

St. Peter the Apostle Antiochian Orthodox Church, San Dimas

Policy Title:	Temporal Maintenance Policy
Effective Date:	March 8, 2009
Revised Dates:	
Approval Date:	March 8, 2009
Purpose:	To define for the purpose of Voting Membership, what qualifies as temporal maintenance for those attending St. Peter the Apostle Church.

BACKGROUND

Article III, Section 1A, Voting Membership states the following:

The Voting Membership shall consist of all persons eighteen (18) years of age and over, regardless of sex, who have been baptized and accepted in the membership of the Holy Orthodox Church according to its teachings, who accept, profess, and practice its faith and discipline and who subscribe to the temporal maintenance of this church through payment of such dues, pledges, assessments as are prescribed by the Parish Council.

This commitment to “subscribe to the temporal maintenance of this church” serves as concrete manifestation of who is indeed a Voting Member of this parish, and thereby entitled to all the benefits of Voting Membership.

Dues, Assessments, and Fundraisers

Our parish does not request or mandate membership dues, fees, or similar assessments. Furthermore, we do not conduct fundraisers to provide for our parish’s ongoing expenses (see Fundraising Policy). Instead, we encourage those who regularly attend our parish to give tithes and offerings on a regular basis.

Pledges of Tithes and Offerings

A pledge is a declaration of intent to support the parish for the coming year with a title and offering consisting of a certain dollar amount. Pledges provide the parish council with a basis to create a church budget for the coming year. It is a practical element of parish stewardship.

Historically, our parish has never used pledges or pledge cards. For the purpose of budget preparation, we recently used pledge cards and may do so again, but a request for pledge cards is never:

- Used as a fundraiser or request for more money
- Intended as a substitute for tithes and offerings
- Intended to put pressure on people to give
- Intended to lock people into a commitment
- Intended to produce guilt if for some reason a person is unable to keep his or her pledge

Our service to the Lord includes our possessions, our time, and our bodies (Matt. 6:19-24, Rom. 12:1, Eph. 5:15-17, etc.). Consequently, tithes and offerings are not only expressed in financial terms, but in terms of time, talent, and energy as well.

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RULES

- In accordance with Article III, Section 1A, the parish council prescribes that to be a Voting Member of St. Peter the Apostle Antiochian Orthodox Church, any person meeting the qualifications of Voting Membership also must comply with at least one of the following in order to be a Voting Member:
 - Regularly contributes a tithe or some portion of his or her income to this parish throughout the course of the calendar year.
 - If financially unable to give tithes or donations, regularly contributes his or her time, talents, and energy to help with the ongoing maintenance of the church throughout the course of the calendar year.
- The tracking of financial support of the church is done by the parish council Treasurer and Chair.
 - If a concern arises about a person's financial commitment to the parish, the concern will be addressed with the person by the parish council Chair.
 - If the Chair determines that a pastoral issue is involved, the Chair will request the priest to contact the parishioner.
 - All giving and related discussions will be kept confidential.
 - In cases of unexpected and/or sudden extreme hardship, the inability to fulfill one's commitment and still remain a Voting Member can be allowed at the discretion of the parish priest.

GUIDELINES

- If a person's financial circumstances change, the person is encouraged to complete a revised pledge card.
- The ongoing maintenance of the church includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Cleaning the church after worship services and events
 - Maintaining the church grounds on a regular basis
 - Making needed electrical or plumbing repairs
 - Assisting with routine maintenance such as painting, candle lighting duties, and ordering and maintaining supplies
- All members of St. Peter Parish are encouraged to contribute their time, talent, and energy through works of service such as, but not limited to, the following:
 - Worship ministry (chanters, altar service, choir, prosphora, litya bread, etc.)
 - Sunday School
 - Men's ministry
 - Women's ministry
 - Youth ministry
 - Parish Council
 - Parish committees
 - Parish meals (such as Nativity meal, Pascha meal, Agape Feast, etc.)