An Inaugural Pastoral Plan

for

Saint Elizabeth Roman Catholic Church
Pottstown Pike and Fellowship Road
Upper Uwchlan Township, PA

October, 2004
MISSION STATEMENT FOR SAINT ELIZABETH PARISH

Our mission, together with the Lord, is to build and nourish a holy, faithful community at Saint Elizabeth parish. Our house rests upon the Word and the Sacraments, and its doors will always be open, warmly welcoming all who seek to know and love Jesus Christ in the fullness of our Catholic Faith.

As stewards of the abundant gifts God gives to us, we will freely share them with our brothers and sisters everywhere. We will educate all our generations, and help our youth in their quest for fulfillment as disciples and citizens in today’s world.

By the conviction of our words, the goodness of our deeds and the witness of our lives, we will reflect the presence of Jesus living within us. With the grace of the Holy Spirit we will extend His kingdom everyday, one person at a time.

Recommended by the Parish Pastoral Council: January 29, 2002
Approved by the Pastor: February 1, 2002
Our Parish Pastoral Council was established early in 2001, about six months after the founding of Saint Elizabeth parish. The pastoral council is a body of appointed and elected members, representative of both parishioners and parish staff. The fundamental role of the pastoral council is to assist our pastor in two key dimensions of parish life:

1) in fostering the active participation of all parishioners in the life and mission of Saint Elizabeth, and
2) in providing ongoing pastoral planning to ensure that the activities and programs conducted by the parish are responsive to the spiritual and pastoral needs of our parish community.

Over the course of its first year of meetings, our pastoral council crafted a parish mission statement, drawing upon their shared experience and insights, and building upon the comments and suggestions offered by parishioners in a written consultation form and at an open parish meeting held in May of 2001. Our current mission statement was recommended by the pastoral council and approved by the pastor on February 1, 2002. It was formally presented to parishioners on the occasion of our second anniversary as a parish community. The mission statement serves as the foundation and touchstone for everything we do and all that we strive to become as a parish community, even as we continue to grow in membership, to construct parish facilities, to expand our pastoral services, and to introduce a wider range of parish activities in response to the needs of parishioners of all ages.

Since the Fall of 2002, our pastoral council has been developing an inaugural pastoral plan for our parish for the next three-to-five years. A pastoral plan serves a two-fold purpose: first, as a benchmark to evaluate existing parish activities in light of our fundamental mission as a parish community; and second, to guide the introduction of new activities at our parish. Planning goals and objectives provide direction for the commitment of time/money/facilities/personnel to existing and proposed parish activities.

We need a roadmap to help us figure out how to travel to our ultimate destination, what roads to take, when we need to put on the brakes, and when we need to speed up. Our pastoral plan serves as that roadmap. Because we needed to get some things up and moving right away, a number of parish committees and programs have been put into place even before the adoption of a pastoral plan. The pastoral plan now being developed will be our guide to make sure that all existing programs and all future programs are helping us to live out our mission here at Saint Elizabeth. The pastoral plan is a living document – it will evolve as we continue to grow.

This plan delineates three specific goals; they are:
1) Saint Elizabeth parish is committed to providing a variety of opportunities for parishioners of all ages to become more knowledgeable and informed about their Catholic faith and about the Catholic Church, and in this way foster the spiritual growth and sacramental life of each parishioner and of our parish community as a whole

During the season of Advent, we will conduct an evening of recollection and discussion about these pastoral planning goals; for the convenience of our parishioners, this program will be held
on three Fridays: December 3, 10 and 17, 7:00-8:30 PM in the parish office.

how we participate in the mission of Jesus through our commitment to and involvement in the mission of the Church at Saint Elizabeth. May God direct us on our journey to His kingdom!
GOAL ONE

Saint Elizabeth parish is committed to providing a variety of opportunities for parishioners of all ages to become more knowledgeable and informed about their Catholic faith and about the Catholic Church, and in this way foster the spiritual growth and sacramental life of each parishioner and of our parish community as a whole.

Through baptism, our initiation into the faith, we are invited to act as the disciples did – by learning from, being empowered and being transformed by the teachings of Jesus and the sacramental life of the Church. We recognize the interest of many of our parishioners to learn about and grow in their Catholic faith, and we will invite these and others to take part in a journey of learning and spiritual growth together.

The parish community of Saint Elizabeth will provide a nurturing environment, a variety of opportunities and the necessary resources for our adults, teens and children to grow in our Catholic faith. Through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we can listen, learn, teach and be transformed.

Inspired by the faith commitment of those who have gone before us, we in turn can invite others to learn, support their journey in faith, and ultimately witness the transformation of all our generations. By exercising our baptismal responsibility in this way, we can grow in faith, worship God in spirit and truth, and reap the joy that comes from a fuller life with God.
GOAL TWO

Saint Elizabeth parish is committed to providing a variety of opportunities for parishioners of all ages to recognize the spiritual and material gifts each of us has been given by God, to cultivate these gifts with the grace of the Holy Spirit, and to share these gifts with others.

Jesus led a life of service to others. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to follow his example by sharing the gifts God has given to us. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can share our gifts, both as individuals and as a parish community, by praying for one another, listening to each other, building fellowship with others, caring attentively to others’ needs, and by many other forms of stewardship service. No God-given gift is too small to be shared with others.

The parish community of Saint Elizabeth will provide a supportive environment and a variety of practical opportunities for our adults, teens and children to identify and develop their spiritual and material gifts, and to share them effectively with others, both within and beyond our own parish community. The love we demonstrate in sharing with our brothers and sisters will inspire our parish to a more active stewardship of the gifts they have received from God.
GOAL THREE

Saint Elizabeth parish is committed to providing a variety of opportunities for parishioners of all ages to participate in the Church’s evangelical mission of promoting peace and justice in the world by shaping their everyday lives around the values and convictions of the Gospel.

Jesus proclaimed a kingdom of peace and justice for all, founded upon the two great commandments: love of God and love of neighbor. As baptized believers, we share in the mission of the Church to proclaim this kingdom of God to all the world. Like the first disciples, we are blessed when we hunger and thirst for justice, when we are peacemakers, and even when we suffer for the sake of the kingdom. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, we are called to exemplify in our daily lives the same attitudes, convictions and values which Jesus demonstrated in his life.

The parish community of Saint Elizabeth will provide practical opportunities and the necessary resources for our adults, teens and children to give witness to the values of the Gospel in their family lives, in their workplaces and schools, and in their service for justice in the public community. Our commitment to serve those in need and to spread Christ’s message among others will contribute to Christ’s redemptive mission to the world.
Gracious and loving God, this world and all its wonders are the gifts of your love. We know that it is from your hand that we receive all that we have, all that we are, and all that we will be. Help us to always place you at the center of our lives.

We believe that you call us to be good stewards, the caretakers of all that you have entrusted into our hands. Help us to commit ourselves to share our time, our talent and our treasure as an outward sign of our love and gratitude.

Lord God, help us to respond to your care, by our care for one another; to respond to your generosity, by our generosity to all in need; to respond to your forgiveness, by our willingness to forgive others.

Lord, as you guide us on our journey, may we, your children, remain ever grateful for your constant love.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

[Adopted by Parish Stewardship Council: February 19, 2003]