

## ASCENSION ALLIANCE

### By-Laws

#### Article I: Name

In accordance with the Articles of Amendment filed with the Washington Secretary of State, December 29, 2011, the official name of the organization is the Ascension Alliance.

#### Article II: Spiritual Identity

We are a Church; an alliance of people and communities of faith; and a mystical movement – “rich in spirit but without ceiling or walls”

We are born of a “free” Catholic vision, in the tradition of a fledgling “Independent Catholic” movement, inspired by the intuitions of the “Emerging Church,” and following in the example of the “Jewish Renewal” movement.

Ordained clergy, commissioned lay ministers, and enrolled members shall be considered members of the “Community of Ascensionists” and to be an ecumenical part of the “Mystical Body,” the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

#### Article III: Beliefs

We accept scripture and tradition in conversation with lived experience, as discussed in the current edition of *A Free Catholicism for the Third Millennium: An Introduction to the Ascension Alliance*, which we hereby adopt as a summary of our charism, philosophy, and beliefs.

#### Article IV: Liturgy and Practice

We are committed to both personal praxis and community celebration. The text, *A Free Catholic Concise Liturgy and Other Useful Writings*, shall serve as a guide, not requirement, for liturgical practice.

#### Article V: Mission

In accord with our Articles of Incorporation, we strive to be a new vessel to contain our body of faith, in the hope it may be expressed in the following ways, e.g.:

- A. Be the presence and a witness of an evolving and enduring faith
- B. Foster hospitality as an administrative home for like-minded communities, parishes, groups, and organizations
- C. Provide an ecclesiastical vessel to contain the remnants of the Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch–Malabar Rite
- D. Serve as the hub for a network of teachers and pilgrims
- E. Foster lives of authenticity and service

- F. Form, educate, and prepare clergy
- G. Establish and/or nurture societies and/or congregations of religious life
- H. Form; prepare; educate; ordain and/or consecrate persons for ministry and/or religious life
- I. Provide for the pastoral care and counseling of persons and souls
- J. Preach, teach, and heal
- K. Help spiritual pilgrims raise mind, body, and spirit
- L. Creatively administer the sacraments and sacramentals
- M. Charter, create, recognize, and/or support subordinate ministries

**Article VI: Governance**

A. Administration. Consistent with our Articles of Incorporation, as amended, we shall be led by a CEO and a Presiding Bishop, who shall be charged with the responsibility to act on behalf of the organization, in consultation with the Board of Governors, Council of Bishops, and General Assembly. In accord with the Articles of Incorporation, as amended, the responsibilities of the CEO and the Presiding Bishop shall be broken out as follows:

1. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Overseer. The CEO perform the following duties:
  - a. Serve as chief executive officer of the organization;
  - b. Conduct the business affairs and manage the assets of the organization;
  - c. Fill vacancies on the Board of Governors, when permanent positions open up due to death, retirement, disability, or recall;
  - d. Serve as the Chair and a member of the Board of Governors;
  - e. Serve as Co-chair of the Council of Bishops;
  - f. Serve as Rector and CEO of Ascension Theological College, a subsidiary organization, which offers theological education under the authority of the religious-exempt status granted by the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board:
    - i. In consultation with the Board of Governors and Council of Bishops, develop curriculum;
    - ii. Oversee instruction;
    - iii. Recruit, screen, and admit students in accordance with the official catalog;
    - v. Facilitate, help form, and oversee the operation of candidates' Formation Committees in accordance with the official catalog;
    - vi. Oversee each candidates' progress;

- vii. Maintain records of faculty and candidates;
  - viii. Issue diplomas.
- g. Issue ministry credentials and maintain records of clergy, ministers, seminarians, members, and chartered subordinate ministries of the organization;
  - h. Organize, and/or delegate coordination of annual convocations, including contracting for the use of facilities, meals, and other services;
  - i. Publish newsletters, liturgical texts, and spiritually oriented writings, in consultation with the Board of Governors and Council of Bishops;
  - j. All other duties not otherwise provided for in the organization's Articles of Incorporation and/or by-laws.
2. Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop shall be elected in accord with our amended Articles of Incorporation. All past, present, and future Presiding Bishops shall be accorded the honorific title of "Archbishop." The Presiding Bishop shall have the following responsibilities:
- a. Serve as the spiritual leader of the organization, including responsibility to act as spokesperson;
  - b. Hold and carry the "charism," or spiritual Grace of the organization;
  - c. Convene convocations and preside at or appoint a primary celebrant at "corporate" liturgies;
  - d. Be the pastor of the flock, "first among equals," and Chair of the Council of Bishops;
  - e. Serve as a member and Co-chair of the Board of Governors (assuming the seat on the Board previously held by Bishop Patsy Grubbs);
  - f. In consultation with the ordaining bishop, Rector of Ascension Theological College, and Formation Committee, approve candidates for ordination or commissioned lay ministry;
  - g. Serve as primary consecrator for anyone elected to the episcopacy within our jurisdiction.
- B. Board of Governors. The Board of Governors will assist in charting a course for the organization:
- 1. A five member Board of Governors shall advise the CEO and Presiding Bishop on all important matters, approve by-law changes, approve admission of clergy and candidates into our

- organization, provide oversight for Ascension Theological College, and approve all major decisions.
2. Clergy of any rank, seminarians, and lay persons are eligible to serve as members of the Board of Governors.
  3. Three founding members of the Ascension organization, Bishop Alan R. Kemp, of Gig Harbor, Washington, Bishop Bernie Finch, of Pepin, Wisconsin, and Bishop Howard Dugan, were ratified as permanent members of the Board of Governors in the amended Articles of Incorporation, filed December 29, 2011. Their positions become vacant and subject to the appointment of a replacement, as discussed above, in the event of death, retirement, resignation, or recall by a vote of two thirds majority of the members of the Board of Governors. Effective September 13, 2015, Archbishop Patsy Grubbs will serve as a permanent member of the Board of Governors.
  4. The appointment of two temporary members of the Board of Governors, Rev. Sandy Olson, of San Francisco, California, and Bishop Patsy Grubbs, of Portland, Oregon, were ratified by the amended Articles of Incorporation, filed December 29, 2011. They shall serve until Convocation 2012, at which time the new Presiding Bishop shall assume the seat now held by Bishop Patsy Grubbs and the new General Assembly Representative to the Board of Governors shall replace Rev. Sandy Olson on the Board, for three year terms, in accord with the amended Articles of Incorporation, filed December 29, 2011.
  5. Review recommendations of the Ethics Committee and in consultation with the CEO and Presiding Bishop make final decisions about the discipline of members.

C. The Episcopacy

1. Bishops. As provided for in Church tradition and elsewhere in our by-laws, persons incardinated or consecrated as bishops in the Ascension Alliance:
  - a. shall first and foremost be pastors and servants of the servants of God;
  - b. mentor, nurture, and support ordained and non-ordained ministers in their development as clergy, pastoral counselors, and/or spiritual directors;
  - c. provide for the pastoral needs of persons as well as ordained and non-ordained ministers;

- d. discern the appropriateness of candidates for major orders or non-ordained ministry;
    - e. ordain appropriate candidates to major orders and/or commission candidates for non-ordained ministry.
    - f. and, provide faculties and holy oils to priests affiliated with them
  - 2. Ordinariates. To provide structure to the relationship between bishops and their affiliated ministers, bishops may establish jurisdictions called "ordinariates," the constitutions of which may help clarify the pastoral relationship between the bishop and ministers, subject to the by-laws of the organization, whose charism emphasizes love, freedom, as well as the pastoral and collegial nature of the relationship between the bishop and the ministers affiliated with him or her.
  - 3. Council of Bishops. In addition to the administrative leadership and oversight provided by the CEO/Presiding Bishop and Board of Governors, a Council of Bishops is hereby established.
    - a. All duly consecrated bishops who are members of the Ascension Alliance shall be recognized as members of the Council of Bishops;
    - b. It shall provide spiritual and pastoral leadership to the organization in the following ways:
      - i. provide consultation and input on all matters pertaining to religious belief and spiritual praxis;
      - ii. serve as, or appoint, an Ethics Committee as provided for in our by-laws, including the investigation of complaints of ethics violations and shall make recommendations on member discipline to the Board of Governors and CEO/Presiding Bishop.
- D. General Assembly. A General Assembly is hereby created. All members of the clergy, seminarians, and members of the Alliance who are not permanent members of the Board of Governors or members of the Council of Bishops shall be considered members of the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall be consulted on and kept informed about major changes in the operation of the organization.

## **Article VII: Nonprofit Status**

Consistent with our Articles of Incorporation, as amended, we hereby ratify the principle that we are organized solely as a Church, ecclesiastical organization, and religious movement.

- A. We exist exclusively to promote and provide charitable, religious, and educational purposes in accord with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- B. Notwithstanding any other provision in these Articles, the organization shall not carry out any activity prohibited by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

## **Article VIII: Nondiscrimination Policy**

- A. In accord with the requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, neither this organization nor any project; activity; seminary or ordination program; or subordinate ministry of this organization may discriminate on the basis of color; race; national or ethnic origin.
- B. In accord with the principle of “radical inclusion” and “table fellowship,” as exemplified in the life of Jesus Christ, we shall welcome all persons to fellowship with us, regardless of color; race; national or ethnic origin; sex; sexual orientation; socioeconomic status; or disability.

## **Article IX: Ethics**

- A. Authority. The CEO and the Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Board of Governors, Council of Bishops, clergy, and members, shall have ultimate responsibility for enforcing discipline within the organization. However, the Council of Bishops shall have the authority to act as an Ethics Committee, or appoint a separate Ethics Committee.
- B. The Great Commandments. We accept the two Great Commandments of both the Hebrew scriptures and the New Testament as an overarching guide for all our intentions: First, we should love God with all our minds, hearts, and strength. Second, we should love our brothers and sisters as ourselves.
- C. The Beatitudes. We accept the “Sermon on the Mount,” as contained in the Gospel According to Matthew, as an inspired guide on how one ought to live.
- D. Recognizing that in addition to the Great Commandments and Beatitudes, we may need more detailed policies, we hereby adopt the following as integral to these by-laws:

1. Ethics Policy
2. Conflict of Interest Policy

### **Article X: Chartering Subordinate Ministries**

The Ascension Alliance, hereafter referred to as the central organization, has been granted a group exemption letter from the IRS. The central organization shall issue charters to subordinate ministries in accord with the requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Groups who feel aligned with our charism, philosophy, and beliefs may request affiliation as a Chartered Ministry. Approval of the Charter Agreement by the central organization shall be subject to the following conditions:

- A. Each Chartered Ministry shall be subject to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the central organization and bound by its Ethics Policy and Conflict-of-Interest Policy as adopted in the by-laws, as may be amended.
- B. Each Chartered Ministry must have an ordained or non-ordained ministry leader in good standing with the central organization, who shall serve as the Charter Holder.
- C. The Charter Holder shall be the chief executive officer of the subordinate ministry.
- C. Each Chartered Ministry must have at least two other officers.
- D. Each Chartered Ministry shall have the option to adopt the model by-laws the central organization drafts or by-laws they write themselves, so long as the by-laws of the subordinate ministry conform to the requirements of the central organization's by-laws.
- E. Each Chartered Ministry will be asked to support the central organization as follows.
  1. The first ten Charter applicants have been granted a "lifetime," "plank holder," Charter for a one-time fee of \$300. This means the subordinate organization may use the central organization's name and group tax exempt letter for as long as it is affiliated with the central organization, without paying an annual fee.
  2. Future applicants may apply for a regular Charter for an annual fee of \$153 per year.
  3. Charter Holders shall be exempt from paying annual clergy dues.

### **Article XI: Ascension Theological College**

The Ascension Theological College is a non-denominational, highly decentralized, program of study that offers structured guidance and mentorship to those willing to undergo rigorous study and practice that may lead to ordination as a "barefoot priest," minister, or pastoral counselor, within the context of our "free" Catholic spiritual renewal movement. The college has been

granted religious-exempt status by the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Boards, and is thereby able to lawfully grant credits and confer specific theological degrees.

A. Governance.

1. Rector. The CEO shall serve as chief executive officer and Rector of the program.
2. The Rector may or may not appoint a Dean to oversee day-to-day operations of the program.
3. Board of Governors. The Board of Governors shall oversee all aspects of the governance of the college.

B. Faculty. The core faculty shall include clergy and educators selected on the basis of their scholarship, spiritual depth, passion, and creativity.

C. Program Description. The Course of Studies shall be both structured and individualized. The educational expectations are comparable to those of other contemporary seminaries even though the curriculum reflects a unique renewal philosophy and style of learning.

Frequently asked questions regarding program specifics may be available at our web site on a FAQ page.

1. Decentralization and Individualization. A hallmark of our approach is that we recognize there are many legitimate ways to learn and that our seminarians may come from almost anywhere in the world, with diverse needs, resources, and local study opportunities. These may include but need not be limited to the following:

- Distance learning courses taken through our college or at other institutions of higher learning
- Ascension workshops and retreats held at the Hermitage or other locations
- Graduate studies at an accredited institution of higher learning
- Independent study courses done with an approved instructor according to the provisions of an independent study contract
- Individualized readings courses (by theme or author) done under the supervision of an approved reader, to include assignments and the submission of a final Integration Paper
- Hands on projects
- Practica, CPE, or other supervised applied learning experiences

- Attendance at specialized workshops by approved teachers or organizations
  - Other approved learning activities
2. Formation Directors. Because the program requirements are complex, and the ways of fulfilling the stated outcomes are varied, the Program assigns a Formation Director to supervise the seminarian's studies. Formation Directors are renewal oriented clergy and scholars whose background and training gives them the needed competence for this work.
  3. Formation Committees. In addition to the candidate's Formation Director, each seminarian recruits at least one other mentor to serve on the candidate's Formation Committee. Collectively, the seminarian, Formation Director, and other committee members shall constitute the seminarian's Formation Committee.
    - a. Role of Committee. Its role is to offer guidance, instruction, help, and support. The members of committees are usually clergy, educators, spiritual directors, counselors or individuals poised to support and help the student. Thus, the seminarian's progress and journey through the program is assisted by the committee, offering encouragement, guidance, support, and feedback.
    - b. Committee Chairs. Formation Directors shall serve as the Chairs of Formation Committees.
  4. Learning Covenants and Annual Learning Contracts.
    - a. Learning Covenant. The candidate and committee develop an overall Learning Covenant for the seminarian's program. This will address all the required Program Outcomes as well as an outline of how the individual candidate will accomplish these outcomes. All mentors, including the Formation Director, must formally sign on to the student's comprehensive Learning Covenant. This written covenant shall be regarded as a *sacred document*. It will guide the candidate's journey through the program, but can be renegotiated as needed.
    - b. Annual Learning Contracts. candidates will work with their committee to develop Annual Learning Contracts.
      1. Timing. Typically, these should be submitted in advance of the academic year.

2. Contents. It is a detailed description of what the student will actually be studying, the methodologies, the learning formats (e.g., university course, seminary course, tutorial, directed reading, internet course, course on tape, internship, practicum, workshop series, etc. ...), the forms of ongoing assessment, and details of what knowledge the student expects to acquire.
  3. Assessment. The contract must specify how the learning will be supervised and evaluated, and what competencies the student is expected to demonstrate at the conclusion of the contract.
  4. Amendments. These contracts may be amended in consultation with the Formation Committee, especially when unique learning opportunities arise.
  5. Annual Progress Report. At the close of the year, the candidate's Formation Committee will review the candidate's progress and submit a brief report.
5. Program Outcomes.
- a. Overview. The required Program Outcomes provides an outline of the minimum values, knowledge, and skills needed for the informed practice of ordained or non ordained ministry within the context of a free Catholic renewal. However, preparing to become a priest or minister capable of supporting others on the spiritual journey is more than mere learning *about* religion.
  - b. Considerations. Candidates must be grounded in spiritual practice; fluent in tradition and scripture; competent in liturgy (Ordination Program); able to craft innovative worship experiences (Ordination Program); and be fully "present" to the pastoral needs of others (Ordination and Pastoral Counseling programs).
  - c. Unique Challenges. Mastering the academic component of the curriculum is itself a prodigious undertaking. Although the process of (re-)learning the basics of tradition may feel like an obstacle, this intensive study grounds our creativity and helps establish balance. Inflexible adherence to tradition fosters rigidity; neglect of it, to "flakiness" and a superficial spirituality. It is the work of the Formation Committee to help the candidate craft and refine an overall program that is both personally meaningful and that integrates the essentials

of ministry with the organic charism of a free Catholic renewal.

6. Fundamental Areas of Knowledge.
  - a. Ordination Program. The following Fundamental Areas of Knowledge provides a general organizational framework for accomplishing the stated outcomes of the ordination program, which is taught at the equivalent of the Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity, or Doctor of Ministry degree levels, depending on the educational background of the candidate. A more detailed description will be articulated in the catalog and the web pages, as approved by the Board of Governors:
    - Theological Formation
    - Prayer & Praxis
    - Mysticism
    - World Religions
    - New Cosmology
    - Story of Christianity
    - Ecclesiology
    - Scripture
    - Liturgy
    - Homiletics
    - Pastoral Care
    - Theological Reflection
    - Practica
  - b. Pastoral Counseling Program. The following Fundamental Areas of Knowledge provides a general organizational framework for accomplishing the stated outcomes of the pastoral counseling program, which is to be taught at the Master of Pastoral Counseling degree level. A more detailed description will be articulated in the catalog and the web pages, as approved by the Board of Governors:

- Theological Formation
  - Prayer & Praxis
  - World Religions
  - New Cosmology
  - Story of Christianity
  - Scripture
  - Pastoral Counseling
  - Theological Reflection
  - Pastoral Counseling Practica
7. Spiritual Direction. We expect each candidate to have an ongoing formal relationship with a spiritual director to offer ongoing spiritual direction, guidance, and consultation. Candidates are financially responsible for this expense.
  8. Background checks. Candidates for admission shall be required to undergo a criminal and child protective background check to determine their suitability for admission. On a case-by-case basis, they may be asked to complete a psychological evaluation. Expenses for background checks and/or psychological evaluation shall be the responsibility of the candidate.
  9. Personal counseling. On a case-by-case basis Formation Committees may require candidates to participate in a program of personal counseling. Candidates are financially responsible for this expense.
  10. Tithes and fees. Current tithes and fees of the Ordination Program, as currently in effect, are detailed in the draft copy of the web site. Changes in tithes and fees shall be made by a vote of the ~~Council~~ Board of Governors and approved by the CEO/Presiding Bishop, which then become effective with 30 days notice.
  11. Students entering the program will have ten years to complete the program in accord with the Learning Covenant established at the time of their admission to the program.
- D. Minor and major orders. As discussed in our guiding literature, we accept minor and major orders as progressive initiations. See Article IV, above and Article IX, below.
1. The candidate's Formation Committee determines eligibility for ordination by a review of their progress on the Learning Covenant and Annual Learning Contracts.
  2. Final decisions about ordination to minor and major orders shall be made in conversation with the Rector and ordaining bishop.

- E. Ordination and commissioning. While our programs will provide the support and structure to help candidates meet their educational, spiritual, and personal goals, the final decision about suitability of any candidate for ordination or commissioned ministry is always discerned by the ordaining or commissioning bishop, or archpriest, in consultation with the Formation Committee.

## **Article XII: Ordained and Nonordained Ministry**

The Ascension ordination program recognizes that persons are called to a diversity of ministries, both ordained and non ordained.

- A. Ordained Ministry. As part of the One Mystical Body, and a custodian of Apostolic Succession, we recognize a solemn responsibility to ordain, consecrate, and support persons called to ordained ministry.

As part of Catholic tradition, and in accord with our adopted liturgy and philosophy texts (Articles III and IV, above), we recognize the efficacy of both minor and major orders, as follows:

1. Minor orders are: Cleric; Doorkeeper; Reader (or Lector); Healer (or Exorcist); and Acolyte.
  - a. Charisms. Each of these minor orders has its own charism, or character.
  - b. Initiation. Initiation, or ordination, into minor orders may be done by a bishop or archpriest.
2. Major orders are: Subdeacon, Deacon, Priest, and Bishop.
  - a. Charisms. As is also true of minor order, each of the major orders has its unique charism and spiritual efficacy.
  - b. Approval. Ordinations to major orders must be approved by the CEO/Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Board of Governors and ordaining bishop.
  - c. Ordination. Ordinations to major orders must be done by a bishop, faithful to all accepted essentials with respect to both form and intent.
  - d. Diaconate. Ordination to the diaconate is our equivalent of the protestant ordination of ministers, which comes with the authority to baptize, teach, preach, marry, and bury.
  - e. Priesthood. Ordination to the priesthood requires prior ordination to the diaconate.
    1. Authority. In addition to the authority conferred by ordination to the diaconate, ordination to the priesthood confers the authority to celebrate mass

and consecrate the elements of the eucharist (sacrament of holy communion); to forgive (sacrament of reconciliation); and to bless.

2. **Faculties.** Priests receive their “faculties,” or authorization, to celebrate the sacraments from the bishop they are affiliated with. Traditionally, clergy act as extensions of the bishop. In our Church, clergy are authorized function fully independently in creative ministry. They have a collegial relationship with their bishop, who is there to mentor, encourage, and support.
  3. **Service.** Generally, we require priests (aka presbyters) to have at least six months service as a deacon prior to ordination.
- f. **Consecration to the episcopacy.** In our tradition, ordination to the episcopacy, (aka the ordination of a bishop) is called consecration.
1. **Authority.** Consecration to the episcopal office confers apostolic succession, or the ability to consecrate other bishops.
  2. **Pastoral Responsibility.** Bishops are the servants of the servants of God. Traditionally, the bishop is both a pastor par excellence, and the overseer of a community or mission.
    - a. While the role of bishop in many Churches is one of authority, in our Church we emphasize the importance of collegiality and mutual respect.
    - b. Bishops are therefor expected to have a pastoral relationship with their clergy, to mentor, support, and encourage them.
  3. **Requirements.** Because this Office is a sacred trust, all diligence must be exercised when electing and consecrating a candidate.
    - a. The Council of Bishops and Board of Governors in consultation with the CEO and Presiding Bishop shall have the authority to elect persons to the episcopacy within our organization. There should be clear evidence that the candidate is called to this high and

- holy office, such as humility; an exemplary and holy life; possessing special gifts; and so forth.
- b. The following should be considered:
    - 1. Testimony from those whom the candidate serves
    - 2. Possession of spiritual gifts
    - 3. Leadership ability
    - 4. Inspiration
    - 5. Faithfulness to our charism
    - 6. Ability to serve
    - 7. The needs of the movement
  - c. While not a firm requirement, especially in the early days of our organizational life, it is generally understood that candidates should establish themselves within the organization as priests before consideration for consecration.
  - d. Candidates should understand that bishops serving in our organization are not authorized to independently ordain or consecrate others. All ordinations and consecrations within the organization must be approved.
  - e. Any bishop incardinated in our jurisdiction who ordains or consecrates another person within the organization without the agreement of the bishops and leadership of the organization subjects himself or herself to investigation and possible expulsion or suspension from the benefits of full membership in the organization, subject to a vote of the Council of Bishops, Board of Governors, in consultation with the CEO and Presiding Bishop.
  - f. No member of the organization who has been validly consecrated to the episcopacy outside of normal channels shall be seated in the Council of Bishops. Further, they shall be subject to investigation and possible expulsion or suspension from the benefits of full membership in the organization, subject to a vote of the Council of Bishops, Board of

Governors, in consultation with the CEO and Presiding Bishop.

4. Consecration rite.
  - a. All bishops are consecrated to serve a specific geographic area; society or congregation of religious life; calling; mission; ministry; etc.
  - b. The consecration must be a public celebration
  - c. All essentials of form and intent must be present.
    1. At least one duly consecrated bishop in apostolic succession must confer the order using an accepted liturgy and rite.
    2. In addition, it is recommended that in order to ensure the efficacy of the conferral of apostolic succession, two other bishops in apostolic succession should co-consecrate.
  - d. All consecrations are publicly announced.

4. Incardination. Persons ordained or consecrated to holy orders in other churches with valid apostolic succession may apply to be incardinated into our organization, according to the following guidelines:

- a. The individual can show conclusive evidence they were ordained in holy orders.
- b. We can establish apostolic succession of the ordaining group.
- c. The individual passes a background check, and/or completes a psychological evaluation, as may be deemed appropriate.
- d. The person completes additional preparation to sufficiently familiarize themselves with our charism and practices.

B. Nonordained ministry. In addition to Holy Orders, we recognize Lay Ministry as a valid calling. Lay Ministry may include but need not be limited to: pastoral counseling, chaplaincy, spiritual direction and spiritual healing. We will issue a commission to lay ministers, according to the following guidelines:

1. In the case of pastoral counselors and chaplains, the individual shall demonstrate that they have the requisite character, skills, and education to professionally provide this service.

2. In the case of other forms of non ordained ministry, the individual can substantiate their calling to this ministry and establish the appropriateness of their services under the umbrella of this organization
3. The individual passes a background check, and/or completes a psychological evaluation, as may be deemed appropriate.
4. The person completes additional preparation to sufficiently familiarize themselves with our charism and practices.

### **Article XIII: Consecrated Life**

In accord with the Articles of Incorporation of this organization, as amended, Ascension–Alliance for Spiritual Renewal is missioned to establish and/or nurture societies and/or congregations of religious life, i.e. religious orders. Because persons who wish to take vows commit themselves to living a holy, or consecrated way of life, we refer to this special type of ministry, whether the charism be contemplative or missional, as “consecrated life.”

- A. Petition. Any member of our organization who is ordained in major orders, or is commissioned as a Lay Minister, who wishes a special Charter for a religious society or congregation of religious life, may do so by petitioning the Presiding Bishop with the following:
  1. A description of the reason, charism, and purpose of the proposed society or congregation
  2. A proposed constitution, describing the charism, organizational structure, leadership, and requirements for postulancy, novitiate, and professed membership in the group
  3. Any other information
- B. Consecration. The constitution of the society or congregation shall be consecrated on the altar at a ceremony presided over by a bishop, who will also accept on behalf of ASCENSION the vows of the founder and other individuals who will be professing. The founder shall be consecrated as its leader and will assume the title of abbot (if residential), acharya, servant, director, or other, according to the needs of the religious society or congregation.

## **Record of Resolutions & Other Important Changes**

1. Resolution to adopt these By-Laws was Passed unanimously this 24th day of November, 2009. Ballots cast by e-mail and a copy placed in the official record.

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop  
Rev. Charles Cooper, D.Min, Council Member  
Rev. Bernie Finch, D.C., Council Member

2. Article XI. The Council voted unanimously to change the name of our educational program from Ascension Ordination Program to Ascension Theological College. February 10, 2010 .

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop  
Rev. Charles Cooper, D.Min, Council Member  
Rev. Bernie Finch, D.C., Council Member  
Rev. Howard Dugan, Bishop, Council Member

3. Article XI, C, 6 amended by unanimous vote on February 15, 2010 to add the Doctor of Ministry degree level.

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop  
Rev. Charles Cooper, D.Min, Council Member  
Rev. Bernie Finch, D.C., Council Member  
Rev. Howard Dugan, Bishop, Council Member

4.. Article X was amended by a unanimous vote on September 7, 2010. In accord with IRS requirements the amendment clarifies the relationship between the “central organization” and “subordinate ministries,” and creates two categories of Chartered Ministry: 1) “lifetime” or “plank holder” Chartered Ministry and 2) regular Chartered Ministry. The first ten ministries to apply for a “lifetime” or “plank holder” Charter shall pay a one-time fee of \$300. Other applicants shall pay \$153 annually for a regular Charter. The Charter Holder of each subordinate ministry shall be exempt from paying annual clergy dues.

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop  
Rev. Charles Cooper, D.Min, Council Member  
Rev. Bernie Finch, D.C., Bishop, Council Member  
Rev. Howard Dugan, D.D., Bishop, Council Member

5. Informational and administrative only. Mistakes in Roman numerals used to identify each major section heading were corrected to indicate the correct number and sequence. September 25, 2010.

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop

6. Informational and administrative only. Rev. Charles Cooper, D.Min has resigned from the council, effective October 26, 2010, per e-mail with the Presiding Bishop on that date.

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop

7. Effective December 27, 2010 Rev. Sandra Olson is appointed to a one year term on the Council and Most. Rev. Patsy Grubbs is appointed to a two year term on the Council.

Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop

8. Effective December 28, 2010, the Council has approved the curriculum for the Master of Pastoral Counseling degree program for qualified candidates who feel called to pastoral counseling ministry. A curriculum sheet, which shall be integrated into the proposed 2011 catalog, was reviewed and approved by the Council. Changes in the wording of Article XI, C, 5-6 were made to reflect this action. Voting in the affirmative:

- Rev. Sandy Olson, Council Member
- Most Rev. Howard Dugan, Bishop, Council Member
- Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, Bishop, Council Member
- Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, Presiding Bishop
- Most Rev. Bernie Finch, Bishop, Council Member

9. Information item on the appointment of permanent members of the Council. Exercising my authority under the organization's Articles of Incorporation and By-laws, I wish to clarify that Bishop Bernie Finch, Bishop Howard Dugan and myself were appointed as permanent members of the Council or any successor body. All later appointments shall be made for specific periods of time.

Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, Presiding Bishop. Dated September 8, 2011.

10. The by-laws were amended as follows. Please refer to the document "By-LawsAAProp1.7.pdf, which contains "strike thru" for deleted language and red coloration for added language.

- Article I (Name): The official name will be changed to the "Ascension Alliance"
- Article V.C (Mission): The following language is added: "Provide an ecclesiastical vessel to contain the remnants of the Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch-Malabar Rite." The previous language in section C is moved down and re-labeled "D." All other sections to the articles are similarly renumbered.

- Article VI: section A (Governance): CEO/Presiding Bishop replaces Presiding Bishop. (The intent is that this job will eventually be broken up into two). The term “Council” is deleted and replaced with “Board of Governors.” “Council of Bishops” and “General Assembly” are mentioned for the first time. Subsection 4 changes the “Board of Governors” role in reviewing ethics complaints. Subsection 5 changes “offers an opinion about suitability” to “Approve” candidates for ordination or consecration.
- Article VI.C (Governance): New section added titled “The Episcopacy” with subsections titled “Bishops,” “Ordinariates,” and “Council of Bishops.” This new section defines the role of bishops, creates ordinariates as a pastoral institution, and creates a Council of Bishops with a defined role.
- Article VI.D (Governance): A “General Assembly” of all members of the Alliance, except those who are permanent members of the Board of Governors or Council of Bishops.
- Article IX.A (Ethics): gives the Council of Bishops the authority to act as an Ethics Committee, or to appoint a separate Ethics Committee.
- Article X (Chartering Subordinate Ministries): Language has been changed to reflect that our group exemption letter has been granted by the IRS.
- Article XI (Ascension Theological College): Minor changes in language required because of the other changes in names and functions, above.
- Article XII (Ordained and Nonordained Ministry): Minor changes in language required because of the other changes in names and functions, above.

The major changes were introduced at Convocation 2011, discussed online and over the phone, and modified. The amendments were passed unanimously, effective September 9, 2011. Voting in the affirmative:

Most Rev. Howard Dugan, Bishop, Council Member (now Board Member)

Most Rev. Bernie Finch, Bishop, Council Member (now Board Member)

Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, Bishop, Council Member (now Board Member)

Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, Presiding Bishop, Council Member (now Board Member)

Rev. Sandy Olson, Council Member (now Board Member)

11. Informational and administrative only. Article XI. The description of Ascension Theological College in the introduction to the Article was edited to reflect the continuing existence of the college, that it has been granted religious-exempt status by the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, and that it can therefor lawfully grant credits and confer specific theological degrees.

Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, Presiding Bishop and Rector. Dated September 10, 2011.

12. Several changes in the by-laws were enacted by the Board of Governors. These include changes in wording to bring the by-laws into accord with the amended Articles

of Incorporation, which were filed with the Washington Secretary of State on December 29, 2011. These describe the election process for the Presiding Bishop and Representative of the General Assembly; and, spell out the duties of the CEO and the Presiding Bishop. In addition two short paragraphs were added to Article XII, A, 3, (e-f), which articulate how we will handle illicit ordinations and consecrations within our ranks. The amendments were passed unanimously, effective February 7, 2012. Voting in the affirmative:

Most Rev. Howard Dugan, Bishop, Board Member  
Most Rev. Bernie Finch, Bishop, Board Member  
Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, Bishop, Board Member  
Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, CEO & Presiding Bishop, Board Member  
Rev. Sandy Olson, Board Member

13. A third paragraph was added to Article II, "Spiritual Identity," as follows: "Ordained clergy, commissioned lay ministers, and enrolled members shall be considered members of the "Community of Ascensionists" and an ecumenical part of the "Mystical Body," the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ., effective April 11, 2012. Voting in the affirmative:

Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, CEO & Board Member  
Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, Presiding Bishop, Board Member  
Rev. Sandy Olson, Priest, General Assembly Representative to the Board  
Most Rev. Bernie Finch, Bishop, Board Member

14. Informational and administrative only. Bishop Alan R. Kemp, notified the Board of Governors on February 1, 2015 that he had acted upon his authority as CEO and Overseer of the Alliance and had appointed Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs as a Permanent Member of the Board, which will be announced prior to the end of her term as Presiding Bishop.

Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, CEO and Permanent Board Member

14. Effective February 2, 2015, Article VI.2 of the By-Laws were amended to read as follows: "Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop shall be elected in accord with our amended Articles of Incorporation, filed December 29, 2011. All past, present, and future Presiding Bishops shall be accorded the honorific of 'Archbishop' ... "

Voting in the Affirmative via e-mail:

Most Rev. Bernie Finch, Permanent Member  
Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, Presiding Bishop, Permanent Member  
Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, Founder, CEO, and Overseer, Permanent Member

Rev. Sandy Olson, General Assembly Representative, Member

Not voting:

Most Rev. Howard Dugan, Permanent Member