parish Council shall  
143 manage, direct and administrate the affairs of the Parish between Parish Meetings. The Rector and the five  
144 officers shall constitute and be known as the Executive Board of the Parish and shall meet at such times as  
145 deemed necessary by the Rector or the Parish Warden.

146 The previous year's Parish Warden, if someone other than the current Parish Warden, becomes a non-voting  
147 ex-officio consulting member of the Church Council for a period of one year.

### 148 **SECTION 3 ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE**

149 All lay members of the Parish Council shall be elected each year at the Annual Parish Meeting and shall  
150 serve for a term of one year, or until their successors have been duly elected and qualified. The term of office  
151 shall begin on February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and end on January 31<sup>st</sup> of the succeeding year. No lay member of  
152 the Parish shall concurrently hold more than one elected office and, except, for the office of Trustee, shall not  
153 serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in any one office. In the event that one (1) or more of the initial  
154 Directors (as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation) of the Council are elected as officer (s) at the first  
155 Annual Parish meeting held after the date of incorporation, the period served by said initial Director (s) from  
156 the date of incorporation to said first Annual Parish Meeting, shall not constitute one (1) of the aforesaid  
157 three (3) consecutive terms. Each elected member of the Parish Council shall assume the duties of his (or her)  
158 office only after his (or her) election has been approved by the Diocesan Bishop and he (or she) has taken the  
159 prescribed Oath of Office administered by the Rector.

### 160 **SECTION 4 QUALIFICATIONS**

161 To be elected to the Parish Council, a person must be a Full Member of the Parish for no less than six (6)  
162 months.

### 163 **SECTION 5 MEETINGS AND NOTICES**

164 The regular monthly meetings of the Parish Council shall be held at a date, time and place fixed by the Parish  
165 Council. Special meetings of the Parish Council may be called by the Rector, the Parish Warden, or a  
166 majority of the members of the Parish Council. The Recording Secretary shall give all members of the Parish  
167 Council notice by mail or telephone of any meeting.

168 No regular or special meeting of the Parish Council shall be held without the knowledge and blessing of the  
169 Rector.

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## 170 SECTION 6 QUORUM AND NECESSARY VOTE

171 The presence of five (5) members of the Parish Council, two (2) of whom must be members of the Executive  
172 Board, shall be necessary to constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Parish Council; provided, however,  
173 that no Parish Council Meeting shall be held without the presence of the Rector, unless the Rector or the  
174 Diocesan Bishop has first given his written approval to the Parish council meeting's being held in the Rector's  
175 absence. When a quorum is present at any such meeting, a majority of the members present thereat shall  
176 decide any question or issue brought to a vote, except as otherwise mandatorily required by ecclesiastical or  
177 civil law. The Chairman at the time of any vote shall vote only when necessary to break a tie vote on any  
178 question or issue. The members present at a duly convened Parish Council Meeting may continue to do  
179 business at the meeting, notwithstanding the withdrawal during said meeting of enough members to leave  
180 less than a quorum present.

## 181 SECTION 7 OPEN PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

182 All Parish Council Meetings shall generally be open to Full Members of the Parish however, the Parish  
183 Council, in its discretion, may on occasion, under extraordinary circumstances, deem it necessary to have a  
184 closed Parish Council Meeting, and at such times the meeting shall be limited to the members of the Parish  
185 Council.

## 186 SECTION 8 APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANTS AND COMMITTEES

187 The Parish Council, in its discretion, may appoint assistants to any of the officers from the Trustees and may  
188 formulate such committees, composed of Full Members of the Parish, and prescribe the duties thereof as are  
189 deemed necessary for the proper administration of the Parish. The Rector and the Parish Warden shall be  
190 ex-officio members of all such committees and of all other organizations affiliated with the Parish, either  
191 directly or by implication.

## 192 SECTION 9 VACANCIES

193 In the event that the office of Parish Warden becomes vacant for any reason, the Assistant Parish Warden  
194 shall assume the duties of the Parish Warden, but any other vacancy occurring in the elected membership of  
195 the Parish Council, for whatever reason, shall be filled by the affirmative vote of the majority of the  
196 remaining Parish Council members, though less than a quorum, and each person so elected and qualified  
197 shall be a member of the Parish Council until his (or her) successor has been elected and qualified at the next  
198 Annual Parish meeting.

## 199 SECTION 10 RESPONSIBILITIES

200 Each member of the Parish Council shall continue to be a Full Member during his (or her) term of office,  
201 assume the duties of his (or her) office in a responsible manner, and attend all scheduled meetings of the  
202 Parish Council.

## 203 SECTION 11 DUTIES OF LAY MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCIL

204 The duties of the various elected lay members of the Parish Council shall generally be as follows:

- 205 (a) Parish Warden – The Parish Warden shall be the principal lay executive officer of the Parish and  
206 shall assist the Rector in the general supervision and direction of all of the administrative affairs of  
207 the Parish.
- 208 (b) Assistant Parish Warden – In the absence of the Parish Warden, or in case the office of Parish  
209 Warden becomes vacated for any reason, the Assistant Parish Warden shall assume and perform the  
210 responsibilities of the Parish Warden.
- 211 (c) Recording Secretary – The Recording Secretary shall keep accurate and complete minutes of all  
212 Parish and Parish Council Meetings, be responsible for the necessary correspondence of the Parish,  
213 give the proper and timely notices required by these By-Laws, keep an accurate and complete  
214 register of the membership of the Parish, and perform such other duties that may be incident to the

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- 215 office. The official minutes of all meetings of the Parish Council shall, in accordance with Diocesan  
216 or parish Bylaws, be approved, signed, properly maintained, and made available as appropriate.
- 217 (d) ~~Financial Secretary~~Treasurer – The ~~Financial Secretary~~Treasurer shall keep accurate and complete  
218 records of the financial transactions and affairs of the Parish, disburse the funds of the Parish at the  
219 discretion and order of the Parish Council, open his (or her) books for the inspection by the Rector,  
220 the Parish Council or the Parish Auditors at any time, and perform such other duties that may be  
221 incident to the office.
- 222 (e) ~~Treasurer~~Financial Secretary – The ~~Treasurer~~Financial Secretary shall have the care, charge and  
223 custody of all money and funds received by the Parish, deposit same in the name of the Parish in  
224 such financial depositories as shall be designated by the Parish Council, maintain accurate records  
225 of all contributions received, open his (or her) records for inspection by the Rector, the Parish  
226 Council or the Parish Auditors at any time, and perform such other duties that may-be incident to  
227 the office.
- 228 (f) Trustees – The Trustees shall give their advice, recommendations and suggestions to the Parish  
229 Council in regard to the administration of the Parish and shall perform such other duties that may be  
230 incident to the office.

### 231 SECTION 12 DUTIES AND AUTHORITY OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

232 The general duties and authority of the Parish Council shall be as follows:

- 233 (a) To serve the Holy Orthodox Church, to work for its spiritual and material progress, and to support  
234 its educational and charitable programs and institutions;
- 235 (b) The establishment and maintenance of accurate and complete records pertaining to Parish finances,  
236 Parish and Parish Council meetings, Parish membership, and all other records necessary for the  
237 proper administration and functioning of the Parish;
- 238 (c) To perform as a fiduciary on behalf of the Parish and Parish Corporation;
- 239 (d) The establishment and implementation of an annual budget for the proper administration and  
240 functioning of the Parish;
- 241 ~~(e)~~(e) \_\_\_\_\_ The management, control and maintenance of all real and personal property of the Parish;
- 242 ~~(d)~~(f) \_\_\_\_\_ The setting of reasonable fees due the Parish from members and nonmembers of the Parish  
243 (provided, however, that no fees shall be required for administering the sacraments per se), and the  
244 granting of exemptions to individual members or non-members of the Parish from the payment of  
245 any such fees if in its discretion the circumstances warrant such exemptionsFormulate, implement,  
246 and direct stewardship programs;
- 247 ~~(e)~~(g) \_\_\_\_\_ The establishment and any change of the salary of the Rector and the Parish personnel;
- 248 ~~(f)~~(h) \_\_\_\_\_ The designation of financial depositories for funds of the Parish, and the determination and  
249 establishment of the Parish's fiscal year;
- 250 ~~(g)~~(i) \_\_\_\_\_ The designation of those persons authorized to sign checks, drafts, notes or other orders  
251 and obligations for the payment of money or for the execution of any contract or other documents in  
252 the name of the Parish;
- 253 ~~(h)~~(j) \_\_\_\_\_ The supervision of good order, collections and general appearance of the church edifice, at  
254 all religious services;
- 255 (k) The approval of the formation, operation and existence of Parish Organizations;
- 256 ~~(i)~~(l) \_\_\_\_\_ The authorization of any and all fundraising activities within the Parish or on the behalf of the  
257 Parish;
- 258 ~~(j)~~(m) \_\_\_\_\_ The minimization, investigation, control and, resolution of all complaints and disputes of  
259 and between the Rector, the Parish Council and the Parish members;

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260 | ~~(k)~~(n) \_\_\_\_\_ The presentation ~~n~~-of a full and complete report to the Parish members at the Annual Parish  
261 | Meeting concerning all aspects of Parish affairs (including a financial statement concerning the  
262 | income and expenses of the Parish and containing, inter-alia, the salaries and other benefits paid to  
263 | the Rector and the Parish personnel) for the past year;

264 | ~~(l)~~(o) \_\_\_\_\_ The execution and performance of all decisions and regulations of the ~~Metropolitan and~~  
265 | Diocesan Authorities, the Parish Meetings and the Parish Council;

266 | ~~(m)~~(p) \_\_\_\_\_ The preparation, enactment and amendment of Standing Rules for the orderly  
267 | administration of the Parish;

268 | ~~(n)~~(q) \_\_\_\_\_ The determination of the date of any Annual, Semi-Annual or Special Parish Meeting; and

269 | ~~(o)~~(r) \_\_\_\_\_ All other matters affecting the interests of the Parish, or its membership, which are not  
270 | within the exclusive authority of the ~~Metropolitan and~~Diocesan Authorities, the Rector, or the  
271 | Parish Meeting.

## 272 | **ARTICLE V THE PARISH AUDITORS**

### 273 | **SECTION 1 NUMBER, ELECTION AND QUALIFICATIONS**

274 | Two (2) Parish Auditors shall be elected each year at the Annual Parish Meeting and shall serve for a term of  
275 | one (1) year or until their successors have been duly elected and qualified. To be elected as a Parish Auditor,  
276 | a person shall (a) be a Full Member of the Parish and (b) not be a member of the Parish Council. Each Parish  
277 | Auditor shall assume the duties of his (or her) office only after his (or her) election has been approved by the  
278 | Diocesan Bishop and he (or she) has taken the prescribed Oath of office administered by the Rector. A  
279 | person shall not serve more than three (3) consecutive terms as a Parish Auditor.

### 280 | **SECTION 2 DUTIES OF PARISH AUDITORS**

281 | The Parish Auditors shall inspect, verify and audit the accounts and records of the Recording Secretary, the  
282 | Financial Secretary, and the Treasurer at least once a year and shall thereafter give written reports concerning  
283 | their examinations to the Parish Council and to the members of the Parish at the Annual Parish Meeting. The  
284 | Parish Council shall cooperate with the Parish Auditors during the performance of the aforesaid duties.

### 285 | **SECTION 3 VACANCIES IN PARISH AUDITORS**

286 | In the event of any vacancy or vacancies occurring in the Parish Auditors for any reason, such vacancy or  
287 | vacancies shall be filled by the affirmative majority vote of the Parish Council at a duly convened Parish  
288 | Council Meeting, and each person so elected and qualified shall be a Parish Auditor until his (or her)  
289 | successor has been elected and qualified at the next Annual Parish Meeting.

## 290 | **ARTICLE VI PARISH ORGANIZATIONS**

### 291 | **SECTION 1 STATEMENT**

292 | The formation and development of various organizations affiliated with the Parish and whose primary  
293 | purpose is to improve the spiritual, moral and cultural life of the Parish is encouraged by the Parish. The  
294 | purposes and objectives of such organizations, as well as the operation thereof, must be compatible with the  
295 | spiritual standards of the Orthodox Church. The formation, operation and existence of all Parish  
296 | Organizations shall be subject to the terms and conditions of this Article.

### 297 | **SECTION 2 AUTHORITY OVER PARISH ORGANIZATIONS**

298 | The Parish Council shall have the authority (a) to approve the formation of all Parish Organizations, (b) to  
299 | periodically review the operation thereof, and (c) to withdraw a prior approval for the formation and  
300 | existence thereof for reasons set forth in this Article.

# BY-LAWS OF ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

## 301 SECTION 3 FORMATION

302 Any five (5) Full Members of the Parish may submit a petition to the Parish Council for the formation of a  
303 Parish organization. The petition shall contain a full statement concerning the purposes, objectives and  
304 organizational plan of the proposed Parish Organization. The Parish Council may request additional data  
305 from the petitioners and, after reviewing the entire matter, shall either approve, can conditionally approve or  
306 reject the petition. The Parish Council shall set forth its reasons for a rejection of a petition in writing to the  
307 petitioners. Subsequent to an approval of such a petition, the Parish Organization may establish bank  
308 accounts in its own name as an affiliate of the Parish and to seek to recruit additional members from among  
309 the parishioners.

## 310 SECTION 4 OPERATION AND EXISTENCE

311 The Parish Council may request periodic reasonable reports from all Parish Organizations concerning the  
312 membership, operation and financial status of such Parish Organizations. In the event that (a) any Parish  
313 Organization does not submit such reports to the Parish Council; (b) the membership in any Parish  
314 organization falls below five (5) Full Members of the Parish; (c) the operation of any Parish Organization, in  
315 the Parish Council's discretion, is contrary to (i) its original purposes and objectives, or (ii) the spiritual  
316 standards of the Orthodox Church, or (iii) the welfare of the Parish; or (d) the members of the Parish  
317 Organization duly agree to dissolve the Parish Organization; then, in any of said events, the Parish Council,  
318 in its discretion, shall (a) withdraw its prior approval of the Parish organization, or (b) take whatever action it  
319 deems necessary in connection with same.

## 320 SECTION 5 PARISH ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATION

321 Participation in a Parish Organization is open to all Members of the Parish.

322 To be eligible to run for or hold office of any kind, elected or voluntary, in any Parish Organization, a person  
323 must be a Full Member of the Parish for no less than six (6) months.

## 324 ARTICLE VII MEMBERSHIP

### 325 SECTION 1 MEMBERS

326 All persons and their children whose names are recorded on the Parish membership register shall be  
327 considered members of the Parish.

### 328 SECTION 2 NEW MEMBERS

329 Any person desiring to become a member of the Parish shall so inform the Rector and, after fulfilling all  
330 requirements or conditions of the Church as set forth by the Rector for said membership shall be placed on  
331 the Parish membership register.

### 332 SECTION 3 DUTIES OF MEMBERS

333 Parish members, by virtue of their Baptism and Chrismation, are members of the Body of Christ and must  
334 strive to live in accordance with their high calling. Parish members, as Orthodox Christians, shall comply in  
335 their lives and activities with the teachings of The Orthodox Church; regularly attend religious services; raise  
336 their children according to the Orthodox Faith and in the spirit of the Church; respect the ~~Metropolitan and~~  
337 Diocesan Authorities, the Rector and other members of the clergy; obey in matters of faith and ecclesiastical  
338 order; partake at least ~~regularly~~ regularly ~~annually~~ of the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion; direct their  
339 personal activity toward the spiritual and material welfare of the Parish; assume an obligation for the  
340 financial support of the Parish and the ~~Metropolitan and~~ Diocesan Authorities; and proclaim and bear witness  
341 to the doctrines, discipline and worship of the Orthodox Church. No one can be a member of the Orthodox  
342 Church if he (or she) betrays the teachings of the Orthodox Church or if he (or she) leads a life or acts in a  
343 manner condemned by the Holy Canons as being incompatible with membership in the Orthodox Church.

# BY-LAWS OF ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

## 344 SECTION 4 FULL MEMBER(S)

345 The term "Full Member(s)", when appearing in these By-Laws, shall mean any member who;

346 (a.) Is at least eighteen years of age;

347 (b.) Partakes at least ~~regularly~~ annually of the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion in this  
348 Parish;

349 (c.) Supports the Parish in its financial obligations and expenses, including those established by the  
350 Diocesan Authorities, by making regular contributions; and indicates an intent to financially support  
351 the Parish by making an annual pledge to the Parish and, thereafter, attempts to fulfill said pledge  
352 through regular donations to the Parish; and;

353 ~~(e.) Supports the Parish in its financial obligations and expenses. As a minimum, a member shall be~~  
354 ~~obligated for the following:~~

355 ~~(1) Payment of the annual Metropolitan and Diocesan Assessments.~~

356 ~~(2) Contribute, through his(her) weekly offerings, a total of at least \$25 per year to the Parish;~~

357 ~~a. — In the case of financial distress, and at the discretion of the Rector, a member may be~~  
358 ~~relieved of all or part of the above financial obligations which will be assumed by the~~  
359 ~~Parish.~~

360 (d.) Attends Parish liturgical services on a regular basis.

361 The Rector and the Parish Council shall establish and maintain adequate records so that the Full Members  
362 may be determined at any time.

363 Parish membership may be suspended or revoked by the Rector or the Diocesan Bishop for due cause, such  
364 as:

365 (a.) Open rejection of the Orthodox Faith;

366 (b.) Public and open defamation of, defiance of, or rebellion against ecclesiastical authority;

367 (c.) Grave moral transgression; or

368 (d.) Formal association with a non-Orthodox religious body.

## 369 SECTION 5 ORTHODOX NON-MEMBERS

370 Orthodox non-members, as brothers and sisters in Christ, shall have the privilege ~~right~~ to enjoy all religious  
371 privileges of the Parish but shall not have the privilege ~~right to~~ to participate in the governmental,  
372 deliberative, electoral and administrative life of the Parish.

## 373 ARTICLE VIII APPEALS

### 374 SECTION 1 PROCEDURE FOR RECTOR

375 In the event that the Rector acknowledges in writing to the Parish Council that he (a) is in material  
376 disagreement with or is materially aggrieved by any act, action or omission of the Parish Council or any  
377 Parish meeting, or is involved in a material dispute or misunderstanding with any parishioner (s), the matter,  
378 at the Rector's request, shall first be presented and discussed at a Parish Council Meeting. If the matter is not  
379 resolved at or by such meeting, the matter shall be submitted to the District Dean, who shall review the  
380 matter and thereafter exercise his best efforts to resolve the matter. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved,  
381 the District Dean shall file a report thereof to the Diocesan Bishop for determination.

### 382 SECTION 2 PROCEDURE FOR INDIVIDUAL FULL MEMBER

383 In the event that a Full Member acknowledges in writing to the Parish Council that he is in material  
384 disagreement with or is materially aggrieved by any act, action or omission of the Rector, the matter, at the

# BY-LAWS OF ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

385 request of said Full Member, shall first be presented and discussed at a Parish Council Meeting. If the matter  
386 is not resolved at or by such meeting, the matter shall be submitted to the District Dean for review and  
387 resolution as set forth in Section 1 hereof.

## 388 SECTION 3 PROCEDURAL CONTROL BY ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA AND 389 DIOCESE

390 In the event that any part of the procedures set forth in the first two (2) Sections of this Article are now or  
391 hereafter covered by any statute, law, ruling or regulation of the Orthodox Church in America or of the  
392 Diocese of the Parish, the latter shall supersede the terms and provisions of said Sections.

## 393 ARTICLE IX REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE PARISH

### 394 SECTION 1 OWNERSHIP OF PARISH PROPERTY

395 The Parish Corporation shall be the sole owner of all real and personal property of the Parish and act as  
396 trustees of such property dedicated to the service of God and the use of the Church. In the administration of  
397 same, however, the members and the Parish Council must always be mindful of the religious nature,  
398 purposes, responsibilities, and goals of the Parish.

### 399 SECTION 2 MERGER, CONSOLIDATION OR DISSOLUTION OF THE PARISH

400 In the event the Parish Corporation is a party to a merger or consolidation proceeding with another Orthodox  
401 parish, the real and personal property of the Parish shall be vested thereafter in such manner as provided by  
402 law. In case of the dissolution of the Parish Corporation, the real and personal property remaining or the  
403 proceeds thereof shall be vested in or distributed to the Diocese of Philadelphia and eastern Pennsylvania of  
404 the Orthodox Church in America, and its successors and assigns, for the same uses and trusts as the same  
405 were theretofore held by the dissolved Parish Corporation.

406 This provision shall not limit the authority of the Parish or Parish Corporation in its administration of such  
407 property, assets, and funds in accord with the faith, governance, and discipline of the Orthodox Church in  
408 America.

## 409 ARTICLE X AMENDMENTS

410 These By-Laws may be amended, modified, added to, or repealed and new By-Laws adopted, in the  
411 following manner:

- 412 (a) The proposed, change shall first be submitted by a Full Member to a duly convened Parish Council  
413 Meeting held at least thirty (30) days prior to the hereinafter mentioned Parish Meeting;
- 414 (b) The Parish Council shall then place the proposed change on the agenda of the next scheduled Parish  
415 Meeting and also give notice of the proposed change in the required notice to the members  
416 concerning the scheduled Parish Meeting; and
- 417 (c) The proposed change shall be adopted if a majority of the Full Members present at the duly  
418 convened Parish Meeting vote affirmatively for the proposed change.

## 419 ARTICLE XI EFFECTIVE DATE

420 These By-Laws and all amendments, modifications and additions made thereto in Accordance with Article X  
421 hereof shall become effective upon being duly approved by the Diocesan Bishop.

422

# BY-LAWS OF ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

## Chronological List of Amendments

423

### 424 **January 30, 1983 Annual Parish Meeting**

425 Replace Article VII - Membership; Section 4 - Full Members; part (c.) in its entirety. Original wording was:

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*(c.) Supports the Parish in its financial obligations and expenses, including those established by the Metropolitan and Diocesan Authorities, by making regular contributions; and indicates an intent to financially support the Parish by making an annual pledge to the Parish and, thereafter, attempts to fulfill said pledge through regular donations to the Parish; and*

### 430 **December 12, 1993 Annual Parish Meeting**

431 1. Amend Article III – The Parish Meeting, Section 2 – Annual, Semi-Annual and Special Parish Meetings,  
432 to set the date of the Annual Parish Meeting to be held in January of each year.

433 2. Add to Article IV – The Parish Council, Section 2 – Composition, the following:

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435

*The previous year's Parish Warden becomes a non-voting ex-officio consulting member of the Church Council for a period of one year.*

436 3. Amend Article IV – The Parish Council, Section 3 – Election and Term of Office, to set the term for  
437 church officers to begin on February 1st of each year and end on January 31st of the succeeding year.

### 438 **January 25, 2015 Annual Parish Meeting**

439 1. Amend Article IV – The Parish Council, Section 3 – Qualifications, to set a minimum period of six (6)  
440 months as a Full Member of the Parish before a person can be being elected to the Parish Council.

441 2. Added to Article VI – Parish Organizations a new section: Section 5 – Parish Organization Membership  
442 Qualification. The new section reads:

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445

*Participation in a Parish Organization is open to all Members of the Parish.*

*To be eligible to run for or hold office of any kind, elected or voluntary, in any Parish Organization, a person must be a Full Member of the Parish for no less than six (6) months.*

### 446 **May dd, 2017 Special Parish Meeting**

447 1. Updates to comply with "The Statute of the Orthodox Church in America" dated 4 May 2015.

448 2. Removed references to the Metropolitan throughout the document.

449 3. Article I; Section 1

450 (c.) Renamed to "Purpose and Name"

451 (d.) Added: "The parish is a local Orthodox Eucharistic community canonically established by and  
452 subject to the authority of the Diocesan Bishop."

453 4. Article I; Section 4 – Added language to clarify the administration of the Diocese and the authority of  
454 the Diocesan Bishop.

455 5. Article II; Section 1 – Added: "The Rector possesses the rights and exercises the responsibilities  
456 stipulated by the Sacred Canons, the Statute, and the directives of the Holy Synod and the Diocesan  
457 Authority."

458 6. Article II; Section 2 – Added: "The Rector cannot vacate his parish, change his status, or seek to  
459 transfer to another parish or Diocese without the permission of the Bishop."

## BY-LAWS OF ST. MARK'S ORTHODOX CHURCH

- 460 7. Article II; Section 3 – Add language to state that parishioner data be kept current as best as possible.
- 461 8. Article II; Section 5 – Added language to follow the established norms and procedures of the Diocese for  
462 compensation of the Rector.
- 463 9. Article III; Section 9 – Added: “No Parish Assembly, either annual or special, shall take any action  
464 which is contrary to or not in accord with these By-Laws. Should there be any such conflict; the By-  
465 Laws shall prevail. Should there be a question whether an action of a Parish Assembly is valid or lawful  
466 under these By-Laws; the issue shall be submitted to the Diocesan Authority for determination.”
- 467 10. Article IV; Section 1 – Added language that the Council normally meets under the presidency of the  
468 Rector.
- 469 11. Article IV; Section 2 – Amended ex-officio clause to clarify that the former Warden has to be someone  
470 other than the current Warden.
- 471 12. Article IV; Section 5 – Added: “No regular or special meeting of the Parish Council shall be held  
472 without the knowledge and blessing of the Rector.”
- 473 13. Article IV; Section 11(c) – Added: “The official minutes of all meetings of the Parish Council shall, in  
474 accordance with Diocesan or parish Bylaws, be approved, signed, properly maintained, and made  
475 available as appropriate.”
- 476 14. Article IV; Section 11 (d) and (e) changed from Financial Secretary and Treasurer to Treasurer and  
477 Financial Secretary respectively to better reflect the actual responsibilities of each Officer as they have  
478 been performed over the years.
- 479 15. Article IV; Section 11(e) – Added language to include the maintenance of accurate records for all  
480 contributions received.
- 481 16. Article IV; Section 12 – Sub-sections renumbered due to additions.
- 482 17. Article IV; Section 12(c) – Added fiduciary responsibility clause.
- 483 18. Article IV; Section 12(d) – Added establishment and implementation of the budget.
- 484 19. Article IV; Section 12 (f) - Deleted the setting of fees wording and replaced with stewardship program  
485 administration.
- 486 20. Article IV; Section 12 (l) – Added fundraising activities approval and administration.
- 487 21. Article VII; Section 4 – Revert the first part of the section back to the original wording removed by the  
488 30 January 1983 amendment. The 30 January 1983 Amendment text is shown below:
- 489 (c.) Supports the Parish in its financial obligations and expenses. As a minimum, a member shall be  
490 obligated for the following:  
491 (1) Payment of the annual Diocesan Assessments.  
492 (2) Contribute, through his(her) weekly offerings, a total of at least \$25 per year to the Parish  
493  
494 In the case of financial distress, and at the discretion of the Rector, a member may be relieved  
495 of all or part of the above financial obligations which will be assumed by the Parish.
- 496 22. Article VII; Section 4 – Added the conditions for suspension or revocation of membership.
- 497 23. Article IX; Section 1 – Added: “...and act as trustees of such property dedicated to the service of God  
498 and the use of the Church...”
- 499 24. Article IX; Section 2 – Added: “This provision shall not limit the authority of the Parish or Parish  
500 Corporation in its administration of such property, assets, and funds in accord with the faith,  
501 governance, and discipline of the Orthodox Church in America.”
- 502