

1 **GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH of ST. PAUL’S**  
2 **PARISH BYLAWS**

3 (Revised and Ratified in December 2022)  
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6 **PREAMBLE**  
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9 By virtue of the authority granted in the uniform parish regulations of the Greek Orthodox  
10 Archdiocese of America, Part Three, Chapter One, Article 21, the Parish Assembly of the Greek  
11 Orthodox Church of ST. PAUL’S in SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, adopts the provisions contained  
12 herein, same having been approved in advance by the Metropolitan of Metropolis of Atlanta. In  
13 so adopting these provision, the Parish Assembly recognizes that the provisions are to serve as  
14 bylaws that address themselves to the requirements of local needs of the community of the Greek  
15 Orthodox Church of ST. PAUL’S in SAVANNAH. It is further recognized that by so adopting  
16 these provision, they become appended to the Uniform Parish Regulations, and nothing  
17 contained herein is to be construed in a manner inconsistent with the spirit of said Regulations.  
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20 **ARTICLE I**  
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22 **Name and Purpose**  
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24 The Greek Orthodox Church of ST. PAUL’S in SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, established in 1907,  
25 is the official name of the parish, a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State  
26 of GEORGIA hereinafter referred to as “Parish”.  
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28 The Parish recognizes and adopts as its purpose the aims and purposes set forth in Part One,  
29 Article 15 of the Uniform Parish Regulations. In addition, it is the aim and purpose of the Parish  
30 to particularize those specific purposes and assume them as goals in fulfilling the lives of its  
31 members with the enrichment of the Orthodox Christian Faith.  
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34 **ARTICLE II**  
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36 **Parishioners**  
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38 Any person, eighteen years of age or over, who was baptized according to the rites of the  
39 Church, or was received into the Church through Chrismation, who lives according to the Faith  
40 and canons of the Church, abides by the Uniform Parish Regulations and these appended bylaws,  
41 and fulfills his or her financial obligation of the Parish, and cooperates in every way towards the

42 well-being of the Parish is a member in good standing of the Parish. Stewardship is treasure,  
43 time and talent.

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45 The definition of “fulfilling one’s financial obligation to the Parish” is by necessity a flexible  
46 one. Generally, for purposes of voting in Parish Assemblies and elections, one is considered to  
47 have fulfilled his or her stewardship and financial obligations to the Parish if he or she has  
48 pledged and paid an amount certain for the year prior to the current year and has pledged an  
49 amount to the Parish for the current year. However, in the event an individual refuses or neglects  
50 to pledge a specific amount, but he or she has committed himself spiritually, morally and  
51 financially to the Greek Orthodox Faith and the parish and the records of the parish so reflect the  
52 financial commitment, he or she will be considered to have fulfilled his or her financial  
53 obligations and be eligible to vote. (Stewardship is recommended to be ten percent (10%) of  
54 one’s annual income as stated in Holy Scripture to help meet the financial obligations of the  
55 Parish, the Metropolis and the Archdiocese.)

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57 A decrease or modification in a member’s stewardship commitment within fifteen (15) days of a  
58 scheduled Parish Assembly meeting shall negate the member’s right to vote in said meeting.

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60 New members to the Parish will have met their financial obligation to the Parish by merely  
61 pledging a sum certain for the current year. The same shall be true of persons not currently  
62 members in good standing.

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64 There will be no charge by the Parish for sacraments and special services such as weddings,  
65 baptisms, memorial services, etc. Donations to the Parish for such services will be voluntary.

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## 68 **ARTICLE III**

### 69 **Parish Assembly**

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72 In addition to the guidelines and requirements relative to the conduct of Parish Assemblies  
73 specified in Article 31 of the Uniform Parish Regulations, the Parish adopts the following rules  
74 and regulations as controlling its local Parish Assemblies:

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76 A. The presence of thirty (30) “Parishioners” shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of  
77 any business. The Parishioners at a regular or special Parish Assembly meeting at which  
78 a quorum was present when initially convened may continue until adjournment to validly  
79 and properly transact all appropriate business and take any proper actions  
80 notwithstanding the fact that such attendance at such meeting may subsequently drop  
81 below thirty (30) Parishioners; provided that for any action which requires a two-thirds  
82 (2/3) vote at a first called meeting there must be at least thirty (30) Parishioners present to  
83 approve such action. If a quorum cannot be achieved, no vote can be taken. Within  
84 twenty-one (21) days, a Parish Assembly shall be called a second time. At such time,  
85 decisions may be taken by the number of parishioners in good standing present, with the  
86 exception of matters pertaining to the purchase, sale or encumbering of Parish property  
87 which shall require a quorum.

- 88 B. Regular meetings of the Parish Assembly shall be held during the first and fourth quarter  
89 of each year. Special Parish Assemblies may be convened as set out in Article VI,  
90 Section 2 of the Uniform Parish Regulations.
- 91 C. At the fourth quarter Parish Assembly, the Parish Council shall submit a proposed Parish  
92 budget for the following year, which shall be subject to final approval at the next first  
93 quarter Parish Assembly, which shall reflect, at a minimum, the Fair Share Assessment to  
94 the Archdiocese.
- 95 D. At the first quarter Parish Assembly the first order of business shall be a report by the  
96 immediate past President or Treasurer of the Parish Council providing a financial  
97 statement of the Parish for the immediately preceding year, said report to include a  
98 statement of receipts and expenditures derived from all properties owned by the Parish.
- 99 E. The Parish Council shall not exceed the approved annual expenditure of any major  
100 expense category in the Parish budget by more than ten (10) percent. Any expenditures  
101 in a major expense category in excess of said amount shall require approval by a Parish  
102 Assembly.
- 103 F. At the first quarter Parish Assembly, a vote on the final approval of the proposed budget  
104 shall be required, with passage necessitating approval by majority.
- 105 G. The Parish Council shall publish all documentary material reflecting all reports on the  
106 budgets to be submitted at all Parish Assemblies and cause same to be made available to  
107 all parishioners no later than seven (7) days prior to the first and fourth quarter Parish  
108 Assemblies.
- 109 H. *Robert's Rules of Order* shall control the order of business only if Parish Assembly is  
110 unable to reach consensus, and to the extent that it is not inconsistent with the Uniform  
111 Parish Regulations. Consensus is defined as broad unanimity, but does not require that  
112 all agree but rather that the participants can live with and support, the decision or  
113 position. Consensus, no majority vote, is an expression of Christian fellowship where all  
114 actions reflect the positions of everyone.
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## ARTICLE IV

### Parish Council

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- 121 A. Membership. The Parish Council shall consist of the Priest, as head of the Parish and the  
122 following number of elected lay members: fourteen for 2023, thirteen for 2024, twelve  
123 for 2025, and eleven for 2026 and thereafter. The Priest shall not have a vote. While not a  
124 voting member, the Priest has full standing as a member of the Parish Council, in order to  
125 cooperatively administer the Parish. A regular Parish Council ,meeting or a special Parish  
126 Council meeting may be held in the Priest's absence, if he is unable to attend and  
127 rescheduling is not practical, and such meeting will be deemed proper under these  
128 bylaws, and any action taken therein shall have full force and effect.
- 129 B. Terms of Office. Parish Council members shall be elected at annual elections as  
130 provided herein and shall each serve a three (3) year term or until their successors are  
131 elected and qualified. Each Parish Council members' term shall commence upon his or  
132 her taking the oath of office. The new Parish Council members shall be given a brief

133 orientation as to their duties and responsibilities by the Priest and senior members of the  
134 Parish Council.

- 135 1. After serving for two (2) full terms, Parish council members will not be eligible for  
136 re-election or appointment to the parish council until they have been off the parish  
137 council for at least one year.  
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139 C. Absentee Balloting during an election. The requirements are as follows:

- 140 1. The voter is confined to his/her home, or medical facility, due to illness or disability.  
141 2. The voter will be absent from Savannah, Chatham County, GA., during the time of  
142 balloting.  
143 3. Absentee ballots may be obtained from the Church Office no earlier than ten (10)  
144 days prior to the date of election. Absentee ballots must be returned to the Church  
145 Office no later than 4:00 PM on the Friday preceding the date of election. Voter can  
146 request absentee ballot be mailed if unable to physically obtain same from Church  
147 Office. Each absentee ballot shall be in a separate envelope with no marking except  
148 "Ballot", and this envelope shall be placed in a larger envelope with parishioner's  
149 name and signature. After eligibility is confirmed, the larger envelope is opened and  
150 the smaller "Ballot" envelope is placed, unopened, in the ballot box. The "Ballot"  
151 envelopes shall be opened and tabulated with the ballots personally cast. The larger  
152 envelopes will be held for a period of one year.

153 D. Officers. Annually, at its first meeting following the qualifying and swearing in of the  
154 Parish Council, the Parish Council shall elect from its number the following officers by a  
155 secret ballot: a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and such other  
156 officers as the Parish bylaws require. The term of office of the officers is to be one (1)  
157 year. In the event vacancies occur in the office of Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer,  
158 or other such officers as the Parish bylaws require, the Parish Council shall immediately  
159 elect a replacement to serve for the remainder of the term of office. In the event a  
160 vacancy occurs in the office of President, the Vice President shall succeed to the office of  
161 President, and the Parish Council shall immediately select a replacement to serve as Vice  
162 President for the remainder of the term of that office.

163 E. Duties. It shall be the duty of the Parish Council to coordinate those affairs of the Parish  
164 as set out herein in furtherance of the aim and purposes of the Church and in accordance  
165 with the dictates of the Uniform Parish Regulations, specifically Chapter One: Parish and  
166 Parish Organization: Articles 15, 24, 28 and 29 contained therein.

- 167 1. The Parish Council shall hold a regular meeting at least once a month, and shall hold  
168 special meetings whenever the Priest, the President or a majority of members of the  
169 Parish Council shall call a special meeting. Notification of a special meeting shall be  
170 given by the Secretary of the Parish Council at the direction of the President by oral  
171 notification or majority of the Parish Council in writing.  
172 2. It shall maintain in a conspicuous place in the church, a current list of all members of  
173 the Parish currently fulfilling their financial obligation to the Parish, provided that  
174 said list does not indicate specific amounts pledged or paid by individual members.  
175 3. It shall have the exclusive power to recommend to the Parish Assembly, by majority  
176 vote, the purchase, sale or mortgage of Parish-held property, which is thereafter  
177 subject to approval of the Parish Assembly, as set out in Article 29, Section 1 of the  
178 Uniform Parish Regulations.

- 179 4. It shall have exclusive power to collect the revenues of the Parish against receipts for  
180 same and shall pay only by check the salaries of the Parish employees.  
181 5. It shall cooperate with and assist the Priest in maintaining the supplies necessary for  
182 church services.  
183 6. It shall make a semi-annual inventory of the church premises and the real property  
184 owned by the Parish for the purposes of preparing and maintaining a physical  
185 inventory of all Parish property.  
186 7. It shall annually determine and publish all fees, dues and charges deemed appropriate  
187 for use of any and all facilities owned by the Parish.

188 F. Vacancies.

- 189 1. A vacancy on the Parish Council not created by hierarchical action shall be promptly  
190 filled by the Parish Council through nomination and election of a successor from among  
191 the parishioners in good standing of the Parish. Such successor shall serve for the  
192 unexpired portion of the term of the vacant office.  
193 2. In the event a member of the Parish Council is absent without justifiable cause for  
194 more than three (3) consecutive meetings, he or she will be relieved of his or her duties  
195 upon said third consecutive absence, and the Parish Council shall give written notice to  
196 said member. The notice shall be recorded in the minutes of the Parish Council.  
197 However, if said member shows justifiable cause for one or more of said absences at the  
198 next regular meeting of the Parish Council, the Parish Council may elect by a majority,  
199 secret ballot vote, to maintain said member on the Parish Council. If said member  
200 chooses to make no showing, the Parish Council shall then proceed to fill the vacancy as  
201 aforementioned.

202 G. Conduct of Business. The Presence of a majority of the members of the Parish Council  
203 shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for any meeting. *Robert's Rules of Order* shall  
204 control the conduct of business, only if Parish Council is unable to reach consensus, and  
205 when not inconsistent with the Uniform Parish Regulations. The business of the Parish  
206 Council shall be preceded and ended by a prayer and reflection from the Priest, if he is  
207 present. If the Priest is not present, the President shall delegate an individual and/or  
208 individuals to say the opening and closing prayer. The President, in consultation with the  
209 Priest, shall prepare an agenda to include, but not be limited to the following:

- 210 1. Reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting;  
211 2. Report from the President;  
212 3. Report from the Vice President;  
213 4. Report from Secretary;  
214 5. Report from Treasurer;  
215 6. Committee reports and Ministries reports and status;  
216 7. Report from Priest on matters requiring Parish Council action;  
217 8. New business.

218 H. Organizations of the Parish. The Parish recognizes the existence of those organizations  
219 enumerated in Chapter One, Article 19, Section 3 of the Uniform Parish Regulations.  
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223 **ARTICLE V**  
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225 **Duties of Officers & Ministry Liaisons/Coordinators**

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- 227 A. The President, together with the Treasurer, and if in need, with the Parish Council
- 228 Secretary of Vice-President, are authorized to sign all checks. The checks shall bear two
- 229 (2) signatures, and they shall be filled in and completed before signing. Immediately
- 230 after the election of the officers, they should make sure that they are listed on all accounts
- 231 of the Parish, and have signatory authorization within the banks where the accounts
- 232 reside.
- 233 B. President:
- 234 1. President to be responsible for the proper administration of the Parish as prescribed
- 235 by the Uniform Parish Regulations, these bylaws, the laws of the State of GEORGIA
- 236 and the Parish Assembly.
- 237 2. To preside at all meetings of the Parish Council and the Parish Assembly in the
- 238 absence of an elected chairman, as provided for in the Uniform Parish Regulations.
- 239 3. To call special meetings of the Parish council.
- 240 4. To sign minutes of all meetings together with the Secretary and the Priest.
- 241 5. To execute on behalf of the Parish any contracts, mortgages, notes or other
- 242 documents entered into within the authorities prescribed by the Uniform Parish
- 243 Regulations, these bylaws, the State of Georgia and the Parish Assembly.
- 244 6. To appoint Committees for the purpose of carrying out such duties as may be
- 245 assigned to each Committee. The President shall appoint the Chairman of all
- 246 committees that he or she deems necessary for the proper conduct of the affairs of the
- 247 Parish. Committee Chairmen shall be members of the Parish Council. However,
- 248 Committee Chairmen, who are not members of the Parish Council, may be appointed
- 249 by the President with the consent and approval of the majority of the Parish Council.
- 250 All committee Chairmen shall serve at the pleasure of the President.
- 251 7. To supervise the administrative functions of the Parish, including the duties of the
- 252 office personnel.
- 253 C. Vice President
- 254 1. To act on any and all matters in the absence of the President.
- 255 D. Secretary
- 256 1. To oversee the keeping of minutes of meetings of the Parish Council and Parish
- 257 Assembly.
- 258 2. To supervise all Parish correspondence.
- 259 3. To ensure availability of the Parish Seal within the custody of the Priest.
- 260 E. Treasurer
- 261 1. To supervise collection of Parish funds and to deposit same with depositories selected
- 262 by the Parish Council, in the name of the Parish.
- 263 2. To see that adequate records of Parish revenues and expenditures are properly and
- 264 promptly recorded and to submit a balance sheet and a statement of receipts and
- 265 expenditures monthly to the Parish Council together with such additional financial
- 266 information the Parish Council may request.
- 267 3. To oversee the Parish accounting system and ensure its availability to the Parish
- 268 Council upon request.
- 269 4. To call a meeting with the Board of Auditors prior to the end of each year to discuss
- 270 the review of the accounting records of the Parish.

- 271 F. Assistant Treasurer  
272 1. The assistant treasurer shall perform duties as assigned by the treasurer and act on  
273 all matters in the absence of the treasurer.  
274 G. Ministries – The Bylaws shall contain a description of the ministries to be assigned for  
275 liaison and coordination by the members of the Parish Council. They are:  
276 • St. George’s Chapel, Brunswick, GA  
277 • Philoptochos Society  
278 • Sunday School  
279 • Hope/Joy  
280 • GOYA  
281 • Bookstore  
282 • Choir  
283 • Youth Choir  
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## ARTICLE VI

### Conduct Meetings, Special Provisions

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289 At meetings of the Parish Assembly, Parish Council, and all committees thereof, a secret ballot  
290 on any matter to be voted upon shall be required if any one (1) voting member of said Parish  
291 Assembly, Parish Council, or committee thereof, so moves or requests.  
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## ARTICLE VII

### Board of Auditors

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299 The Board of Auditors, consisting of at least three (3) parishioners, none of whom are members  
300 of the Parish Council, elected for a term of one (1) year, shall have the following powers and  
301 duties:  
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- 304 A. It shall audit quarterly the account records of the Parish, prepare a report of such audit,  
305 and present same to a meeting of the members of the Parish.  
306 B. It shall have access to the Parish records at all times. However, the Board of Auditors is  
307 not empowered to remove the Parish records from the business office of the Church.  
308 C. After the licensed auditor prepares the annual reports of the revenues and expenditures of  
309 the Parish, the Board of Auditors for the term covered by the annual audit shall sign their  
310 approval of the report prior to submission to the members of the Parish.  
311 D. A physical count of all Church property shall be made during the last two weeks of  
312 December each year. In addition, an inventory of all documents and insurance policies  
313 shall be checked.  
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## ARTICLE VIII

### Board of Elections

- A. Board of Elections. The Board of Elections shall be composed of at least three (3) members, from those who are not a current Parish Council member nor candidates for election to the Parish Council, to be elected by the Parish Assembly at last Parish Assembly meeting, and it shall be the duty of the Board of Elections to conduct and supervise the annual election.
- B. Procedure. The Board of Elections shall, check with the Priest to ensure that candidates are eligible to stand for election by being ecclesiastically and fiscally members-in-good-standing, notify all eligible members concerning the elections, and supervise the elections and tabulate and report the results.
- C. A vacancy on the Board of Elections shall be filled by the Parish Council by electing a successor therefore from amongst the members of the Parish in good standing.

## ARTICLE IX

### Amendments

These Parish bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of voting members present and voting at a special or regular meeting of the Parish Assembly, provided that notice of said meeting is given at least fourteen (14) days prior to same. Notice shall be given by mail to all Parishioners on the church roll and copies of the proposed amendments are to be sent along with said notice.

## ARTICLE X

### Effective Date

The effective date of these bylaws shall be the date of approval by the Parish Assembly. Bylaws heretofore adopted or which conflict with these bylaws are hereby repealed and rendered of no force and effect.



