

National Association of Pastoral Musicians

Chapter  
Manual and  
Bylaws



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Dear NPM Chapter Leaders,

You represent a key element in the NPM structure. Chapters are the building blocks of NPM as well as the primary vehicle by which the Association's efforts to serve and support the liturgical music ministry in the United States are channeled into the dioceses and their parishes.

This manual has been prepared to provide a valuable tool to assist you and your Chapter leadership. The manual also serves as the official Chapter bylaws, replacing any previous bylaws or constitutions that may have been in place. Through the leadership and guidance of your Board members, the Chapter will grow as an instrument for enabling the pastoral musicians of your diocese to further develop their musical skills and deepen their spirituality. Through personal sharing and expanded professional relationships, your Chapter members work together to continually grow in their ability to celebrate God's gift of song.

Thank you for serving pastoral musicians through this valuable component of NPM.

God bless you all,

Signed by Jennifer, and by Joe as Forum chair, noting term dates

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## **INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

**The National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM)** fosters the art of musical liturgy. The members of NPM serve the Roman Catholic Church in the United States as musicians, clergy, liturgists, and other leaders of prayer.

- NPM is an association affiliated with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and has an episcopal moderator.
- NPM assists dioceses and worshipping communities in ongoing liturgical renewal through the promotion of excellence in pastoral music.
- NPM provides education, formation, and mutual support for pastoral musicians and clergy and is a forum for advocating musical excellence in liturgical celebrations. These efforts involve clergy and musicians working together.
- NPM enables pastoral musicians to network with their colleagues throughout the country.
- NPM also welcomes and encourages the membership of pastoral musicians from outside the U.S., or who serve other denominations, so long as they possess a desire to be professionally associated with their Roman Catholic colleagues in the U.S.

**An NPM Chapter** is a division of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, functioning within its diocese, while retaining a strong, dependent relationship with the national organization. Chapters may be formed in each diocese in the United States in accordance with the bylaws of the association.

When Chapters become too large, or it is geographically difficult to maintain adequate functionality, branches of that Chapter may be formed. Each branch has its own leadership and its own meetings, but must meet at least once annually in a combined gathering with the parent Chapter. Branch Chapters are strictly geographically based on region/location, and not on language group or other possible distinctions. The Branch Chapter Director is an ex-officio member of the parent Board.

For information on how to form a Chapter, please contact the Membership Forum at [membershipforum@npm.org](mailto:membershipforum@npm.org).

Chapters exist to:

- deepen the spiritual life of their membership;
- provide an educational forum on issues affecting musical and liturgical practice in the Church;
- provide skill development;
- organize social gatherings;
- foster mutual support;
- maintain the connection with the NPM National Office staff.

**Each Chapter maintains a close relationship with its host diocese.** NPM Chapters are not responsible for setting diocesan policy but are a tool for supporting and implementing diocesan policies in a way that is mutually agreeable. Where liturgical and music education programs already exist, the NPM Chapter does not compete, but rather complements and supports these programs among its members. The NPM Chapter should establish and maintain a good working relationship with the existing diocesan liturgy and music structure. The diocesan director of liturgy and/or music or, if none exists, a representative from the diocese should be invited and encouraged to become an *ex officio* member of the Chapter Board.

**The NPM Membership Forum** serves as a link between the National Office and individual Chapters.

It provides:

- encouragement and assistance in the formation of new Chapters
- charters, both temporary and permanent
- education and formation for development of existing and new Chapters through conventions, workshops and other means
- mentoring

## **CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

The Chapter Board (its leadership team), is responsible for managing all aspects of Chapter activity: meetings, finances, communications, and events. When a new Chapter is being formed, the Membership Forum assigns one of its members to act as mentor to the leadership of the emerging Chapter. This Chapter mentor supports the Chapter leadership in establishing a Temporary Chapter and eventually, a new Permanent Chapter. The mentor provides a listening ear and assistance in problem solving for Chapters that are facing challenges. While the structure varies from Chapter to Chapter, every Chapter is required to have a Chapter Director, a Treasurer, and a Secretary. Additional Board positions may be added at the discretion of the Chapter Board and according to local needs. For positions listed below that are not represented on a particular Chapter Board, the duties of that position should be distributed among other Board members by mutual agreement. All Board members are expected to participate in Board meetings, and all Board members must be members of NPM, maintaining their national membership.

The Membership Forum recommends that the frequency of Board meetings range between quarterly and monthly as suits local circumstances. It might be helpful for the Board to schedule a regular meeting time and place, and to hold meetings virtually if necessary.

If the need is determined in certain areas (e.g., hospitality, publicity, membership), the Chapter Board may form sub-committees of Chapter members for this purpose. Sub-committee members, however, are not Board members.

Each Board member office is to be limited to a three-year term, renewable once. Careful consideration should be made for maintaining a rotation among Chapter members and avoiding “perpetual” office holders. For example, the Treasurer becomes the Chapter Director, and then becomes the Secretary, and then the Treasurer again.

All other concerns notwithstanding, it should be perceived that each Board member is suited to the particular tasks associated with the position. The work of each Board member is subject to collective review by the Chapter Board.

As much as possible, the Chapter Board should reflect the diversity of ages and ethnic groups of the Chapter membership. The following officers are required and must be elected by the Chapter membership:

#### Chapter Director

- Schedules and chairs the Board meetings, prepares the agenda, and oversees the preparation and distribution of minutes (cf. MEETINGS below)
- Guides the Board in setting the vision and goals, ensuring that the vision and goals complement those of the national organization.
- Oversees the implementation of Board decisions
- Maintains communication with the diocese
- Serves as the primary liaison with the NPM National Office and the Membership Forum
- Makes every effort to attend the annual NPM Convention, including all events programmed for Chapter leadership
- Is a co-signer on the Chapter bank account
- Assures the Chapter is using tools provided by the National Office, including npm.org email addresses, online content, and Google Suite tools.

#### Treasurer

- Establishes and maintains a bank account for Chapter funds (cf. FINANCES below)
- Pays expenses as approved by the Board
- Receives and deposits rebate funds from the National Office
- Keeps records of all financial transactions
- Issues financial reports to the Board
- The Treasurer and the Chapter Director may not be the same person.

#### Secretary

- Records minutes of all meetings
- Submits the written minutes to the Chapter director for review and distribution
- Records the proceedings of other Chapter events as requested by the Chapter director
- If there is no publicity coordinator, the secretary assumes those responsibilities as outlined below.

The following are examples of other possible positions on the Board. These positions can either be elected by the Chapter membership or appointed by a consensus of the Chapter Director, Treasurer, and Secretary.

#### Programming Coordinator

- Coordinates Chapter events by contacting the venue to secure the date, specific facility, and other needs expected of the hosting venue (cf. EVENTS below)
- Contacts speakers, clinicians, and other participants to secure their participation
- Manages logistics during the event itself

#### Newsletter Editor

- Gathers and edits the information which the Board desires to share with membership through a newsletter format, according to the schedule which the Board determines, and prepares it for publication in either print or digital form
- Takes photos or arranges for a photographer to take photos at Chapter event

#### Publicity Coordinator

- Implements publicity strategies as determined by the Board
- Utilizes technology and social media (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) to communicate Chapter information (cf. COMMUNICATIONS below)
- Communicates with other local musical organizations (e.g., AGO, ACDA, Choristers Guild, etc.) to promote NPM events

#### Web Master

- Establishes and maintains the Chapter website (cf. COMMUNICATIONS below)
- Takes photos at meetings and events for the Chapter newsletter, website, and other communications, as well as for the "Chapter Happenings" column in *Pastoral Music*

#### Membership Coordinator

- Maintains the Chapter membership database within the NPM Chapter Google Drive
- Communicates with the NPM National Office for updates on NPM membership in the diocese
- Communicates with the Diocese for the contact information of music ministers and liturgists in the diocese

#### Prayer Coordinator

Prepares and leads (or arranges for the leadership of) prayer to open meetings, as well as prayer that is part or all of Chapter events.

#### Hospitality Coordinator

Plans and oversees refreshments and hospitality for Chapter meetings and events, drawing on the assistance of other Chapter members and members of the host venue as appropriate

#### Member(s)-at-Large

A Chapter Board may have one or more members-at-large (MAL). MALs would generally be assigned duties and projects as needed.

#### Students

A Chapter Board is enriched by the participation of students or interns, especially those pursuing studies related to liturgy or liturgical music.

### Ex-officio Members

The Board may include a number of persons on a non-voting, *ex-officio* or honorary, basis (depending upon each individual agreeing to be so named). *Ex-officio* members may include the diocesan bishop, head of the office for worship, diocesan director of music, cathedral music director, immediate past Chapter director (for one year only, to assist with transition), etc. Typically, these persons are entitled to attend Board meetings, and should be sent all Board communications as well as minutes of the meetings. Their voice on all matters is welcomed. *Ex-officio* members are appointed and/or dissolved by the consensus of the Chapter Director, Treasurer, and Secretary.

## **FINANCES**

### Dues

All members of a local Chapter must hold NPM National Membership. National membership is the only membership option as “Chapter only” members no longer exist. NPM offers three membership levels at \$39 (Basic), \$119 (Standard), and \$169 (Premium) to meet the budgets of all pastoral musicians. Please note: while Chapters may levy fees for events, no NPM Chapter may levy dues at any time.

### Reports to the National Office

Every Chapter is required to submit two semi-annual activity reports to the National Office. The Executive Director, Membership Director, or Forum Chair for Membership will contact Chapter Directors to collect the information via a Google Form. Upon satisfactory submission\* of the report and verification that all Chapter officers hold a current membership, the National Office will issue a 15% rebate to each Chapter for their current members. Rebate checks will be issued twice a year, with the first check representing January to June membership renewals/new memberships and the second check reflecting July to December membership renewals/new memberships. \*The reports include activity of the past six months and identifies areas of concern and/or where the Chapter needs assistance. The goal of Chapter reports is for the National Office to support Chapters and share ideas.

### Financial Reports

Each year the Treasurer prepares a formal account of finances and presents it to the Chapter membership. The Chapter Director must send an annual report of Chapter activity and finances to the National Office; this report should first be reviewed and approved by the Chapter Board.



### Chapter Bank Account

A checking account should be maintained in the name of the organization: *National Association of Pastoral Musicians – Chapter* (e.g. *Miami Chapter*). At least two signatures, the Treasurer and the Chapter Director, should be on the account.

In March 1946, the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) a determination letter that the USCCB was exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Since this initial letter, the tax-exempt designation has been renewed each year by the IRS. As a subordinate organization of the USCCB (verified by inclusion in the current edition of *The Official Catholic Directory*, published by P.J. Kenedy & Sons, publishers of the Holy Apostolic See), the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, including NPM Chapters, is included in the IRS tax exempt status granted to the USCCB.

A complete set of informational documents, including the current USCCB IRS status letter can be found on the USCCB website pathway listed below. These documents are identified here in order for you to provide accompanying information for bank personnel if requested. If you or the bank has questions, contact the NPM National Office (202-240-3000) and speak with the Executive Director or Membership Director.

See [www.usccb.org/about/financial-reporting/index.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/about/financial-reporting/index.cfm) for more information.

When opening a new NPM bank account (or addressing a bank's request for verification of an NPM Chapter's IRS status information), an email should be sent to the NPM National Office ([NPMSing@npm.org](mailto:NPMSing@npm.org)) requesting information and documents necessary to open an NPM Chapter Bank Account. A list of the names and addresses of current Chapter officers should be included. The Chapter Director will then receive a letter from the NPM Executive Director containing the pertinent NPM tax and organizational information. A copy of the Executive Director's letter should accompany the bank account application.

Since the founding of NPM in 1976, many changes in banking procedures have occurred. Today, Chapters can utilize available resources including debit/credit cards, Square, Paypal, and other electronic methods. Always be sure to consult best practices and create non-profit accounts to minimize transaction fees.

## **MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Each Chapter is expected to have at least four gatherings each year.

### **Meetings**

Each Chapter must hold an annual membership meeting, which may be in conjunction with another event. At this meeting the Board will present formal reports to the membership and receive input from the membership. This would be an appropriate time for the election of officers.

Formulating a plan or an agenda for a Chapter meeting can be intimidating if Chapter leadership has never done this before; here are a few ways to make your Chapter meetings a success—first, ensure that your Chapter follows NPM national policies. Bylaws and governing documents of the national association can be found online in the “About” section of the NPM national website ([www.npm.org/about/strategic-goals/](http://www.npm.org/about/strategic-goals/)). Second, creating and circulating an agenda in advance of your Chapter’s meeting is not only an easy way for members to follow along with the meeting, but also allows the Chapter director to stay on task and be goal oriented. An example of a simple meeting agenda can be found in the addendum to this handbook. Third, offering members the chance to give input at Chapter meetings can provide valuable insight to Chapter leadership. Member input can be done formally as part of the agenda, or informally following the meeting. Finally, have fun and enjoy the experience—Chapter meetings can be great opportunities for fellowship and idea sharing.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Website**

Chapter websites are platforms for sharing information and ideas, reporting on events, advertising, promoting, inviting, and even for collecting payments. Websites are an essential part of Chapter communication and networking. When used in conjunction with other forms of communication (such as email, direct mail, and telephoning), an up-to-date website brings credibility and substance to the Chapter. Not having a website, or operating a stale, out-of-date website, will give the impression that the Chapter is inactive. It is imperative that, regardless of the scope and depth of the website, it be kept current! Chapter websites must include links to the [npm.org](http://npm.org) site, and be linkable from the [npm.org](http://npm.org) site.

### **Newsletter**

A Chapter newsletter is a valuable tool for keeping in touch with all Chapter members. The newsletter includes happenings in the Chapter and important events in the diocese or in the national Association. Many Chapters send their newsletters by email or post them on the Chapter website. Some also provide a printed newsletter sent by postal mail.

The Chapter newsletter should include the following:

- message from the Chapter Director
- details about upcoming Chapter events
- report on the recent Chapter events
- general calendar of events including non-Chapter events of interest
- announcements
- photos

Additional newsletter features may be developed by the Board.

Automated email distribution services (e.g., phpList, ConstantContact, or MailChimp) are powerful tools to manage email distribution lists. In general, they are better suited for creating and delivering large mailings than a personal email account. Chapters may take the necessary steps to include members of a parish staff and music ministries, as well as other interested parties, developing mailing lists with recipients numbered in the hundreds. The NPM Executive Director ([director@npm.org](mailto:director@npm.org)) and Membership Forum ([membershipforum@npm.org](mailto:membershipforum@npm.org)) should be included on the distribution list to increase the linkage between Chapters and the National Office. This greatly enhances the promotion capabilities for Chapter events. These services are effective and efficient methods for sharing content in a broadcast mode, but care must be exercised in following the rules provided by the distribution service.

### Email

Each Chapter is assigned an npm.org email address by the National Office. This email account is the main account for use by the Chapter Board. Upon completion of elected terms, the outgoing Chapter Director must ensure to transfer this email account over to the incoming Chapter Director.

### Social Media

Chapters are encouraged to use social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) to complement but not necessarily replace the Chapter website. Social media, in some cases, can function in lieu of a Chapter website. Chapter leadership must establish a means to monitor postings. All Chapter social media pages should use the profile and banner images found in the Google Chapter Resources folder to ensure a consistent brand across all Chapter and national pages.

## APPENDIX

### Chapter Meeting Agenda

Proposed Agenda

Birmingham Chapter, National Association of Pastoral Musicians

Location · Date

The National Association of Pastoral Musicians fosters the art of musical liturgy. The members of NPM serve the Catholic Church in the United States as musicians, clergy, liturgists, and other leaders of prayer.

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**(Time)**      **Call to Order**      Name of Speaker

(Meeting Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Overview of Agenda read here)

**(Time)**      **Agenda Items**      Name of Speaker

(List agenda items here)

**(Time)**      **Old Business**      Name of Speaker

(Agenda items from last meeting that were left unresolved, business concerning existing activities would be discussed here, or any other item needing follow up)

**(Time)**      **New Business**      Name of Speaker

(Anything that is a new idea requiring discussion—a place to begin conversation on a new event or idea that requires Chapter input)

**(Time)**      **Adjourn**

### Announcements

Please mark your calendars for the next Chapter meeting—Date/Time.