

Belvedere Family Community: Vote by Midnight Tonight on New Charter

Justin Okamoto
March 29, 2025

Belvedere Family Community



Reminder to VOTE BY MIDNIGHT on the Proposed BFC Charter

Hello Everyone,

As a follow-up to our Town Hall Meeting from Sunday, we reviewed and answered questions regarding the new proposed BFC Charter.

If you were unable to attend, please take a moment to view the recording of the meeting
vimeo.com/1068913953

Here is the Proposed BFC Charter links, if you have not read through them or would like to read again:

Proposed new charter in English: drive.google.com/file/d/1Vg1BCG3CGDcMdkqj5RUKe5xSKjL...

Proposed new charter in Japanese: drive.google.com/file/d/1vF9ifbnA5Qo0Imrhl0Vtq135BWc...

If you're ready to cast your VOTE, please do BY MIDNIGHT TONIGHT, use this [[Google Form](#)] to submit your response.

Thank you for your participation!

God bless you and your family!

-Charter Ad Hoc Team

Visit our website

Belvedere Family Community
723 S Broadway
Tarrytown, NY, 10591
info@belvederefamily.com

2025 BFC Charter Ratification Vote form

 Not shared



* Indicates required question

Name *

Your answer

Email *

Your answer



Do you approve this new proposed BFC Charter? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

If no, why? Please explain.

Your answer

Submit

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Belvedere Family Community

2025 Charter

Ratified on March __, 2025

Belvedere Family Community
723 S. Broadway
Tarrytown, NY 10591

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1. Introduction

Several events in December 2023 made it evident that the then-current Charter - ratified in 2005 - was in need of substantial revision. After some debate, an intergenerational ad hoc committee was formed consisting of 5 next-generation and 4 first-generation members. The diverse committee represented old and young; male and female; Asian and western; single members and Blessed couples; and also included representatives from the Council and the Pastoral team.

The Ad Hoc Committee was tasked with reviewing the 2005 Charter and proposing an updated version to address the shortcomings that developed over the previous two decades.

After fourteen months of prayerful and sincere deliberation, the committee proposed a new structure for the community that incorporated some central elements of *Distributed Leadership*. One of the key improvements to our structure was to transfer some of the Pastor's responsibilities to other positions. This gives the Pastor more time to focus on the spiritual well-being of the members and to support our ministries with more guidance, coordination, and love.

As we begin to "pioneer" this new structure, which is explained in this document, we pray that Heaven will continue to bless our community with inspiration, revelation, and divine truths so that we can make our Heavenly Parent's dream of world peace and harmony among all brothers and sisters a reality.

Belvedere Family Community remains affiliated with the Family Federation for World Peace, embracing the same vision of one family under God. However, as the world around us changes, it is expected that our Charter will also need to evolve in order to stay relevant.

Charter Ad Hoc Committee (2025)

2. Letter from Sub-Regional Pastor - Naokimi Ushiroda

Dear Members of the Belvedere Family Community,

It is with sincere appreciation that I acknowledge the dedicated efforts behind the 2025 Charter of the Belvedere Family Community. This document represents countless hours of thoughtful deliberation, prayerful consideration, and collaborative work by your leaders and members who have strived to create a framework that serves your community's evolving needs.

What stands out most is not any particular provision, but rather the spirit of unity and purpose that has characterized this endeavor. Your willingness to engage in open dialogue, consider various viewpoints, and work toward consensus reflects the very values of shared responsibility and mutual respect that strengthen any community.

I would like to emphasize the essential spiritual role that your pastor serves as the central point of connection between your community and the broader providence. In this pivotal time, we have a precious opportunity to deepen our heart connection with True Mother through the insights that our current president is bringing to us all. This charter work coincides with a special period of grace as we prepare our hearts for the Cheon Won Gung entrance ceremony and together usher in a new era in our movement's history. Your community's efforts reflect this providential momentum.

I encourage all members to actively engage with this charter development process and contribute to the ongoing conversation about your community's future direction. May your collaborative efforts continue to strengthen bonds of fellowship and provide a solid foundation for your community's journey forward.

With warmest regards and encouragement,

Naokimi Ushiroda Senior Pastor of the Northeast Subregion

3. Vision Statement

Our vision is to become a thriving community unified by the goal of building a peaceful world in oneness with God, centered on shared universal divine truths.

4. Mission Statement

Our mission is to empower all individuals to grow spiritually and to embody and share God's truth and love.

Through diverse programs, activities, and ministries, we encourage individuals and families to partner with God our Heavenly Parent, and True Parents, in expanding a peaceful world.

5. Our Spirit

The spirit of the Belvedere Family Community (BFC) is based upon the following principles:

Ownership - the entire BFC shares responsibility for the community and its future through its elected leaders, appointed leaders, volunteers, and members.

Empowerment - BFC members can develop the Community in ways consistent with the Charter's guidelines.

Spiritual Growth - BFC promotes and supports the spiritual growth of all its members and families.

Expansion Growth - BFC can expand its membership by welcoming newcomers primarily from Westchester, Rockland, and Orange counties.

Embracing and Serving Others - BFC is dedicated to embracing and serving others in spirit and practice.

Evolving Process - BFC will continue to evolve and change to meet the developing needs of our Community and God's greater providence.

Checks and Balances - power and responsibility are distributed among the three BFC departments, as well as Community members and the Sub-Regional Pastor.

Spirit of Unity - BFC is united in spirit and practice with our parent organization, the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.

6. Our Structure

A. Overview of the Structure

Three Departments

BFC is organized centering on three main departments.



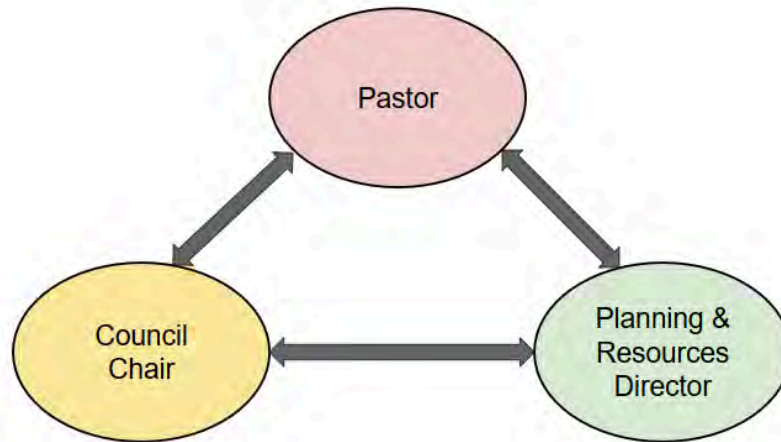
The Council is our elected decision-making body. It ensures that all our activities are aligned with our Vision and Mission, and oversees BFC's finances.

The Planning and Resources Department is responsible for long-term strategic planning with regard to BFC's vision, and major objectives. They are also available to assist members plan for, and launch new activities or ministries. They also manage BFC's physical assets.

The Ministries Department is the focus of our Community's attention. Our ministries not only represent how we, as a community, care for and support each other, they also substantiate the many points of contact with the greater community surrounding us. In addition, they provide the mechanisms through which we can respond to providential guidance from headquarters.

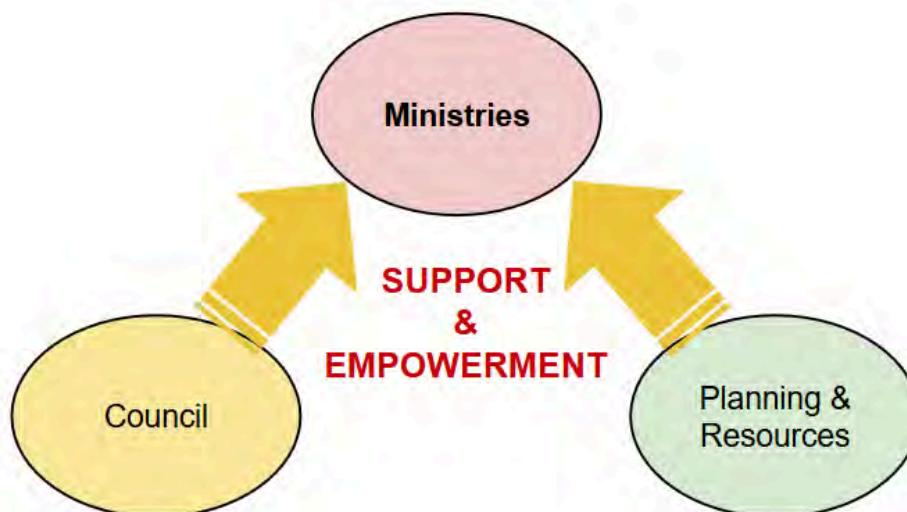
Community Leadership

Responsibility for the leadership of BFC is distributed between the leaders of the three Departments.



Relationship Between the Departments

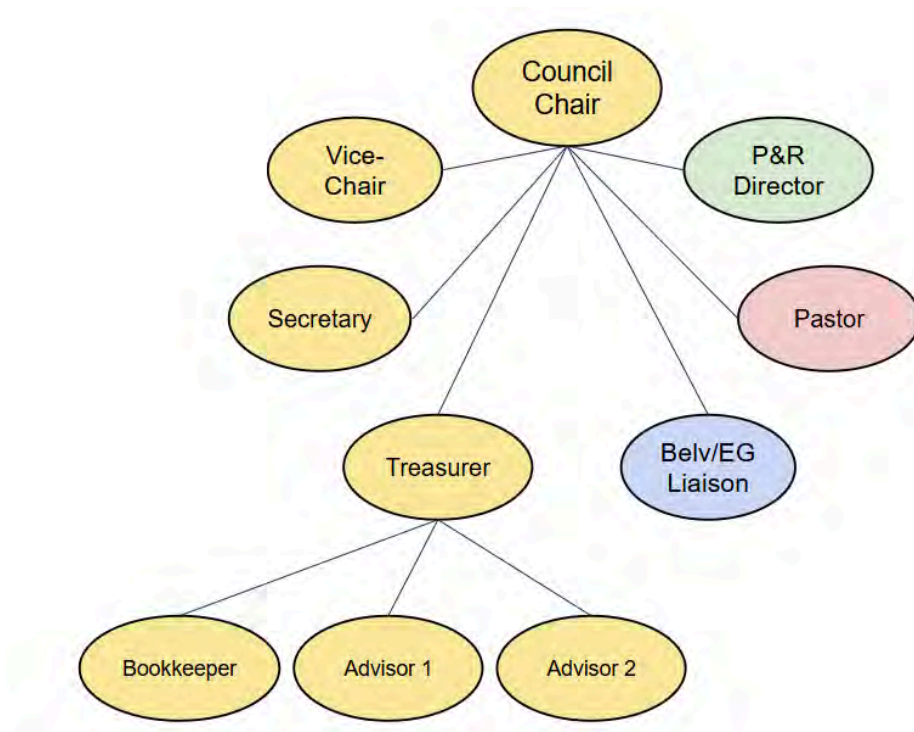
The heart and spirit behind BFC's structure is that of serving and supporting our Ministries. They are the reason for our being and the focus of our attention.



B. BFC Council

1. The Council is BFC's elected decision-making body.
2. There are seven seats on the Council. Four seats are elected. Three seats are filled by appointment.
3. Composition
 - a. Council ChairElected
 - b. Vice-Chair Elected
 - c. SecretaryElected
 - d. TreasurerElected
 - e. Council MemberPastor
 - f. Council MemberP&R Director
 - g. Council MemberBelvedere / EG Liaison

4. Organizational Chart



5. Elected Council members will serve two-year terms.
6. There is no limit to how many times a member can be re-elected.
7. Elections are role-specific and Council members may continue in the same role for an unlimited number of terms.

8. The P&R Coordinator and the Pastor are required to serve as Council members for the duration of their terms.
9. The Belvedere/East Garden (B/EG) Liaison should serve a minimum of one year on the Council. The appointee needs to be well-versed in the policies regarding Belvedere property.
10. For there to be a quorum, no more than two Council members can be absent from that meeting.
11. Council decisions will be made using the Dynamic Governance methodology.
12. If a Council member leaves or resigns, the Council will select a candidate to fill out the term.
13. The Council will conduct at least one open meeting every other month.
14. The Council will make a procedure for members to have their issues addressed.
15. Election and appointment of Council members.
 - a. Council members will be elected from the Community at large.
 - b. Members may run for election after being a member in good standing for 1 year. (For definition of “good standing” see paragraph 2e. on page 18)
 - c. The Council may stagger the elections, opening 2 seats each year, or open 4 seats every other year.
 - d. Elections will be role-specific but candidates may run for more than one seat.
 - e. If candidates are tied for any seat, the outcome shall be decided by lottery.
 - f. The election will be supervised by an election committee as decided by the Council.
 - g. Elections will be held in the first week of February.
 - h. The P&R seat is to be occupied by the serving P&R Coordinator.
 - i. The Pastor’s seat is to be occupied by the Pastor.
 - j. The B/EG Liaison seat is to be occupied by a member appointed by the B/EG management team.
16. Council Duties
 - a. Work collaboratively with the Ministries Department and the PR Department to ensure the Community stays aligned with its Vision and Mission.
 - b. Approve the annual budget and ensure the Community operates within it.

- c. Give regular financial reports to the Community as described in the Council Guidebook.
- d. Approve changes to the budget.
- e. Appoint standing or ad hoc committees as needed.
- f. Maintain the official BFC Members list.
- g. Hear and address members' suggestions, questions, and concerns in collaboration with the Pastor and P&R Director.
- h. Find replacements for the Pastor or P&R Director when necessary.
- i. Record suggestions for amendments to the Charter and review the list annually as described in the Council Guidebook.
- j. Schedule a 7-year Charter review by an ad hoc committee as described in the Council Guidebook.
- k. Oversee the Finance Subcommittee through the Treasurer.

17. Veto and Appeal

- a. Any decision by the Council may be vetoed by a higher authority, for example, the Sub-Regional Pastor.
- b. The Council may appeal a veto by the Sub-Regional Pastor to a higher authority, for example, the National President or Continental Director.

Finance Subcommittee

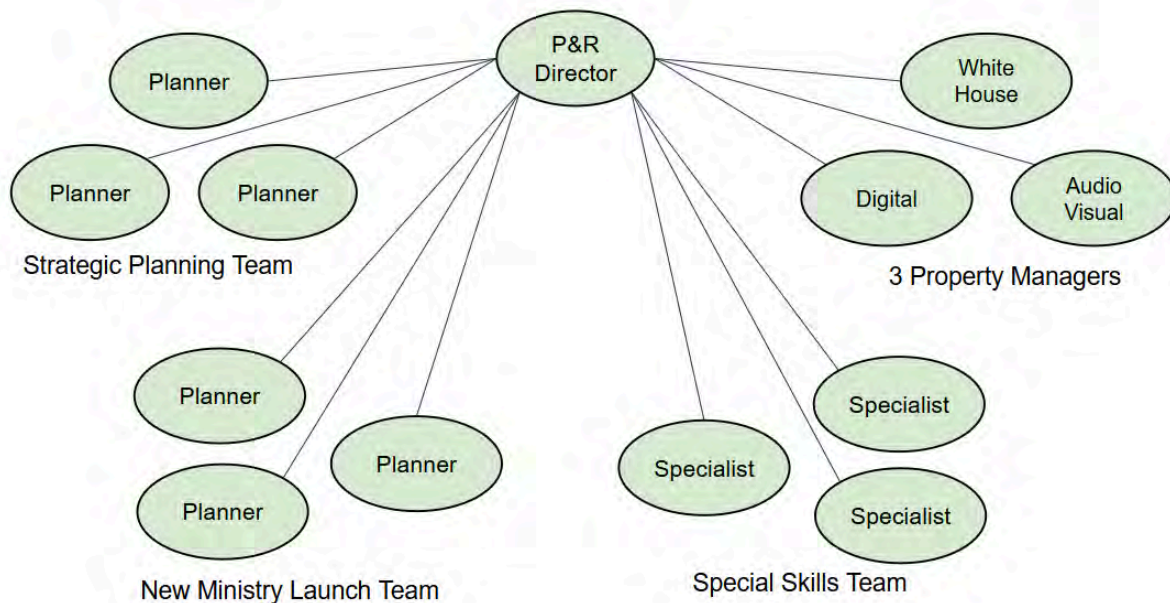
- 1. The Finance Subcommittee supports the Council by tracking income, expenses, and investments and providing monthly budget updates.
- 2. In collaboration with the P&R Department, the Ministries Department, and the Finance Subcommittee, the Treasurer submits an annual budget to the Council for approval.
- 3. The Finance Subcommittee submits financial reports to the Council for presentation to the Community as described in the Council Guidebook.
- 4. Composition
 - a. Treasurer Council representative While serving as Treasurer.
 - b. Bookkeeper Hired by Council While serving as Bookkeeper.
 - c. Advisor 1 Council approved 2-year term minimum
 - d. Advisor 2 Council approved 2-year term minimum.
- 5. The two advisors are qualified members who volunteer and are approved by the Council.

C. Planning and Resources Department

1. Composition

- a. Planning and Resources (P&R) Director
- b. Strategic Planning Team
 - i. Selected for their planning acumen
 - ii. Team size decided by the P&R Coordinator
- c. New-Ministry Launch Team
 - i. Selected for their planning acumen and willingness to help members
 - ii. Team size decided by the P&R Coordinator
- d. Special Skills Team
 - i. Selected for their expertise and willingness to help in a technical field
 - ii. Team size decided by the P&R Coordinator
- e. Property Managers
 - i. White House Manager
 - ii. Audio Visual Manager
 - iii. Digital Resources Manager

2. Organizational Chart



3. Purpose

- a. The P&R Department works collaboratively with the Council and the Ministries Department to provide recommendations for long-term strategic planning.
- b. The Department is also available to support the launching of new ministries and activities, with planning and technical expertise.
- c. The Department also manages certain BFC assets through the three Property Managers.

4. P&R Director's Responsibilities

- a. Coordinates the activities of the Strategic Planning team; the New Ministry Launch team; the Special Skills team; and the Property managers.
- b. Participates as a member of the Strategic Planning Team.
- c. Participates as a member of the Council to represent all issues related to the P&R Department
- d. Encourage members to create new "Community Ministries" based on their authentic interests and abilities.
- e. Manage the Department's budget in cooperation with the Council Treasurer.
- f. Recruit members for all four teams as needed.
- g. The P&R Coordinator will serve an initial term of 3 years. Future terms are to be determined by the Council.

5. Strategic Planning Team

- a. Review current strategies and brainstorm new ones regarding how best to achieve BFC's vision and major objectives.
- b. Meets regularly several times a year as decided by P&R Director.
- c. The Team shares their recommendations with the Council.

6. New-Ministry Launch Team

- a. Available to assist members with the details of launching a new ministry, activity, or program.
- b. The team is project-based so they only meet when called upon.

7. Special Skills Team

- a. Provide technical support and assistance according to each Specialist's expertise

- b. Project-based participation as decided by the P&R Coordinator
- 8. White House Manager
 - a. Manage practical aspects of the White House such as scheduling the use of public spaces; occupancy issues; and building maintenance.
- 9. Audiovisual Manager
 - a. Responsible for training and scheduling of volunteers; scheduling AV equipment assignments; and equipment maintenance.
- 10. Digital Resources Manager
 - a. Manage BFC's website, email, social media, and all other digital accounts.

D. Ministries Department

1. Composition

a. Pastor

- i. The Pastor oversees the Ministries Department and is assisted by the Events Coordinator and the Communications Assistant.

b. Core Ministries Coordinator

- i. Core Ministries are established ministries that are foundational to the Community

c. Community Ministries Coordinator

- i. Community Ministries are new and developing ministries, activities, and programs started by members and based on their interests and abilities.

d. Care and Prayer (C&P) Ministries Coordinator

- i. C&P Ministries are ministries focusing on prayer and care for all members including support for aging members and Seonghwa preparation.

e. Ministry Leaders

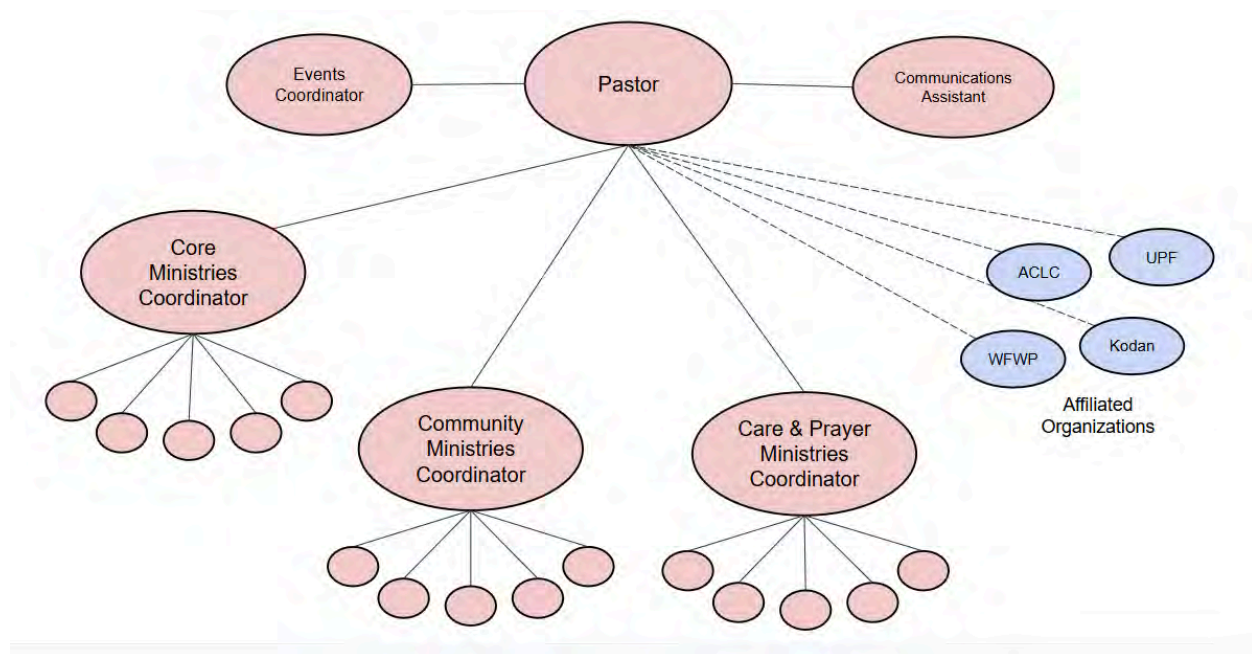
- i. Ministries are grouped under the three Coordinators listed above, who support the Ministry Leaders in their work.

- ii. See Appendix C for a listing of current ministries

f. Affiliated Organizations

- i. BFC supports four affiliated organizations and many of our members work with them.
- ii. The organizations are: American Clergy Leadership Conference; Universal Peace Federation; Women's Federation for World Peace; and Kodan

2. Organizational Chart



3. Purpose

- a. The Ministries Department provides structure, encouragement, and support to help Ministry Leaders run their ministries effectively.
- b. The Department ensures that all ministries, programs, and activities operate in alignment with BFC's Vision and Mission.
- c. The Ministries also provide a mechanism to help BFC members respond to special requests from Sub-Regional or National Headquarters.

4. Pastor - Appointment and Removal

- a. The Pastor is selected by the Council and approved by the Sub-Regional Pastor or higher authority.
- b. The Pastor will serve for a three-year term, at which time the Council may reappoint the Pastor for another three-year term or select a new Pastor. There is no limit to how many times the Council may reappoint the same Pastor.

5. Pastor's Responsibilities

- a. Oversee and support all ministries, programs, and activities with the assistance of the Ministry Coordinators.
- b. Oversee the spiritual well-being of all BFC members with the assistance of the Ministry Coordinators.
- c. Encourage member participation in BFC Ministries, programs, and activities.
- d. Participate as a member of the Council to represent all issues related to BFC Ministries.
- e. Act as the main point of contact for Sub-Regional and National Headquarters.
- f. Represent BFC at meetings called by Sub-Regional or National Headquarters.
- g. Manage the Department budget in coordination with the Council Treasurer.
- h. Ensure all ministries operate in alignment with BFC's stated Vision and Mission.

6. Ministries Coordinators

- a. There are three Ministries Coordinators who report to the Pastor.
 - i. Core Ministries Coordinator
 - ii. Community Ministries Coordinator
 - iii. Care & Prayer Ministries Coordinator
- b. Provide support, encouragement, and guidance to develop and maintain existing ministries within their group.

7. Event Coordinator

- a. Reports to the Pastor
- b. Coordinate the execution of plans for all BFC events.
- c. The Event Coordinator may communicate directly with the Council, the P&R Department, or any Ministry Leader.

8. Communications Assistant

- a. Reports to the Pastor.
- b. Prepare and send emails, social media broadcasts, and other communications for the Council Chair, the Pastor, and the P&R Director.

9. Affiliated Organizations

- a. BFC members are encouraged to support our Affiliated Organizations both individually and at organized events.
- b. The following organizations are affiliated to BFC
 - i. American Clergy Leadership Conference
 - ii. Women's Federation for World Peace
 - iii. Kodan
 - iv. Universal Peace Federation

7. Membership

1. Guests and Members

- a. **Guests** are those people who participate occasionally or consistently in any activity sponsored by BFC.
- b. **Members** are those people who have fulfilled the Requirements for Membership outlined in paragraph 3 below, and participate regularly in BFC activities.

2. Benefits of Membership

- a. Members may participate in all BFC activities.
- b. Members have the right to develop new activities or ministries and request funding for them.
- c. Members have the right to express their hearts and concerns; make new proposals; and report abuses or perceived abuses, to any member of the Council, without fear of reprisal. (See Composition of the Council on page 9)
- d. Members will receive regular financial reports from the Council.
- e. Members have the right to vote in the elections of BFC Council members based on the following requirements:
 - i. They must be a member in good standing. This is automatic unless revoked by the Council for serious violations of BFC Membership Guidelines.
 - ii. Other requirements as determined by the Council and recorded in the Membership Guidelines.

- f. Members have the right to run for election to the BFC Council based on the following requirements:
 - i. They must be a member in good standing, as above.
 - ii. They must have participated in BFC activities for a minimum of one year.
 - iii. Other requirements as determined by the Council and recorded in the BFC Membership Guidelines.
- 3. Requirements for Membership
 - a. Those whose local membership predates this Charter are already considered members.
 - b. To join as a new member, an applicant must sign a BFC Membership Form.
 - c. Members agree to abide by the BFC Membership Guidelines.

8. Tithing

- 1. BFC will offer a portion of its income to the Sub-Regional and National Headquarters, as decided by the Council.

9. Charter Amendments

- 1. This Charter may be amended with the approval of the Council and a two-thirds majority vote of BFC Members
- 2. The Council is to collect suggestions for Charter amendments and review the list annually as described in Appendix B.

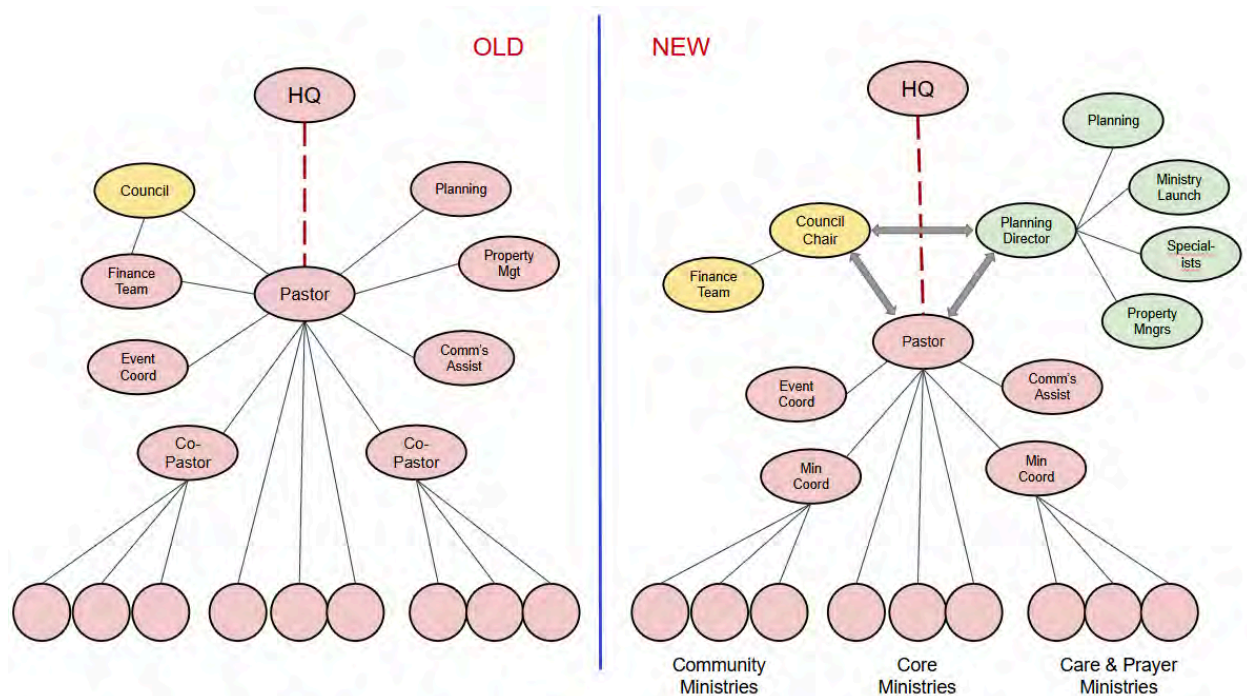
10. Ratification

- 1. This BFC 2025 Charter was ratified on March __, 2025, by members of the Belvedere Family Community at 723 S. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591

11. Appendices

A. Comparing the Old and New Charters

The most significant differences between the old and new Charters can be seen by looking at how the structure has changed. The simplified diagram below illustrates this.



As you can see, most of the structural changes have to do with the Pastor's responsibilities. Several of them have been transferred to different positions leaving the Pastor only with responsibilities that relate directly to the Ministries. This should help him and BFC members focus more on the Ministries.

This "sharing of responsibilities" represents a small step toward Distributed Leadership. We hope to move further down that road in the future, but for now, we created a trinity where the Pastor is joined by the Council Chair and a new position, the Planning and Resources (P&R) Director.

Pastor Responsibilities that have been transferred to other positions:

1. BFC budget and the Finance team. These are now the responsibility of the Council Treasurer. The Pastor will still communicate with the Finance team, especially the Bookkeeper. But he/she is no longer "responsible" for them.
2. Long-range strategic planning - thinking about how to develop BFC and how we plan to tackle our major objectives. This job now belongs to the P&R Director and his/her team. Of course, we can't stop the Pastor from thinking and he/she may want to contribute ideas, but he/she is no longer "responsible" for this.

3. Property management. The administrative task of watching over BFC assets like the White House, the AV equipment, and digital resources such as our website are now the responsibility of the P&R Director and his three Property Managers.

Other differences:

4. The “Community Ministries” designation creates an official space to provide not only encouragement, but also practical support to members who want to start a new ministry; empowering our members to try new activities or clubs based on their unique interests.
5. Planning and Specialist teams create opportunities for members to get involved in more and varied ways. Members who prefer to limit their contribution to offering a practical skill e.g. web page design, can find an avenue to offer their services through the Special Skills Team.
6. Having a smaller Council with fewer elected seats reduces the burden of elections on the community.
7. Council members can be reelected to the same role indefinitely. This avoids the forced and arbitrary turnover of Council members and allows a member to continue to serve in that capacity if they and the Community want them to do so.
8. The East Garden/Belvedere seat on the Council opens the door to a stronger partnership with the property owners.
9. The empowerment of members, and particularly blessed couples, to take initiative is an important underlying principle to embrace if the distributed leadership model is to work. To facilitate that, an intentional space has been made to accommodate the creation of new activities or clubs based on members’ own interests. That space is called Community Ministries. In addition, because the prospect of starting a new activity may seem daunting to some, the New Ministry Launch Team and the Team of Specialists were created to offer support if needed.
10. Mechanism for making Charter amendments. Over the past two decades since the 2005 Charter was ratified, we didn’t do very well at keeping the Charter up-to-date and relevant. For this reason, the 2025 Charter contains a mechanism, that will be operated by the Council, to collect suggestions for Charter amendments in real time, and review them annually.

B. Making Charter Amendments

The details of this process are recorded in the Council Guidebook, but in brief, making an amendment to the Charter requires three steps:

1. Collection of suggestion: A suggested amendment must be made in writing to the Council. The Council will record the suggestion pending review.
2. Review of suggestion: The Council will review any collected suggestions annually and if necessary, form an Amendments Committee to consider the suggestions. Suggestions approved by the Council will be scheduled for a Community vote.
3. Community vote: To be adopted as an amendment to the Charter, a suggestion must pass a Community vote with a minimum two-thirds majority.

All BFC members are entitled to make suggestions. To do so, they should contact any member of the Council who will guide them in the process.

C. List of Ministries

1. Core Ministries
 - a. Young Family Ministry
 - b. Young Adult Ministry
 - c. Youth Ministry
 - d. Sunday School
 - e. Blessed Family Ministry
 - f. Witnessing Ministry
 - g. Outreach Ministry
 - h. Heavenly Tribal Messiah
 - i. New Member Education
 - j. Sunday Gathering
 - k. Fundraising
2. Community Ministries
 - a. Community Garden
 - b. Yoga & Meditation
3. Care & Prayer Ministries
 - a. Care Team
 - b. Cheon Shim Won
 - c. Seniors Ministry
 - d. Elder Board
 - e. Seonghwa Ministry

D. What is Dynamic Governance?

Dynamic Governance, also known as Sociocracy, is a collaborative decision-making method that emphasizes equality, transparency, and inclusivity within organizations. It was developed by Gerard Endenburg in the mid-20th century. The core principles of Dynamic Governance include:

1. **Consent-Based Decision Making:** Decisions are made when there are no reasoned objections, ensuring that all voices are heard and considered.
2. **Circle Structure:** Organizations are structured into semi-autonomous, interconnected circles that handle specific domains or tasks.
3. **Double-Linking:** Circles are linked through two representatives—one elected by the circle and one appointed by the broader organization—ensuring effective communication and feedback loops.
4. **Elections by Consent:** Roles and responsibilities are assigned through a transparent election process based on consent, rather than majority rule.

Dynamic Governance aims to create a more agile, responsive, and inclusive organizational culture. It fosters collaboration, innovation, and shared accountability, making it well-suited for organizations seeking to balance efficiency with democratic participation. By integrating these principles, organizations can enhance their capacity to adapt to changing environments and make informed, collective decisions.

E. What is Distributed Leadership?

Distributed Leadership is a leadership model that emphasizes shared responsibility and collaborative decision-making across an organization. Unlike traditional hierarchical structures where leadership is concentrated at the top, distributed leadership spreads leadership roles and responsibilities among multiple individuals, regardless of their formal titles or positions.

Key principles of Distributed Leadership:

1. **Collective Responsibility:** Leadership tasks and decisions are distributed among team members, leveraging their diverse skills and expertise.
2. **Collaboration:** Team members work together, share ideas, and support each other to achieve common goals, fostering a sense of shared ownership and accountability.
3. **Empowerment:** Individuals are empowered to take initiative, make decisions, and contribute to the leadership process, promoting innovation and adaptability.
4. **Flexibility:** Leadership roles and responsibilities can shift based on the needs of the organization and the strengths of its members, allowing for dynamic and responsive leadership.

Distributed Leadership aims to create a more inclusive, participatory, and resilient organizational culture. By distributing leadership responsibilities, organizations can harness the collective

intelligence of their members, enhance problem-solving capabilities, and adapt more effectively to changing environments. This approach fosters a sense of shared purpose and collective effort, ultimately driving organizational success.