

## **ARTICLE I**

1.1 The Parish is the local eucharistic community of the Church in a given locality; organized under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese whose ecclesiastical authority is its canonically consecrated Hierarchy. Locally, the Parish is headed by a canonically ordained and duly appointed Priest. The assignment of such appointed Priest shall bind the Parish to the Archdiocesan Regulations, Uniform Metropolis Regulations and Uniform Parish Regulations with the same force and effect as if the same were formally approved and adopted by the Parish.

1.2 The aims and purposes of the Parish are to keep, practice and proclaim the Orthodox Christian Faith pure and undefiled.

1.3 The organization shall be known as Traverse City Orthodox Mission Church. Within this document it shall be referred to as the Parish.

1.4 The Parish is located at P.O. Box 2356, Traverse City, Michigan 49685-2356.

1.5 The Church may have offices at such other place within the Grand Traverse Area as the Parish Council may, from time to time, appoint.

## **ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP**

2.1 Every person who is baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church is a Parishioner. The religious, moral and social duties of a Parishioner are to apply the tenets of the Orthodox Faith to his/her life and to: adhere to and live according to the tenets of the Orthodox faith; faithfully attend the Divine Liturgy and other worship services; participate regularly in the holy sacraments; respect all ecclesiastical authority and all governing bodies of the Church; be obedient in matters of the Faith, practice, and ecclesiastical order; contribute towards the progress of the Church's sacred mission; and be an effective witness and example of the Orthodox Faith and Traditions to all people.

A Parishioner in good standing practices all the religious and moral duties as described in this Section 1. At a minimum, a Parishioner in good standing must: be eighteen years of age or over; be current in his or her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish, abide by all the regulations herein stated and the Parish By-laws; and cooperate in every way towards the welfare and well being of the Parish. (Stewardship is recommended to be ten percent (10%) of one's annual income as stated in Holy Scripture to help meet the financial obligations of the Parish, the Metropolis and the Archdiocese.)

2.2 All members in good standing are eligible to vote at meetings of the members of The Parish provided they have been members for at least three (3) months prior to the date on which a meeting is held.

2.3 All members for at least three (3) months are eligible to vote in the annual elections.

2.4 All members, with the exception of salaried employees, are eligible for election to one of the elected bodies of the Parish, provided they have been a member for at least one year.

### **ARTICLE III** THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

3.1 The General Assembly is the Parish-wide meeting of the membership.

3.2 The General Assembly shall be convened at dates fixed by the Parish Council.

3.3 The membership shall be notified of meetings of the General Assembly by written notice and agenda, mailed at least two (2) weeks prior thereto. These meetings shall also be announced by the Priest at appropriate times during gatherings for religious services.

3.4 Special meetings of the membership may be convened by the Parish Council following public notice given at least three (3) days in advance of every special meeting.

### **ARTICLE IV** MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

4.1 The meeting of the General Assembly shall be called to order by the President of the Parish Council or his/her designate.

4.2. The meeting shall open with a prayer.

4.3 The quorum of the membership; is required for the General Assembly. A quorum shall consist of 33% of the membership eligible to vote.

4.4 If quorum of the membership is not in attendance, discussion of agenda items may occur, but formal action on the agenda or any item thereof must be deferred to a subsequent meeting of the General Assembly, which shall be called within 21 days.

4.5 If a quorum is determined to be in attendance, The General Assembly shall proceed as follows:

4.5.1 The Assembly shall elect a Chairperson to preside over the meeting.

4.5.2 The Secretary of the Parish Council shall serve as Secretary of the General Assembly, or in his/her absence, the Chairperson shall designate a Secretary pro-tem. Proceedings of the meeting are to be recorded as Minutes of The General Assembly and shall become part of the Parish's records. One copy of the Minutes shall be posted within the Parish.

4.5.3 The Secretary shall read the Minutes of the previous meeting of the membership for approval or correction.

4.5.4 The General Assembly shall proceed through the items of the published agenda which shall be identified by the Chairperson as either "informational" or "requiring action." At least one time per year, each organization or group within the Parish community shall make a report to the General Assembly describing its activities.

4.5.5 Items to be voted on at the General Assembly shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the members in good standing.

4.5.6 The business of the General Assembly shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

4.5.7 The General Assembly shall close with a prayer.

## **ARTICLE V ELECTIONS**

5.1 Elections for member of the Parish Council and the Board of Auditors shall be held annually, but no later than the end of October, as determined by the Parish Council.

5.2 Candidates for service on the Parish Council shall be nominated at a meeting of the General Assembly to be held at least three (3) weeks prior to the election. The list of nominees shall remain open until two (2) weeks prior to the election, during which time any two (2) members in good standing may submit in writing the nomination of another member in good standing, provided that such nominee has indicated his/her assent by countersigning the Statement of Nomination at the same meeting. The General Assembly shall elect the Board of Auditors (see section 7).

5.3 A Board of Elections, to consist of three (3) members, shall be elected at the aforesaid meeting of the General Assembly to supervise the forthcoming

election. No member of this Board or their immediate family shall be a nominee for, or a member of, either the Parish Council or Board of Auditors.

5.4 The Parish Council shall establish the list of members eligible to vote, and shall notify each Parishioner about his/her eligibility status two (2) weeks prior to an election. The Board of Elections shall conduct and oversee the elections.

5.5 A written notice stating the time and place of elections and including the names of candidates shall be mailed by the Parish Council to members not less than one week before the election. A similar notice shall be posted in the Parish.

5.6 Elections shall be by secret ballot or absentee ballot.

5.6.1 Elections shall be held in an announced, appropriate place in the Parish. Voting may take place on the designated and announced Sunday following the end of the Divine Liturgy. Ballots shall be deposited in a sealed box.

5.6.2 In the announcement of elections (see 5.6.1), the membership will be informed that if necessary an absentee ballot may be requested. To be considered valid, absentee ballots must be returned to the Parish by the commencement of the elections.

5.7. Ballots cast shall be counted after the closing of the polls.

5.8 The election results shall be entered in the official record of the Parish and shall show the number of votes cast for each candidate. Candidates receiving the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected for the relevant term of office. Within five (5) days of the election, the Priest shall forward the election results to The Diocese for ratification.

5.9 Following receipt of ratification from the Diocese all members of the newly elected Parish Council shall publicly and jointly take the oath of office on the last Sunday of October. The oath shall be administered to the newly elected by the Priest and shall be repeated by all the members of Parish Council.

5.10 Once the oath of office has been given, the new Parish Council is empowered to hold its first regular meeting as of January 1 of the subsequent year.

## **ARTICLE VI**

6.1 The Parish Council, the elected administrative body of the Parish, shall consist of nine (9) members in good standing. The Priest serves as an ex-officio member of the Council.

6.2 Members of the Council are elected to serve a three (3) year term. For the election of the 2008 Parish Council only, there will be:

- 4 seats retained for a 1-year term, consisting of the prior year's President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer (in subsequent years, 3 seats are retained)
- 3 seats open for a 2-year term;
- 3 seats open for a 3-year term.

6.3 To be eligible for election to the Parish Council, a person must be at least 21 years of age and a member in good standing for at least one year prior to the date of the election.

6.4 As the administrative body of the Parish, the Parish Council conducts the secular affairs of the Parish and oversees the maintenance and repair of the Parish property, establishes a stewardship committee to implement and expand the stewardship program of the Parish, employs or discharges all Parish personnel, collects the revenue of the Parish, issues receipts thereof and pays by check the salaries of the Parish personnel and Parish expenses.

6.4.1. The Parish Council shall report regularly to the General Assembly on the secular affairs of the Parish and shall annually present the proposed operation budget for approval at the last regular meeting of the prior year.

6.5 The Parish Council shall hold regular meetings at least one each month. Special meetings may be called when deemed necessary by the President, the Priest, or a majority of the members of the Council.

6.6 Five (5) members of the Parish Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

6.7 The Parish Council's regular monthly meetings shall be open to members of the Parish. Parish members are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Parish Council any matters deemed important to the affairs of the Parish, for consideration by the Parish Council.

6.8 The officers of the Parish Council are the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer, all of whom shall be elected for a one-year term. They shall be elected by majority vote of the membership of the Council as the first order of business at the first meeting in January.

6.9 The officers shall have all the legal powers and shall perform all legal duties incidental to their respective offices.

6.10 The duties of the President include: convene and preside over the meetings of the Parish Council, open the meetings of the General Assembly, prepare the agenda of meetings of both bodies for distribution, name chairpersons of standing committees to the Parish Council, appoint sub-committees of the Parish Council, represent the Council at diocesan or archdiocesan clergy-laity meetings, exercise leadership in advancing the goals and purpose of the Parish.

6.11 The Vice President shall carry out the duties of the President in his/her absence and responsibilities assigned by the President.

6.12 The Secretary shall record all minutes of the meetings of the Parish Council and shall be responsible for all written communications of the Council. Draft minutes of a meeting of the Council shall be submitted for approval or correction at the next meeting of the Council.

6.13 The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial records, receipts and deposits, and payment of all Parish obligations. These are regularly submitted to the Parish Council for approval. The Treasurer shall give a financial report at regular monthly meetings of the Council.

6.14 All checks, drafts, and orders for the payment of money shall be signed by any two (2) officers of the Council, usually the Treasurer and the President.

6.15 In exercising its responsibility to oversee the repair of Parish property, the Parish Council is empowered to appropriate and allocate the funds necessary for any one single capital expenditure up to a maximum of \$5000. Expenditures in excess of this amount must first receive the approval of the General Assembly.

6.16 Should a seat on the Parish Council become vacant, the unexpired term shall be filled by a member of the Parish in good standing elected by the Parish Council and approved by the Metropolitan.

6.17 Should an officer resign his/her office, the resignation is to be made in writing and shall take effect from the time of its receipt by the Parish Council unless a different time is specified in the written resignation. Resignation from the office does not implicitly mean resignation from the Parish Council. An office vacated by resignation shall be filled for the unexpired term by election conducted at a meeting of the Parish Council from among its membership, with the exception of the office of President, which shall be filled by the Vice President.

6.18 No more than one (1) member of an immediate family household shall serve on the Parish Council concurrently.

6.19 No salaried employee of the Parish may serve on the Parish Council.

6.20 Members of the Parish Council must attend Parish Council meetings. No proxies are permitted. To the extent permitted by applicable law, in the event of

an emergency, a special telephonic meeting may be called by the Priest and Parish Council President. A member who misses three (3) meetings without justifiable cause may be relieved of his/her office upon prior notice to the member and the majority vote of the Parish Council.

6.21 The duties of the Parish Council shall be governed by the constitution and regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The Parish Council may exercise all additional authority consonant with the regulations of the Archdiocese, the Parish By-Laws and the limitations imposed by the state in which the Parish is incorporated.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **BOARD OF AUDITORS**

7.1 The Board of Auditors shall consist of three (3) members elected to serve a one-year term, commencing on January 1 of the year immediately following their election. A member cannot serve simultaneously on the Parish Council and the Board of Auditors.

7.2 The Board of Auditors shall audit regularly the accounting records of the Parish and shall prepare a report of the audit for presentation to the Parish Council and General Assembly at its spring meeting. The Parish Council shall send a copy of the report to the Metropolitan and the Archdiocese.

7.3 A vacancy on the Board of Auditor shall be filled by a member of the Parish elected by the Parish Council for the unexpired portion of the term of office.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

8.1 Stewardship pledges and contributions of individual members of the Parish shall be kept strictly confidential. The Parish Council shall be permitted to disseminate information concerning amounts of contributions withholding the names of individual donors and strictly protecting the anonymity of the individual contributors.

8.2 The amounts of individual memorial contributions shall be kept strictly confidential. Family members shall be notified by Treasurer of only the names of individuals who contributed to the memorial. The Treasurer may also report to the family upon request the total amount of memorial contributions.

8.3 Limited Disclosure. Only The Treasurer and Stewardship Chairman and others appointed by this Council as deemed necessary (e.g., accountants) shall have access to all information otherwise deemed confidential under this Article.

## **ARTICLE IX**

9.1 The Parish shall hold title to all real property acquired by it and shall have authority to sell, convey, lease, mortgage or otherwise dispose of said property in accordance with the provisions of the Special Regulation and Uniform Parish Regulations of The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

9.2 All restricted gifts, bequests and devises shall be considered for acceptance by the Parish Council and, if accepted, shall be administered by the Parish Council in accordance with the donor's instructions. All unrestricted contributions, including memorial contributions, shall be utilized by the Parish Council at its discretion.

9.3 In the event any gifts, bequests, or devises shall be deemed no longer of use, they shall be stored in a designated appropriate, accessible place or as determined by the Parish Council. They may be returned to the donor or the most immediate known relative of the donor. Lacking response from donor or last known relative, the Parish Council reserves the right to divest itself of the property as it deems appropriate.

9.4 The Parish shall maintain segregated and restricted funds authorized for specific purposes.

9.4.1 The Parish shall maintain a segregated and restricted fund designated as the "Capital Fund" for the specific purpose of preserving and restoring the real property and fixtures of the Parish.

9.4.2 The Parish shall maintain a segregated and restricted fund for the specific purpose of assisting Parishioners in need. This fund shall be designated "Crisis Fund." The Priest administers these monies. In his periodic reports each year to the Parish Council on their use, he maintains the confidentiality of the Parishioners assisted by this fund.

9.4.3 The Parish shall maintain a segregated fund for the specific purpose of depositing and dispersing restricted gifts accepted by the Parish Council. This fund shall be designated as the "Restricted Donation Fund."

## **ARTICLE X FISCAL YEAR**

10.1 The fiscal year of the Parish shall commence on the first day in January in each year and end on the following 31<sup>st</sup> day of December.

## **ARTICLE XI**

11.1 The Parish shall have a seal bearing its name in a form acceptable under The Laws of the State of Michigan. The Parish Seal shall be kept in the Parish Office.

## **ARTICLE XII**

12.1 Any matters not addressed by these By-Laws shall be governed by the Special Regulations and Uniform Parish Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. These By-Laws shall be interpreted and applied in a manner that does not conflict with the provisions of the aforesaid Special Regulations and Uniform Parish Regulations of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

12.2 Any question of interpretation of the By-Laws shall be referred to the Parish Council which shall resolve it at a regular monthly meeting by majority vote.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAWS**

13.1 An amendment to the By-Laws may be proposed by any member of the Parish.

13.2 A proposed amendment shall be circulated and posted with the agenda of a regular General Assembly or duly announced special meeting of the members of the Parish at which the amendment shall be discussed and voted on. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members in attendance and voting at such meeting shall be required to approve an amendment to the By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS AND BUDGETS**

14.1 At the first Parish Assembly of each year the Parish Council shall present a financial report covering all income and expenses for the preceding year.

14.2 The Budget for the next fiscal year shall be submitted for approval at the Fall Parish Assembly. The Audit Report shall be submitted for approval at the Spring Parish Assembly.