№ 1

CONSTITUTION of the Bulgarian
Eastern Orthodox Church "St. George"
in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, U.S.A.

PREAMBLE

We, the members of this Church, in order to form a more perfect union, cultivate Christianity, provide the general welfare of all Eastern Orthodox Christians whose origin is Bulgarian in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, and its suburbs of Maryland and Virginia, do hereby ordain and adopt the Charter of "St. George" Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church as our Constitution.

ARTICLE I. The name of said Corporation shall be: "St. George" Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church of the City of Washington, District of Columbia.

The official languages of this Church shall be BULGARIAN and ENGLISH.

ARTICLE II. This Church is strictly and exclusively a religious incorporated legal entity with all appurtenant rights and privileges under the existing laws of the City of Washington, District of Columbia, and the existing laws of the United States of America.

ARTICLE III. This Church's religious Corporation has originated in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, United States of America, and is organized under Title 29, Chapter 5, of the Code of Laws of the District of Columbia, 1973 Edition, and as such is amenable to all laws and regulations promulgated in said Code.

As a Canonical Spiritual Organ, this Church is under the Ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocesan Bishop of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church, Diocese of the United States and Canada of the Orthodox Church of America (OCA), to which it endures no administrative, legal, or procedural obligation, whatsoever.

ARTICLE IV. The principal office of the Corporation is to be located in Washington, D.C., United States of America.

ARTICLE V. The purpose or purposes for which said Corporation is formed are:

Section 1. To unite religiously and ecclesiastically in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ all Eastern Orthodox Christians whose origin is Bulgarian, or any other Eastern Orthodox Christians and their families of whatever national origin residing in Washington, D.C. and all surrounding areas, and to satisfy their religious and spiritual needs and purvey to all their church requirements.

Section 2. To provide a place of public worship and facilities for social, physical, civic, educational, moral, and religious instruction for its members and their families, and conduct the same according to the teachings of the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Canons of the Eastern Orthodox Church, in conformity with the tradition and regulations of the Eastern Orthodox Church, to be supplemented by the BY-LAWS, rules and regulations presented by the Trustees of the Corporation for the acceptance of at least two-thirds of the membership.

Section 3. To purchase, own, and maintain suitable real estate, buildings and personal property of all kinds and do any and all things necessary or incident to the accomplishment of the purposes herein out.

Section 4. In the event this Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church in Washington, District of columbia, should lose all of its membership and cease to exist, title to all real property and buildings and improvements thereon held by the Church shall vest in a bank located and existing under the laws of the District of columbia, which will keep in trust until new church is organized with the same structure and purposes as indicated in this Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE VI. The affairs of the Corporation shall be controlled and conducted according to the ARTICLES of this Constitution by a Board of seven (7) Trustees with the spiritual advice of the designated Priest of the Parish.

Section 1. The Trustees, who must be members in good standing, shall be nominated from the floor and elected by a simple majority, as provided in the BY-LAWS, of the members at the annual meeting to serve for four years. But, no Trustees shall serve for more than three consecutive terms.

Section 2. The Trustees shall elect from among themselves a President, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and Two (2) members at Large, and may select assistant and appoint members to committees as are necessary to cary out the purpose of said Corporation.

Section 3. The Trustees, who shall be elected by the first meeting following the establishment of the corporation, shall serve for four years. Every new annual meeting shall elect two Trustees to replace the same number of Trustees selected by a lot.

ARTICLE VII. The Trustees shall be nominated and elected only among the members of the Corporation who are American citizens of Bulgarian origin with no political affiliation to organizations professing anti-religious doctrines or teaching.

ARTICLE VIII. Regular meetings of the membership shall be held quarterly each year as provided in the BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE IX. Proposed amendments submitted for adoption relative to the Articles of Corporation and BY-LAWS shall be subject to the acceptance of the Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting called for that purpose by at least two-thirds of the membership in good standing.

BY-LAWS of the Bulgarian
Eastern Orthodox Church "St. George"
in the City of Washington, District of Columbia

ARTICLE I

DUTIES OF TRUSTEES

Section 1. The Board of Trustees shall transact the business and control the property and finances of the Church as directed in Article VI of the Constitution.

Section 2. The Board of Trustees, acting in good faith and in the interest of the Church, without requiring a vote of the members, may spend up to $100.00 each month and up to $500.00 in case of emergency during the interim of holding regular meetings.

Section 3. Each member of the Board of Trustees is morally bound before God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Christian conscience to attend the Sunday and Feast Day Divine Services as often as possible, to receive Holy Communion, and to encourage the members to do likewise.

Section 4. A member of the Board of Trustees, who applies unorthodox Christian conduct in the performance of his duties as a trustee, may be impeached or suspended by a two-thirds vote of the Church membership.

Section 5. The Board of Trustees, who shall serve as ushers, shall provide Sextons, Chanters, Candlemen, Choir Director, and Custodians.

ARTICLE II

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The President shall preside at all the meetings of the Church Congregation and of the Board of Trustees

and shall present a report at the Annual Meeting of the activities of the Congregation during the preceding year. He shall be the Agent of the church Corporation and a member, ex-officio, of all committees.

Section 2. The Secretary shall call the roll and keep the minutes of all the meetings of the Congregation and of the Board of Trustees, read all such minutes at the next regular meeting of the Congregation and of the Board of Trustees, conduct the correspondence, send out notices at least seven days prior to the call of the day, contact each member personally when necessary, keep a list of members, present all the work of the Committees and of the Congregation during the preceding year to the Board of Trustees, and perform such other duties as the Board of Trustees may direct. In his absence, the duties of the Secretary shall be performed by the Assistant Secretary who may have other duties assigned by the Board of Trustees.

Section 3. The Treasurer shall keep an account of all receipts and disbursements in a book, collect dues, send out receipts, deposit all the funds in the name of the Church in a designated bank, make payments by check only on the order of the Board of Trustees with the signature of the President and the Treasurer. He shall present a full report at the Board of Trustees meeting and shall present a full report at each meeting of the Congregation and of the Board of Trustees and shall give a complete report, examined by the Auditing Committee, at the Annual Meeting. In his absence, the duties of the Treasurer shall be performed by the Assistant Treasurer who may have other duties as assigned by the Board of Trustees.

Section 4. The Sergeant-At-Arms, who may appoint three assistants, shall maintain order and enforce the rules and regulations at all Church services, meetings, and general affairs.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any Eastern Orthodox Christian, as provided in Article V, Section 1, of the Constitution, eighteen years or over, who has received the Divine Grace of Sacred Baptism and has been confirmed in the Eastern Orthodox Church, is eligible to become a member.

Section 2. Candidates for new members are accepted by the following procedures: The candidate submits a written form-application to the Church Board of the Congregation. The application must be accompanied by a payment of membership dues and countersigned by two members of the church as sponsors. If the candidate is rejected by the Church Board, he/she may appeal the decision at the annual meeting.

Section 3. Members may participate in the respective annual meetings, regular meetings, special meetings, and extraordinary meetings in person or by written proxy.

Section 4. Honorary membership may be conferred? By a majority vote at any regular meeting, upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IV

DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS

Section 1. Each member is morally bound before God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Christian Conscience to support the Church, to attend the Sunday and Feast Day Divine Services, to receive Holy Communion, to lead a life in conformity of the Eastern Orthodox precepts, and to encourage his family to do likewise.

Section 2. Each parishioner must conduct himself toward the Authority His Eminence Diocesan Bishop and the Parish Pastor with reverence and respect, and cooperate with them in the performance of their duties.

Section 3. Each parishioner must have respect toward all his fellow members and the administration of the Church.

Section 4. At the direction of the Board of Trustees, any parishioner who applies unorthodox conduct, inconsistence with the purposes of this Church, may be expelled or suspended by two-thirds vote of those present at the meeting, and that his dues be refunded on a prorated basis.

ARTICLE V

REVENUE

Section 1. The financial support shall be derived from regular membership dues, ecclesiastical and religious fees, programs, projects, candle offerings, voluntary contributions, grants, legacies, and such other philanthropic deeds.

ARTICLE VI

DUES

Section 1. At the direction of the Board of Trustees, the dues shall be determined by a majority vote and payable by the members for the ensuing year at the annual meeting in September.

Section 2. Any person or family becoming a member during the year shall pay dues on a prorated annual basis.

Section 3. Members whose dues from the previous year remain unpaid at the Annual Meeting shall not be permitted to vote or be nominated for any office of the Church, and may be dropped from the roll at the direction of the Board of Trustees by a majority vote of the members.

ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS

There shall be regular, special, annual, and extraordinary meetings held by the Church Congregation.

Secton 1. Regular meetings of the membership shall be held quarterly on any Sunday of each month of March, June, September, and December.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the President or by any three members of the Board of Trustees.

Section 3. The annual meeting, held on any Sunday of September, shall be for the reading of all annual reports, for amending the Constitution and the BY-LAWS, for the election of officers, and for the payment of all dues.

Section 4. An extraordinary meeting, relative to solving an emergency problem due to the negligence of the Board of Trustees, may be called with a petition signed by a majority of the regular members of the Congregation, a notice of which shall be sent to all the members stating the purpose or purposes, date, time, and place of such meeting.

Section 5. The Board of Trustees shall hold regular meetings once a month and may meet for ten minutes on the same date prior to the regular meeting of the Congregation for the transaction of business, all such meetings of which shall be open to the regular members.

Section 6. The Board of Trustees shall hold special meetings at the call of the President or upon the request of two of its members.

Section 7. A member of the Board of Trustees who without reason is absent from three consecutive regular Board Meetings is considered to be giving up his responsibilities as a trustee and may be replaced at the next meeting by a vote of the majority of the members.

ARTICLE VIII

QUORUM

Section 1. The presence of at least twenty-five (25) percent of the regular members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting.

Section 2. The presence of at least fifty (50) percent of the regular members shall constitute a quorum at the annual election of the Board of Trustees.

Section 3. The presence of at least fifty (50) percent of the regular members shall constitute a quorum at the extraordinary meeting.

Section 4. The presence of at least two-thirds of the Trustees shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any Board of Trustees meeting.

Section 5. Whenever a quorum is not present at any meeting, a motion should be adopted to schedule another meeting within two weeks.

ARTICLE IX

ELECTIONS

Section 1. The election of the Board of Trustees and all decisions requiring a two-thirds majority vote shall be by secret ballot and as provided in Article VI of the Constitution. After two successive meetings have been called, as required in Article VIII of the Constitution, and a quorum of 50 percent was not present, then the election of the Board of Trustees shall be made by absentee ballot.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of those members present, providing that the presence of at least 25 percent of the regular membership is in attendance.

In the case of absentee ballot, a person may be nominated in absentia, providing written permission is presented to the Committee by the nominee.

Section 3. The ballots shall be sent by mail to all absent regular members. Ballots are required to be returned no later than one week after the nomination for Board of Trustees. The ballots shall be counted by a committee, appointed by the Board of Trustees. The Chairman of this committee shall be the Pastor of St. George Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church.

Section 4. Members absent from the annual meeting shall not be eligible to any office of the church congregation except in the case of absentee ballot.

Section 5. A new member shall have the right to attend the general meetings with voting and all other privileges and shall be eligible to hold office only after being a regular member for a period of at least 3 months.

Section 6. All vacancies of the Board of Trustees shall be filled by a call of a special election meeting.

ARTICLE X

Section 1. A committee or committees, consisting of the Board of Trustees, shall make necessary recommendations to the committees and appoint their chairmen, vice-chairmen, and members.

Section 2. The Finance Committee, consisting of three regular members, shall devise and direct the plans for raising money to carry on the work of the Congregation.

Section 3. The Program Committee, consisting of twelve (12) regular members, shall make plans for all Church activities for the ensuing year.

Section 4. An Auditing Committee, consisting of three regular members shall examine the accounts of the Church Treasurer and of the treasurer of any auxiliary organization at each regular and each annual meeting.

Section 5. The audit for any annual meeting shall be made between the first and fourth Sundays of September. The Auditing Committee shall instruct the Board of Trustees and the officers of the auxiliary organizations not to defray any expenses until the new administration of the respective organization takes office.

Section 6. A Membership Committee, consisting of three regular members, to whom all names for membership are submitted, shall review the qualifications of all applicants and report to the Board of Trustees for action to be taken at the next regular or annual meeting.

ARTICLE XI

CHURCH ASSISTANTS

Section 1. The Sextons shall assist the Pastor during all church services.

Section 2. The Chanters, who are assisted by the church choir, shall perform all passages of the Liturgy required during all church services.

Section 3. The Ushers shall see that all persons are provided with seats during the church services, light candles upon the request of any persons, and welcome all the guests.

Section 4. The Candlemen shall look after all candle requests and offerings to the church.

Section 5. The Custodians shall look after the maintenance of the Church Buildings and Grounds.

ARTICLE XII

PASTOR

Section 1. Whenever the parish is in need of securing a regular pastor or a deacon, the Board of Trustees, with the consent of the members, may notify the Diocesan Bishop to name available candidates for consideration. The name of the successful candidate, who was chosen by a majority vote of the members, may be sent to the Diocesan Bishop who is to make the necessary provisions.

Section 2. Whenever the parish is in need of securing a regular pastor or a deacon and no pastors or deacons are available, the Board of Trustees, with the consent of the members, shall notify the Diocesan Bishop to name for consideration the available candidates desiring to be ordained. The name of the successful candidate, who was chosen by a majority vote of the members at a meeting presided by a Pastor appointed by the Bishop, shall be sent to the Diocesan Bishop who is to make the necessary provisions for ordinations.

Section 3. The Pastor is the servant of God and our Lord Jesus Christ and the spiritual leader of the church community. It is his obligation to assist the church administration in guiding and coordinating all the church activities and attend the meetings.

Section 4. The Pastor shall abide by all the Canons of the Holy Eastern Orthodox Church, observe the Constitution and BY-LAWS of this parish, officiate regularly at the Sunday and Feast-Day Divine Services, administer all the Holy Sacraments and rites to the parishioners, extend true pastoral charity and gentleness toward all mankind, give aid to everyone who comes to him for advice and conduct himself with reverence and respect towards the Authority of the Diocesan Bishop.

Section 5. The Pastor shall not be eligible to be a member of the Board of Trustees, shall not undertake any official policy or correspondence without the knowledge of the Board of Trustees, shall not attend any meeting of the Diocesan Clergy unless such a meeting has been sanctioned and convened by the Diocesan Bishop, and take any membership in any non-charitable organization.

Section 6. The Pastor shall be responsible for preparing and mailing out a monthly church bulletin to all parishioners. The last bulletin issue of the calendar year shall contain the summary of the yearly contributions for each individual. The text of each bulletin issue shall be approved by the editor appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Section 7. The Pastor shall be granted a two-weeks annual paid vacation at the direction of the Board of Trustees and with the blessing of the Diocesan Bishop.

Section 8. For every absence from his regular parish service or from his church community, the Pastor must ask the consent of the Board of Trustees.

Section 9. The salary of the Pastor is geared according to the living conditions of the community, and may be decided at the first regular meeting by a majority vote of the membership, upon the recommendations of the Board of Trustees and approval of the Diocesan Bishop.

Section 10. The Deacon, who may have variously defined duties in the Church, is a member of the clerical order next below that of the Pastor.

ARTICLE XIII

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. Auxiliary organizations may be formed with the consent of a majority vote by the Congregation at the direction of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. The Constitution and BY-LAWS of the Parish shall govern any Auxiliary Organization.

Section 3. At the Annual Meeting, the outgoing administration of an Auxiliary Organization shall issue a check of all the net proceeds, except $50.00, in the name of "St. George" Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church for deposit in the treasury.

ARTICLE XIV

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Section 1. The "ROBERT RULES" shall be used as a basic guide in all matters of parliamentary procedure during any Church Meetings of the regular membership and the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XV

AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These BY-LAWS may be amended by two-thirds vote of the entire membership at the Annual Meeting, provided notice of such amendments shall have been given in writing at the previous regular meeting.

The BY-LAWS were ratified and approved by not less than two-thirds of the membership assembled at a special meeting.