

Appendix A

Foundation Documents for the Pastoral Council

There are many new terms and concept employed in this document. The following quotes and references are intended to provide a basis for understanding the foundation and function of a pastoral council.

Discernment

Discernment can be described as “‘graced ability’ Ernest Larsen speaks of an experience of the indwelling God, a gift that represents ‘considerable growth and expertise in the life of the Spirit. . . It is a call to be in relationship with the Lord; a call to respond to the Spirit who speaks in our hearts and through our lives; a call to believe in the God of the gathering, the God who speaks to us in and through one another.’” McKinney, pp. 15-16 Discernment is a process which takes time and patience. We need to develop our listening abilities and the ability to “let go and let God.” Through this discernment, openness and prayer we develop a model of working which is called SHARED WISDOM. It is this model that we have chosen to be the direction of our pastoral ministry in the establishment of a Pastoral Council here at St. John’s which will respond to the invitation of the Second Vatican Council and our search as a Governance Planning Group. We thus respond to the mission “to build, strengthen, and nourish church.” This church model we propose “allows for the collaboration of all those involved. This model is based on the belief that the presence of the Spirit is in and with those called TO BE AND TO BUILD CHURCH, that is, those whose lives of growth in holiness allow them to be church and whose commitment to ministry calls them to build church. . . The being and building of Church is a dynamic process and must flow from the lived experience of those committed to that dynamic.” McKinney, pp v-vi We thus present our Covenant with each other, with the Community of St. John Neumann and God in response to our Baptismal/Confirmation call “TO BE AND TO BUILD CHURCH.”

Service

“The watershed of contemporary Catholic understanding of ministry (Lat. ministerium, “service”), the public service rendered by members of the Church came in Vatican II (1962-65). . . .Basic to its understanding of ministry in the Church is the council’s recognition that all the faithful, by Baptism and Confirmation, are called to take an active responsibility for the community and mission of the Church. All the baptized participate in the mission of Christ, who was himself the minister of God’s presence and purpose in the world. (mission, the purpose for which the Church has been sent’”

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CATHOLICISM, Harper Collins, Richard P. McBrien, general editor.

Mission

This mission is fleshed out in what will be referred to as pastoral ministry (Lat. pastor, “shepherd”). *“Pastoral Ministry is commonly described as the selfrealizing activity of the Church whereby the saving and shepherding care of God for all peoples is made present in the world.”* IBID. This ministry *“is a calling, a vocation. One is moved by God’s grace, touched by God’s intervention in one’s life, called to serve in a special way, to give of one’s life or talents or time or all of the above.”*

SHAREDWISDOM, Mary Benet McKinney, O.S.B.

Sacramental Gifts

In the Baptismal Liturgy when the person who has been baptized is anointed with Chrism the presider prays, *“God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin, given you a new birth by water and the HOLY SPIRIT, and welcomed you into his holy people. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation. As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.”* (Baptismal Liturgy). The HOLY SPIRIT becomes an active part in the baptized’s life. The HOLY SPIRIT brings all the baptized together into the community that we call Church. This is more specifically celebrated and confirmed in its fullness in the sacrament of Confirmation. This is indeed the age of the Holy Spirit and is the foundation of the shared wisdom that we will be addressing. *“We are called, we are chosen. We are Christ for one another. We are promised to tomorrow, while we are for him today. We are sign, we are wonder. We are sower, we are seed. We are harvest, we are hunger. We are question, we are creed.”* ANTHEM, Tom Conry

Through Baptism and Confirmation all are called to exercise both their right and responsibility to participate fully in the life and mission of the Church. This mission of the Church is rooted in the mission of Christ who commanded everyone - clergy, religious and laity - to "Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all of creation." (Mark 16:15).

Gifts of Spirit

We are called to holiness, to let the gift of the SPIRIT grow within us. The SPIRIT is found in the Church not so much in individuals but in the sharing of the gifts of the SPIRIT in community (Church). This requires prayer and an *“ability to ‘let go’ and seek the will of the Spirit in the gathered wisdom rather than in the wisdom of any one individual.”* McKinney, p.17 Prayer is a very important part of the life of the spirit, both a personal prayer life and a communal prayer life. *“The call to spirituality (a life in and with the Spirit) challenges me to develop a relationship with God that results in a deepening intimacy with the Lord and enables me to grow in that difficult ‘letting go’ stance.”* IBID. p.19 *“It is only out of a deep and personal spirituality, a growing awareness of the Lord in my life, that I can surrender to the Spirit in a group, sharing wisdom and treasuring the wisdom of others.”* p.20 This is developed in prayer, a time of reflection, discernment, openness and listening to the word of God and letting the Spirit work in our lives. Our eyes are opened to different ways of seeing things and our part in the process. We pray in the same fashion together, to discern and seek from our shared wisdom what we feel is the direction that God is pointing, leading and guiding us.

Pastoral Council and Church Teachings

This vocation of all the People of God, the community of believers in Jesus Christ, to promote the Reign of God on earth permeates the teachings and spirit of the documents of Vatican Council II. All members of the Church - laity, religious and clergy- according to their proper charisms and roles collaborate in the responsibility for fulfilling its mission. Vatican Council II urged active involvement in the life of the Church by emphasizing the principles of collaborative responsibility, consultation and lay participation.

The laity have an active part to play in the life and activity of the Church. Their activity is so necessary within Church communities that without it the apostolate of the pastors is generally unable to achieve its full effectiveness.

Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 10.

Pastors also know that they themselves were not meant by Christ to shoulder alone the entire saving mission of the Church toward the world. On the contrary, they understand that it is their noble duty so to shepherd the faithful and recognize their service and charismatic gifts that all according to their proper roles may cooperate in this common undertaking with one heart.

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 30.

The Pastor needs to consult with the laity who in turn have the right to express their views and concerns to their Pastor. An important structure initiated to foster this collaboration in the mission of the Church by all its members is the Parish Pastoral Council. The Parish Pastoral Council assists pastors in achieving the cooperation of the parishioners and staff in the task of carrying out the mission of the Church on the parish level.

While the Parish Pastoral Council is not explicitly mentioned in the documents of Vatican Council II, the theological principles which underlie it are clearly enunciated and a rationale for its development is given.

By reason of the knowledge, competence or pre-eminence which they have, the laity are empowered, indeed sometimes obliged, to manifest their opinion in those things which pertain to the good of the Church. If the occasion should arise, this should be done through the institutions established by the Church for that purpose and always with truth, courage and prudence and with reverence and charity towards those who by reason of their office, represent the person of Christ.

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, 37.

The 1983 Code of Canon Law gives juridic value to Vatican Council II's teaching on the vocation and mission of the People of God and provides structures to express and encourage collaborative responsibility on every level of ecclesial administration.

Canon 208 speaks of everyone's responsibility to work together in the building up of the Body of Christ.

In virtue of their rebirth in Christ there exists among all the Christian faithful a true equality with regard to dignity and the activity whereby all cooperate in the building up of the Body of Christ in accord with each one's own condition and function.

Code of Canon Law, 208.

Canon 519 calls for the Pastor to develop structures which incorporate the principles of collaborative responsibility and of consultation with the staff and parishioners.

The pastor is the proper shepherd of the parish entrusted to him, exercising pastoral care in the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share; in accord with the norm of law he carries out for his community the duties of teaching, sanctifying and governing, with the cooperation of other presbyters or deacons and the assistance of lay members of the Christian faithful.

Code of Canon Law, 519.

This Canon emphasizes the role of the community which gives meaning to the office of Pastor and it places him in the context of mutual collaboration with the staff and parishioners in promoting the mission of the Church.

Canon 536 specifically deals with Parish Pastoral Councils.

After the diocesan bishop has listened to the presbyteral council and if he judges it opportune, a pastoral council is to be established in each parish; the pastor presides over it, and through it the Christian faithful along with those who share in the pastoral care of the parish in virtue of their office give their help in fostering pastoral activity. This pastoral council possesses a consultative vote only and is governed by norms determined by the diocesan bishop.

Code of Canon Law, 536.

It is envisioned that the Parish Pastoral Council is to be a major consultative body in the parish which advises the Pastor who presides over the Council. It is composed of the Parochial Vicar(s) and representative parish staff members who carry out the pastoral functions of the parish and of laity who are representatives of the membership of the parish. The purpose of the Parish Pastoral Council is to foster full participation of the entire parish in the life and mission of the Church which reflects the mission of Christ who was sent "...to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners..." (Luke 4:18) (Adapted from Archdiocese of Philadelphia "Rationale for Parish Pastoral Councils, Based in Documents of The Second Vatican Council Based on the 1983 Code of Canon Law", 2003)

Appendix B

Examples of Pastoral Council Agenda Items

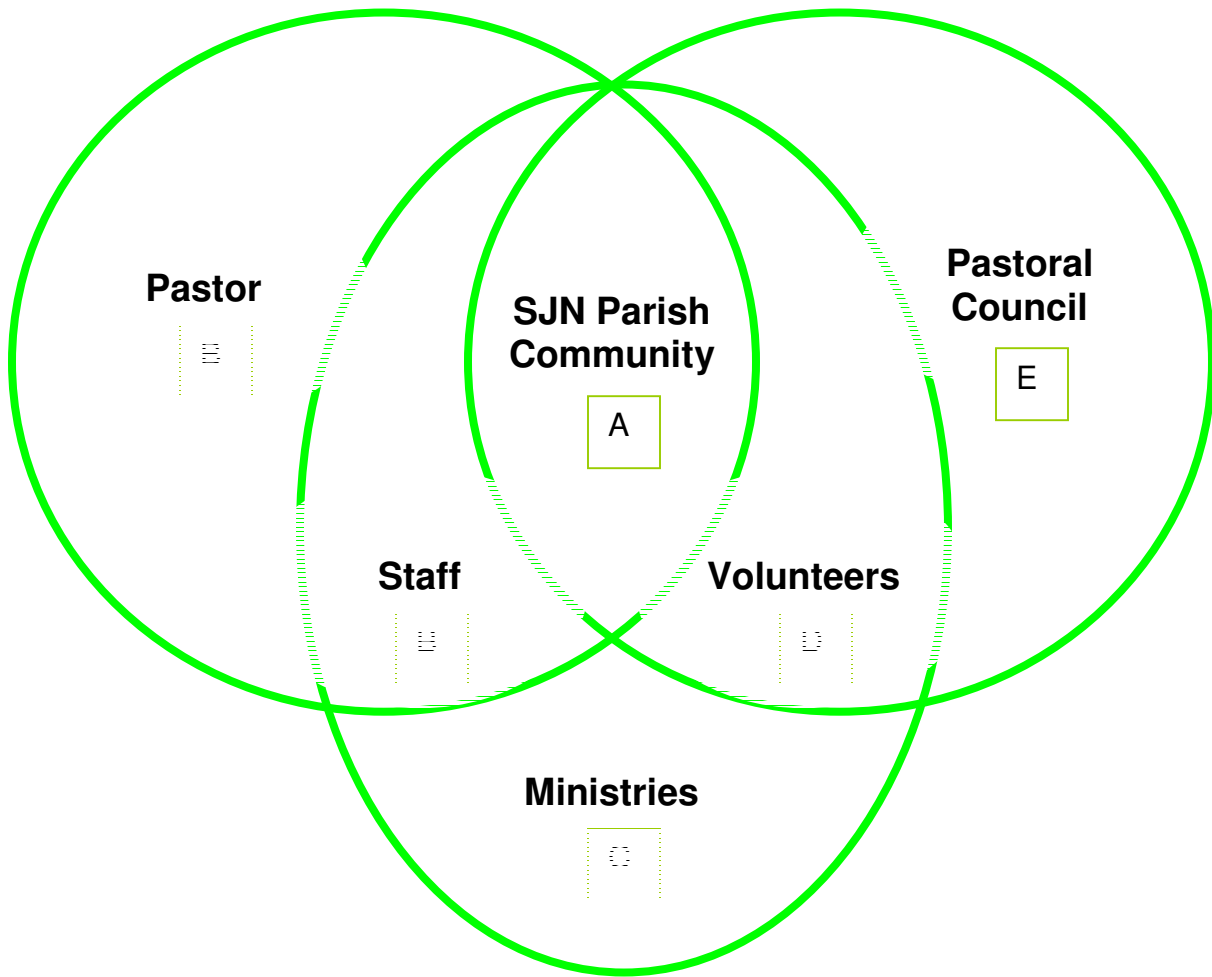
Following are some of the pastoral activities which could constitute agenda items for the Parish Pastoral Council:

Review our original Master Plan and evaluate it.

Establish goals for the next five years with a five year plan in mind.
Review Staff needs
How can we revive and improve Youth Ministry?
Prioritize physical plant needs.
Plan and direct a Financial Campaign.
Review the idea of Stewardship.
Revisit the Ministry Fair.
Investigate the value of a Board of Education.
Consider ways for the development of the spiritual life of the parish.
How to stimulate a response to Adult Education?
How can we introduce Vatican II concepts?
How does shared wisdom become an intimate part of our community?
How does the Pastoral Council keep fresh, motivates and on top of new concepts?
Address Listening Session observations in depth.
What kind of ministries would we like to see develop at St. John's? Plan out in detail strategies and execution.
Social activities and senior activities, are they needed and will there be a sufficient response?
How do we deal with development of the parish as a whole?
How do we maintain diversity and minister to those diversities in the parish?
What is the status of our ecumenical involvement? Interfaith involvement?
Review and discuss Marilyn Wickel's project for her D.Min. How does it apply to our parish?

Appendix C

**St. John Neumann
Pastoral Council Communication Plan**



Parish Communication Diagram

Pastoral Council Communication Plan

Objectives of the Pastoral Council Communication Plan are:

1. To communicate with all parish entities in a spirit of openness, mutual respect, and collaboration as recommended by the Shared Wisdom model.
2. To promote awareness of the Council's activities within the parish community, ministries, staff, etc. (see 'Communication Diagram').
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of our communications.

Introduction:

The purpose of this communication plan is to achieve the vision that is outlined in the St. John Neumann Pastoral Council Covenant Document.

The Pastoral Council is to be viewed as a part of the overall parish community and should work in collaboration with all elements of the SJN parish, as appropriate. It should not be viewed as an isolated ministry. In order to be successful in that respect, communications must be two-way and frequent enough and convey genuine openness.

While there are several avenues of communication necessary in the making/maintenance of a Pastoral Council, this document will focus largely on the avenue between the Pastoral Council and the general parish community. The remaining avenues, depicted in the Communication Diagram, are simply touched upon here. This document is a living one which should be modified as the Pastoral Council matures.

Note that while the employment of multiple communication modes gives better exposure, it is important to prevent dilution via too much communication that may cause a 'fizzle' effect. The Pastoral Council, in conjunction with the pastor's communication strategies, should regularly assess what messages warrant which communication vehicle. For example, the SJN web site could contain a wealth of information for the electronically proactive population; and the 'special' forms of communication could highlight the most important messages. The 2004 Listening Sessions reflected the time constraints of families today. It must be recognized that the majority does not seek out 'news' but does depend on options to read or even *react* to information.

Pastoral Council communications should be filed together with accomplishments for historical and reference purposes.

Sensitivity to privacy/confidentiality must be considered in any outward communication. Publications should be previewed by at least two other members (including the pastor) of the Pastoral Council. Rules for communication should include accuracy and timeliness and should reflect an informative role versus a spokesperson role.

Lastly, there should be evaluation mechanisms. SJNPC Communication Plan Attachment 1 is a proposed checklist that the Pastoral Council should regularly use to review any Pastoral Council communication **before** it is published, announced, etc. SJNPC Communication Plan Attachment 2 is an example of a communication evaluation form that the Pastoral Council could regularly use to measure the effectiveness of the communication elements of the group.

Modes of Communication:

- ① Bulletin
- ② Announcement from the Pulpit
- ③ Postings and Representatives Present in the Narthex
- ④ Mailing and E-mail
- ⑤ Word of Mouth
- ⑥ SJN Web Site
- ⑦ Meetings

Note that the schedule for proposed communications is included in SJNPC Communication Plan Attachment 3.

Communication Channels and Venues

A

General SJN Parish Community

Two-way communication is essential. This will allow for the parish to best grow together toward the future vision of SJN. Outwardly, there needs to be quarterly communication of progress. This should include publication of periodic accomplishments and plans for the following quarter.

① Bulletin

While there is no one communication vehicle that works for the general public, various modes should be considered. The bulletin is the focal point for all parish activities and should contain a section entitled “Pastoral Council Corner”. In order to cycle through to the parish attendees, the entries should repeat for three to four weeks. When a new item appears in that ‘corner’, this should be noted in the end-of-mass announcements. This could also serve to generate more interest in reading the bulletin.

The content should include a brief summary of the most recent Pastoral Council meeting, and the members should alternate responsibility by submitting this element for approval/input by the attendees. This entry should contain a “...summary submitted by...” closing to further promote the openness of the individual representative to specific conversation.

② Announcement from the Pulpit

A council representative should address the parish periodically (at least twice a year) at the end of mass. In keeping with the openness of Vatican II, this effort containing a ‘short’ focus item will promote the underlying fact that ‘we are all in this together’. The content should be agreed to in advance by the pastor.

③ Postings and Representatives Present in the Narthex

Occasionally, when there is an item that warrants more exposure, there should be a posting in the Narthex. As appropriate, this could be combined with an announcement and with the availability of a Pastoral Council representative(s) in the Narthex. This will be essential for recruiting interested potential members.

As for exposure, the Pastoral Council mission and viability is enhanced by the posting of photos to strengthen the link between this team and the parish community. The parish may see and become familiar with *names* of council members, but the intercommunication will be energized by the accessibility that begins with physically identifying individual members.

④ Mailing and E-mail

Mailings should be used as necessary and logical and will be based on available funding. Wherever possible, the mailings should be combined with the communications of the pastor or of other ministries. E-mail is an efficient, low-cost, active form of communication. The challenges here are the maintenance of a 'living' e-mail ID distribution list (as people change their e-mail providers) and the quirks of the e-mail medium (mailbox full, message size limitations, etc.). For these reasons, e-mail should be considered as a supplemental communication vehicle.

⑥ SJN Web Site

Publicity on the web site (Pastoral Council section) should be considered but would be reliant on a resource to maintain that element. The section should include our mission, covenant, goals, accomplishments, and approved summary of minutes of the recent monthly meeting (as mentioned in the 'Bulletin' section above). As with any communication vehicle, there should be an evaluation of the success of the particular mode of communication. This could be measured by both an electronic count of people who entered the web site as well as a one-question exit survey ("Did you find what you were looking for?") with room for comments. In addition, consideration should be given to assigning an email address for the Pastoral Council allowing for suggestions and communication. In addition to posting on the web-site, this address should be published on the cover of the bulletin. Alternatively, the 'ccsjn' ID could suffice if the email ID count is at its limit.

⑦ Meetings

There should be semi-annual 'town-hall' meetings with summaries published the following month. Key periods for these meetings would be March (early in the month so as not to impact Holy Week preparations) and October. These forums serve as the best place for two-way communication that will aid the pastor and the Pastoral Council, therefore, various members (at least 50%) of the council should be in attendance to enhance, prompt and record input received relative to its mission. However, these semi-annual meetings should include information reported on all (or about one-half of the ministries for each meeting) and can be either in the form of the pastor's address or ministry representatives' presentations. Additional items should be introduced, as appropriate. The basic content of these meetings must, of course, be planned. The agenda must be clearly conveyed in order to generate the desired interest in attending, the logic here being to improve the connectedness of the parish.

Another opportunity for Pastoral Council communication would be monthly coffee socials after Mass (*logical time to be determined*). The listening sessions exposed the need for increased warmth among the parish, and these socials should

provide a first step toward that end. In order to be successful and prevent ‘fizzle’, the Pastoral Council should initially add interactivity, such as icebreakers.

Finally, it is imperative that *active listening* should be exercised in all two-way communications.

B

Pastor

The pastor serves both as Parish Leader and member of the Pastoral Council. It is through the former role that the Pastoral Council should maintain a communication connection with the SJN Staff. However, members could be invited to specific staff meetings, or as otherwise designated, at the pastor’s invitation. Likewise, the pastor is the link in providing input/feedback from the SJN Staff.

The pastor and the other council members will all work in collaboration, with consensus, to develop common strategies for the enrichment of parish life. The pastor’s corner in the Pastoral Council meetings is just one place where this communication link is exercised.

C

Ministries

Representatives should be assigned a liaison role with particular ministries (ongoing as well as occasional ministries) and should retain an open dialogue with these. The objectives of this role are to maintain two-way communications, to learn of needs and concerns of the ministries and to enhance collaboration. The representative is to report back to the Pastoral Council with the outcome. Based on that discussion, potential items should be added to the Pastoral Council prioritization list for appropriate attention.

The frequency of these meetings or dialogues will vary, but it is recommended that they occur regularly so that the Pastoral Council does not lose sight of the inclusiveness and collaboration that will enhance the SJN community. Since it is vital to the cohesiveness of the parish, a mid-year check should help measure the occurrences as well as the success of these communications. SJNPC Communication Plan Appendix “B” contains a related evaluation item.

D

Volunteers In General

From time to time there will be a need to address volunteers in general. Again, this would be an opportunity for Pastoral Council representatives to listen to volunteers’ concerns as well as to assess their commitment.

E

Pastoral Council Member-to-Member

Communication within the council should follow the Shared Wisdom model. That includes the rules for effective meetings, protocol, open mindedness and mutual respect. Expected outcomes for Pastoral Council activities need to be clear so that the council maintains focus. The Pastoral Council mission and activities should always align with the SJN mission. Much of this section is very well elaborated in Sr. Mary Benet's publication regarding the Shared Wisdom Model.

SJNPC Communication Plan Attachment 1

A. Pastoral Council Communication Checklist

This is a proposed checklist of criteria that the Pastoral Council should regularly use to review any communication piece **before** it is sent out from the Pastoral Council and assure the quality of the communication.

- ✓ Are the Pastoral Council minutes summarized regularly in the parish bulletin and posted for all to see?
- ✓ Does the communication piece have a contact person, phone number, e-mail address, etc. so that if someone wants to discuss the item they know who to call?
- ✓ Is a pulpit announcement scheduled and does it makes sense to use this means of communication? Should we include the piece in the parish newsletter?
- ✓ Is the subject we are communicating a pastoral topic? Is it within our mission?
- ✓ Have we performed a survey recently? Should we include some questions for feedback? (Note: Supply contact info for responses.)
- ✓ Do we have a town meeting scheduled? (Note: Develop a list for the discussion.)
- ✓ Should we post the communication in the Narthex or in any other space, e.g., parish center/offices?
- ✓ Have we met with any ministries recently, and is there information from those meetings that we should communicate to the parish as a whole?
- ✓ Have we been clear in our message? Have we used confusing terminology?

SJNPC Communication Plan Attachment 2

B. Pastoral Council Communication Periodic Evaluation Form

This is a proposed example of a checklist that the Pastoral Council could regularly use to measure the effectiveness of the communication elements of the group. It is recommended that this be used for quarterly assessment.

Use a scale of 0-3 (0 means nothing happens; 1 means that the item described happens occasionally and that the quality is minimal; 2 means the item described happens with some regularity with average quality; 3 means that the item described happens regularly and the quality of the communication is very good).

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Pastoral Council minutes are summarized in the parish bulletin and posted for all to see |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | There is a method developed for Pastoral Council to receive input from parishioners |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Pastoral Council has focus groups of parishioners regarding major issues facing the parish |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Pastoral Council encourages/recommends input to a parish newsletter |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | The bulletin is used regularly for communication |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Where feasible, pulpit announcements are employed to alert parishioners to needs and important parish issues |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | The needs of the parishioners are regularly assessed in a variety of ways (questionnaires, focus groups, small groups meeting for "coffee", town hall meetings) |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Pastoral Council uses the narthex effectively (postings/representative presence) |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Pastoral Council meets regularly with ministries. |

SJNPC Communication Plan Attachment 3

C. Pastoral Council Communication Schedule

The sample schedule below serves as a *guideline* depiction of a proposed annual communication plan. The Pastoral Council will designate the calendar for each ensuing year. Ministry meetings for the Pastoral Council liaisons are not shown here as they will vary, ***but it is imperative that they do, in fact, occur in order to maintain collaboration and cohesiveness.***

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report on 4th Quarter and plan for 1st Quarter ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| February | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-Annual Town Hall Meeting ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report on 1st Quarter and plan for 2nd Quarter ▪ Report on Semi-Annual Town Hall Meeting ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual Volunteer Meeting (or write-up) ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| June | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| July | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report on 2nd Quarter and plan for 3rd Quarter ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| August | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| September | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Semi-Annual Town Hall Meeting ▪ Report on 3rd Quarter and plan for 4th Quarter ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| November | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report on Semi-Annual Town Hall Meeting ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |
| December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pastoral Council Meeting ▪ Monthly Coffee |