

Mary Magdalene Church

By Laws

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Changes are periodically made to this document. Changes, technical inaccuracies, and typographic errors will be corrected in subsequent editions.

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1 Preface

1.1 Purpose

In order for any organization to function appropriately by-laws must be developed and followed. The church is no exception. You will find the by-laws of Mary Magdalene Church in this document. These by-laws were created to reflect the guiding principles of our church community, namely: transparency, participation, inclusiveness, empowerment, continuity and accountability.

Transparency: Full, accurate and timely disclosure of information to the community is necessary in the building of trust between leaders and parishioners. It promotes accountability and allows members to be included in every aspect of community life.

Participation/Inclusiveness: We are each created in the image and likeness of God, and are all deserving to be treated with respect, dignity and love. No one is to be left out, but all are encouraged to participate in community life to the extent that they desire.

Empowerment: Each member of Mary Magdalene Church is encouraged to use their talents, and share their thoughts and insights with others. This strengthens us as a church community and actualizes our belief that we are all precious children of God endowed with unique gifts and talents.

Continuity: Mary Magdalene Church is meant to be a community that will thrive beyond its original founders. A community that will serve not only today's generation but also will be there to serve our children and our children's children.

Accountability: The leadership of Mary Magdalene Church is charged with being responsible stewards of its resources and is charged with accurately reporting the use of resources on an ongoing basis

1.2 Document Revision Control

Revision Number	Date	Edited By	Nature of Change
1.0	Nov 17, 2010	TRUSTEES: Paul Kaiser pskaiser@grbbank.com Lynne Hamilton equalrall@aol.com Kathy McCarthy Proulx rangernice@hotmail.com Mike Proulx rangernice@hotmail.com Eric Wolf erwolf@rochester.rr.com Phil Donato pdonatojr@gmail.com	Document Creation
1.1	Dec. 4, 2010	Rev. Denise Donato revdenised@gmail.com	Fix typo's
1.2	Aug 27, 2014	Rev. Denise Donato revdenised@gmail.com	Made changes to Preface; item 3.6 Tithing, Membership 4 and 4.1, Board Membership 5.2, Board Communication 5.8, Board Voting 5.9

1.2.1.1.1

2 Mission

Mary Magdalene Church is an inclusive church in the Catholic tradition, where people of all faiths and backgrounds are welcomed to the Lord's Table. We strive to live the values that Jesus taught, to honor and respect each individual, to share the joy of God's unconditional love, and to foster the growth of social responsibility in our community and beyond.

3 Values

3.1 Inclusiveness

The Creation Story found in the Hebrew Scriptures reminds us that we are all created in the image and likeness of our God, male and female, gay and straight, people of every color, nationality and hue, able bodied and those who struggle with disabilities of every type, rich and poor. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God. In our great diversity we discover the beauty and creativity of our God, and we discover that we are all God's precious children. At Mary Magdalene Church we believe that we have a responsibility to carry that message in our hearts and live it out in our practices.

3.2 Discipleship of Equals

Each of us has been given unique gifts and talents, which we are expected to share with one another freely and generously. No one set of gifts or talents is more highly regarded than any other. Within Mary Magdalene Church we are all called equally by God to serve one another. Ordination is a call to designated service within the people of God. This call is not holier than the ways God has called others to serve within our community.

3.3 Hospitality of the Eucharist

Eucharist means thanksgiving and the sacrament we celebrate as we gather around the altar is just one way we are all reminded of God's love for each one of us. Jesus said "No one who comes to me will I ever reject." The Altar is Jesus' Table. It is not the property of any one denomination. That would be counter to Jesus message of love. ALL ARE WELCOME.

3.4 Faith Sharing

While Christian in our orientation and Catholic in our sacramental expression of faith, Mary Magdalene Church recognizes the authenticity of other faith traditions. We believe that every religion contains a kernel of the truth of the Divine. If we brought these nuggets of truth together we would have a more complete picture of the God which we call by many different names, and even then our picture would be incomplete.

3.5 Social Responsibility

As people of faith and children of God, we are called to service within our world. Jesus reminds us “Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me.” In serving others we encounter the Risen Christ.

3.6 Tithing

One part of sharing what we have been given, involves giving of our finances. Tithing as defined through scripture is the giving of 10% of our income to those in need. At Mary Magdalene Church, we strive towards this practice. One Sunday each month we take a second collection to give to a nonprofit or charity locally, nationally or internationally.

4 Membership Requirements

Anyone is welcome to participate in liturgies and ministries of the parish whether or not they choose to become members.

To become a member, an individual must register with the community by completing a membership covenant and registration form.

Membership is open to anyone; however a member must be at least 18 years of age to vote in any voting action.

Members are expected to embrace the Responsibilities as outlined in 4.1.

4.1 Responsibilities of Members

In general, it is expected that members will, to the best of their ability:

Preserve the integrity of the community.

Share in the responsibility of the community.

Participate in parish ministries and activities through the use of each one's unique gifts.

Support the mission of the community through regular attendance as well as the sharing of each one's time, talent and financial resources. Complete a Stewardship Pledge and Time and Talents forms.

Address with the pastor, or a trustee, any concerns regarding the parish, especially any issues that may interfere with the quality of parish life or the individual's comfort within the community.

5 Governance

5.1 Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees (the Board) will be established and maintained to regularly assess Parish needs (spiritual, fiscal, outreach, operations, diversity etc.) and communicate with Parishioners.

This Board holds fiduciary responsibility for the Parish.

The Board will consist of six (6) elected trustees. Board members are recruited based on parish needs, aptitude, skill and desire to hold positions of responsibility within the church.

Board members are expected to work cooperatively and maintain confidentiality at all times.

5.2 Board Membership

Board membership is open to any adult member who has had at least 1 year participation in the Parish community.

Current Board members with a minimum of one (1) year experience on the Board may be selected to serve a Board Officer (Officer) position which include but are not limited to: Secretary, Treasurer, and Facilitator.

5.3 Board Officer Duties

The Secretary is responsible for recording, archiving, and communicating all business and transactions discussed at Board meetings.

The Treasurer is responsible for compiling and reporting on the financial health of the Parish. The Treasurer will have check signing authorization.

The Facilitator is responsible for calling meetings, distributing an agenda, facilitating the meeting agenda and coordinating all Board voting activities.

5.4 Board Terms

Board members are elected to serve a term of three (3) years.

Board Officers will serve in that office for a two (2) year term.

Membership terms will be staggered to ensure continuity of membership.

5.5 Board Elections

Board elections will occur annually to fill any positions that are becoming open due to the end of a trustee's term.

Existing Board members will be offered an opportunity to renew their membership at the end of their first term. A two-thirds (2/3) majority board vote is required to approve renewal. The Parish will then be required to affirm the vote presented by the Board.

The Board will inform the Parish of Board membership vacancies, including a description of special skills and experiences sought, and will ask the Parish to respond to a call for nominations. This request will be made by March 31st of each year.

Current Board members will formally interview candidates and then present a slate of qualified nominees to the Parish at a community meeting for approval / affirmation by May 15th of each year.

A signed paper ballot will be used by Parishioners for Board election voting.

5.6 Board Compensation / Expenses

Board Members shall not receive any stated salary for their services.

Parish related expenses that are pre-approved by the Pastor or Treasurer will be reimbursed.

5.7 Board Meetings

Board meetings will be normally scheduled for once per month with a minimum of six (6) per year.

A Board meeting may be called by any Board member with the approval of a majority of Board members.

Board members are expected to attend a minimum of sixty percent (60%) of meetings annually. Telephone or conference call attendance is acceptable.

5.8 Communication

Ideas or concerns from Parishioners are to be brought to a Board member or to the attention of the Pastor as soon as possible.

The Secretary is expected to officially record all Board business and communicate it to Board members. Board meeting minutes will be made available to the Parish community upon request.

Electronic communication (e-mail) will be the primary mode of communication thus, access to e-mail is required.

5.9 Board Voting

The Board is required to formally vote on all material matters that may affect the well-being or direction of the Parish such as finances, by-laws, and outreach.

Each Board member has one equal vote; the Pastor is considered a member of the Board but does not have a vote.

A five (5) out of six (6) member attendance at the Board meeting will be required to be considered a voting quorum. A passing vote is considered to be a quorum minus one (1).

While it is preferred that Board members be physically present at any Board meetings where a vote will be taken, there may be times when this is not possible. In that event Board members can vote in one of the following two ways:

- a) Board members can attend the Board meeting via conference call. In this way they can be a part of the conversation that ensues and have an opportunity to be aware of all the issues involved.
- b) If a Board member cannot attend the meeting physically or over the phone, a Board member can vote electronically via email.

Any Board member may request a vote on any matter. In addition, any Board member may request a postponement of a vote if they believe that more input is needed from Board member(s) who are absent from a meeting, even if a quorum exists.

Board members will be required to abstain from voting on matters which may present a conflict of interest.

5.10 Committees

Will be determined and defined based on need.

5.11 Board Office Dismissal

Any Board member or Officer may be removed from membership or from office by a majority of all votes cast by Board members present, or by proxy, at any regular or special Board meeting, for conduct detrimental to the interests of the Parish. Grounds for dismissal may include but are not limited to breach of confidentiality, fiscal mismanagement, unauthorized use of church property, disrespectful or uncooperative behavior, or any other breach of expected Board function(s).

Any Board member or Officer will be entitled to a minimum of five (5) days written advance notice of such said dismissal.

5.12 Board Office Resignation

Any Board member may resign by providing thirty (30) days written notice of resignation to the Board.

5.13 Board Vacancies

Any Board vacancy occurring during the year may be appointed for the unexpired portion of the term by majority vote of the Board.

The Parish must officially approve Board appointed vacancies.

Any Board member appointed by the Board (and approved by the Parish) will hold that position until the next Parish Annual Meeting.

6 The Parish Community Forum

The Parish Community Forum (PCF) at Mary Magdalene Church provides an opportunity for the community to come together to share information, to express concerns and opinions, and to have a voice in the larger decisions that impact community life in significant ways. Decisions made at the PCF tend to be the decisions that affect everyone, especially those decisions based on the five criteria below. The biggest decisions may be brought to an all-parish vote, to maximize community involvement with the decision.

While the PCF is a decision making body, it is not the only decision making body. The bulk of parish decisions are made by those involved in that particular area of ministry. Mary Magdalene Church values empowerment, therefore people who are involved in committees are entrusted with the responsibility of making decisions that impact that area of church life. For example, those involved in the education of our children will make decisions regarding curriculum, times and locations of events, etc.

The PCF meets a minimum of four times a year. Additional meetings may be called for, based on need. Everyone is welcome to attend meetings, to raise questions or voice opinions. Voting will be limited to those who are registered members of the community and who are at least 18 years of age. The Pastor may share information, ask questions, raise concerns or express opinions; however the Pastor does not have a vote at PCF meetings.

Transparency is an important value at Mary Magdalene Church; therefore, at every PCF meeting, there will be updates from the Pastor and the Trustees. The Pastor will speak about things that are happening within the community, or areas the church is involved in outside of the community. Trustees will give a financial update and will address any issues that impact the

viability of the Church, for example issues regarding the lease, the building, utilities, etc. As the Church grows there may be parishioners, staff, committees, teams or ministries that will give updates on an occasional basis. All PCF meetings conclude with an Open Forum, at which any parishioner can raise issues or ask questions, which may lead to future agenda items.

The PCF is a place to listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit together. Everyone is valuable in this process! As such we need to listen to one another with an open heart, believing that all who are gathered have the best interest of the community at heart, even when someone's opinion is different from our own. Often we need to sit with different perspectives for a while before clarity comes, for this reason, decisions that come to the Forum customarily come twice, or more if needed, before a vote is taken.

6.1 Criteria for Decisions that require approval by the Parish Community Forum

Major policy decisions

Expenditures of \$5,000 or more from general funds, or expenditures outside the parish budget. The figure is subject to change due to inflation and the fiscal viability of the Church.

Projects that require a substantial amount of non-budgeted human resources. Substantial defined as 250 person hours per project per year.

Speaking in the name of the entire membership of Mary Magdalene Church.

Issues that strongly affect the on-going operation and growth of the parish.

Decisions that strongly affect the spirituality of the parish.

Amendments to By-Laws

During the course of ongoing business, possible amendments to the bylaws may be identified and brought to the Board's attention. Except for emergency changes which may require immediate action, proposed by-law changes will be recorded and saved for consideration during the annual review of the By-Laws.

Once per year, the Board will review the existing By-laws and any proposed amendments. Proposed amendments will be assessed by the Board. When an amendment meets with Board agreement (as specified in the Governance section), proposed wording will be drafted for review and approval by the Board.

Upon final approval of the draft language, the proposed amendment will be presented to the Parish Forum for review and affirmation following the standard Forum process. Upon affirmation by the Forum, the proposed amendment will go to an all parish vote. If approved, the By-Laws will be updated immediately to reflect the amendment and an official copy of the new By-Laws will be entered into the parish document repository.