



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA

# Constitution and Canons

of the Diocese of Virginia

2024 revision

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# **Constitution of the Diocese of Virginia, formerly and otherwise known as Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia**

Whereas, the civil government in the Virginia Colony from time to time established within the bounds of the Colony parishes of the Established Church of England in Virginia, which parishes continued as such until the Church was disestablished by the several acts of the General Assembly of Virginia in 1784; and

Whereas, the Diocese of Virginia, formerly and otherwise known as Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, was organized in May, 1785, by a union of all the parishes of the disestablished Church of England within the bounds of the Commonwealth of Virginia and took part in the organization of the union of all the Protestant Episcopal Churches of the several States and, by its own formal ratification of the plan of union, became the Diocese of Virginia of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America; and

Whereas, the original Diocese of Virginia, embracing the entire State, has since been divided into several Dioceses, one of which remains established as the Diocese of Virginia;

Now, Therefore, the Diocese of Virginia acknowledges the authority and power of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, as set forth in the Constitution and Canons adopted thereby, and, in the exercise of its own powers and authority, doth amend and revise the Constitution of this Diocese so that the same shall read as follows:

# **The Constitution of the Diocese of Virginia, formerly and otherwise known as Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia**

## **Article I.**

### **Order, Government and Discipline.**

The order, government, and discipline of the Diocese of Virginia, formerly and otherwise known as Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, shall be vested in the Bishop, and in the Convention of the Diocese, constituted as provided in Article III hereof, which shall have power to adopt Canons, and take any other action for the conduct of its affairs not in conflict with this Constitution.

## **Article II.**

### **Meetings of Convention.**

The Convention shall hold on a weekend, upon the date designated by the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, a regular annual meeting at the place designated by the preceding regular meeting of the Convention. The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese may, for any cause deemed by it to be sufficient, change the time, or the place, or both, for any regular meeting of the Convention. At meetings of the Convention, the Rules of Order of the previous meeting shall be in force until they are amended or repealed by the Convention.

## **Article III.**

### **Composition of the Convention.**

#### **Section 1**

- (a) The Convention shall be composed of the Clerical order and the Lay order.
- (b) The Clerical order shall consist of the Bishop or Bishops and all other ministers canonically resident in the Diocese of Virginia. No member of the Clerical order under ecclesiastical censure shall be entitled to a seat in the Convention.
- (c) The Lay order shall consist of two classes, namely: (1) the Lay Delegates from the church and (2) the Lay members ex officio.
- (d) There shall be only one Lay Delegate from each church, to be chosen by its Vestry. But from every church having more than three hundred confirmed communicants in good standing reported to the Diocesan authorities in the last annual report, there shall be an additional Lay Delegate for each three hundred confirmed communicants in good standing, or major fraction thereof, above the first three hundred.
- (e) The Lay members of the Standing Committee, the Lay members of the Executive Board, the Chancellor, the Presidents of the Regions, the President of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese, one Youth Delegate (not over 21 years of age) elected by each Regional Council on or before May 1, and five lay persons, not over 25 years of age at the time of election who are participants in an Episcopal higher education ministry in the Diocese, to be elected by the Standing Committee on or before May 1 as Collegiate Delegates shall be members of Convention ex officio.
- (f) Each elected Delegate and ex officio member shall have one vote.

**Section 2.** The Lay Delegates shall serve for the regular meeting for which they are chosen, and, unless other delegates be chosen, for any special meeting held prior to the next regular meeting of the Convention.

**Section 3.** All Lay members of the Convention shall be adult confirmed communicants in good standing, as defined in the General Convention Canon I.17., of the Episcopal Church, in the Diocese of Virginia.

## **Article IV.**

### **Quorum of the Convention.**

One-third of the members of the Clerical order and one-half of the members of the Lay order shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Convention, but a smaller number may adjourn any such meeting.

## **Article V.**

### **Methods of Voting in the Convention.**

In all matters that may come before any meeting of the Convention the clergy and laity shall deliberate in one body and a majority of those voting shall be necessary for a decision, except where the vote is by orders, in which case there must be a concurrence of majorities in each order; but, before a vote is taken upon any matter, five members may, by request, require the vote to be taken by orders. In a vote by orders each Clerical Delegate and each Lay Delegate shall be entitled to one vote.

## **Article VI.**

### **The Bishops, Officers and Committees of the Diocese.**

In addition to the Bishop of the Diocese, there may be a Bishop Coadjutor, Bishops Suffragan, Assistant Bishops, or any combination thereof, upon the conditions and pursuant to the authority contained in the Canons of the General Convention.

In addition to the Bishop, or Bishops, the officers of the Diocese shall consist of a Secretary, Treasurer, Chancellor, and a Registrar.

For the conduct of the affairs of the Diocese, there shall be a Standing Committee and an Executive Board, together with such other officers, committees, departments, and boards as the Convention may deem desirable.

## **Article VII.**

### **Election of a Bishop.**

The election of a Bishop shall be made at a regular meeting of the Convention, or at a special meeting of the Convention called for that purpose. The vote shall be by ballot and by orders and a concurrent majority of the votes cast by each order shall be necessary to a choice.

## **Article VIII.**

### **The Bishop as President of the Convention.**

**Section 1.** The Bishop shall preside at all meetings of the Convention and exercise all the ordinary duties of a presiding officer. He may call a special meeting of the Convention at whatever time and place he may think necessary; and whenever requested by the Standing Committee, it shall be his duty to call a special meeting to be held at the time and place selected by the Standing Committee.

**Section 2.** The Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall preside at any meeting of the Convention from which the Bishop is absent, or whenever the Bishop may request him to preside.

**Section 3.** The ranking active Suffragan Bishop, if there be one, shall preside at any meeting of the Convention if he is requested to do so by the Bishop, or in the absence of the Bishop, by the Bishop Coadjutor; or if declared or serving as the Ecclesiastical Authority pursuant to Article IX of the Constitution.

**Section 4.** A retired Bishop or an Assistant Bishop of this Diocese may preside at any meeting of the Convention at the request of the presiding officer.

## **Article IX.**

### **Vacancy in the Office of the Bishop.**

**Section 1.** Upon the death of the Bishop and if there is no Bishop Coadjutor, then the ranking active Suffragan Bishop shall be in charge of this Diocese and shall be temporarily the Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese until such time as a new Bishop shall be chosen and consecrated; or, if the Standing Committee declare the disability or absence of the Bishop and there is no Bishop Coadjutor able and present, then the ranking active Suffragan Bishop shall be in charge of this Diocese until such time as the Standing Committee shall declare the ability and presence of the Bishop.

**Section 2.** In case of a vacancy, or anticipated vacancy, in the Office of the Bishop, a special meeting of the Convention shall be called by the Ecclesiastical Authority. That special Convention, immediately upon assembling, if there be no Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, Suffragan Bishop, or Assistant Bishop present, shall elect by ballot a President from among the order of Presbyters present, who shall remain in office until the election and consecration of the Bishop. The President so elected shall perform all the duties and possess all the privileges of a presiding officer. He shall not have the power to call a special meeting of the Convention except when requested so to do by the Standing Committee, in which case the special meeting shall be at the time and place requested.

## **Article X.**

Reserved for future use.

## **Article XI.**

### **The Secretary of the Diocese.**

A Secretary of the Diocese shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee. He shall, upon qualification, continue in office at the pleasure of the Ecclesiastical Authority. If the Secretary is a Priest, he shall hold no other Clerical preferment. He shall also serve as Secretary of the Convention, take minutes of its proceedings and attest to the public acts of the body. The Secretary shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by Canon.

## **Article XII.**

### **The Treasurer of the Diocese.**

A Treasurer of the Diocese shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee or by the Standing Committee if it is at the time the Ecclesiastical Authority. He, or she, shall, upon qualification, remain in office at the pleasure of the Ecclesiastical Authority or until removed as hereinafter provided. He shall receive and keep safely all money and other property confided to his custody; and he shall disburse and dispose of the same as may be provided by Canon. He shall report annually to the Convention an account showing all money and other property received by him, and the manner in which he has disbursed or disposed of the same. The Treasurer shall give bond in an amount to be fixed by the Standing Committee, with corporate surety approved by the Standing Committee, which bond shall be conditioned upon the faithful performance of the duties of his office. At the close of each fiscal year, accounts of the Treasurer shall be audited by a certified public accountant selected by the Standing Committee. In case of the misconduct of the Treasurer, or of his incapacity, refusal or failure to discharge the duties of his office, the Standing Committee shall remove him and a new appointment shall be made in the manner aforesaid.

## **Article XIII.**

### **The Chancellor of the Diocese.**

**Section 1.** A Chancellor of the Diocese shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Chancellor shall, upon qualification, continue in office at the pleasure of the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Chancellor shall be a confirmed adult communicant in good standing, as defined in General Convention Canon I. 17. of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, and a member of the Virginia State Bar. The Chancellor shall be the legal advisor of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Convention of the Diocese, and to the Executive Board of the Diocese.

**Section 2.** The Ecclesiastical Authority may, in consultation with the Chancellor, also appoint one or more Vice Chancellors, who shall continue in office at the pleasure of the Ecclesiastical Authority. Vice Chancellors shall be confirmed adult communicants in good standing, as defined in General Convention Canon I. 17. of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, and members of the Virginia State Bar. Vice Chancellors shall serve at the direction of the Chancellor and shall assist the Chancellor in the performance of the Chancellor's duties. Vice Chancellors shall have seat and voice at the Annual Convention, but shall not have a vote unless the Chancellor does not attend a meeting of the Annual Convention and certifies to the Secretary of the Diocese that a Vice Chancellor will attend the meeting of Annual Convention in the place and stead of the Chancellor, in which case, the certified Vice Chancellor shall have a vote.

## **Article XIV.**

### **The Registrar of the Diocese.**

A Registrar of the Diocese shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee or by the Standing Committee if it is at the time the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Registrar shall, upon qualification, continue in office at the pleasure of the Ecclesiastical Authority and shall perform such duties as may be prescribed in the Diocesan Canons.

## **Article XV.**

### **The Standing Committee of the Diocese.**

The Standing Committee of the Diocese shall consist of twelve members, six of the Clerical order, and six of the Lay order, each of whom shall be a confirmed communicant in good standing as defined in General Convention Canon I. 17. of the Church of this Diocese and eighteen (18) years of age or over.

At each regular meeting the Convention shall elect two members of each order for a term of three years. Each member of the Committee shall hold office for the term for which he was elected and until his successor is elected or appointed. No member shall be eligible to succeed himself.

In case of a vacancy in the Episcopal office, or in case neither the Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor nor Bishop Suffragan be capable of performing the administrative duties of the Bishop, and in any case when the Bishop shall authorize it to act, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.

The Standing Committee at every regular meeting of the Convention shall submit a report of its proceedings. When required by the Convention it shall also lay before the Convention any document which may have come into its possession. It shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by Canon.

In case of a vacancy in the Standing Committee, the Executive Board shall fill the vacancy from the same order. The appointee shall serve until the next regular meeting of the Convention, at which meeting the Convention shall fill the vacancy.

## **Article XVI.**

### **The Missionary Society.**

All baptized members of the Protestant Episcopal Church residing in this Diocese shall, as heretofore, constitute a missionary society known as the Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia.

The direction and activities of the Society be identical with those of the Executive Board and shall be directed solely by it.

## **Article XVII.**

### **Parishes to be Bound by this Constitution.**

Every Congregation within the Diocese of Virginia, however called, shall be bound by the Constitution and the Canons adopted in pursuance hereof.

## **Article XVIII.**

### **Transitional Provision.**

Every member of a committee heretofore established and continued under this Constitution, and every officer heretofore chosen, shall hold office during the term for which he was chosen.



## **Article XIX.**

### **Amendments to the Constitution.**

This Constitution may be amended in the following manner only, namely: At any regular meeting of the Convention a proposed amendment shall be referred to the appropriate committee, and report thereon shall be presented by that committee and the amendment shall be considered by the Convention. If approved by the Convention, it shall be again considered at the next regular meeting of the Convention and, if again approved, shall become effective immediately upon its adoption unless otherwise provided therein.

## **Article XX.**

### **Gender of Pronouns.**

The masculine pronoun whenever used in this Constitution shall be deemed to include the feminine pronoun.

# **Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia**

## **CANON 1.**

### **Official List of the Clergy of the Diocese.**

Section 1. A list of all the ordained Ministers of the Episcopal Church canonically resident or licensed to work in this Diocese, with their respective mailing addresses, cures, stations, and positions, shall be prepared by the Ecclesiastical Authority and kept, corrected up to date, on file at the headquarters of the Diocese. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall keep the Church Pension Fund informed of the employment of any parish, congregation, diocesan related institution, or other ecclesiastical organization in this Diocese of Clergy canonically resident in this Diocese and of non-resident Clergy officiating in this Diocese.

Section 2. The right of any Clergy person to vote in the Convention shall, if challenged, be determined by the Convention itself according to the provisions of the Constitution and Canons, whether the name of such Clergy person is inserted in or omitted from the list.

Section 3. The official list of the Clergy of the Diocese, with the names of those entitled to vote in the Convention, shall be laid before the Convention on the first day of its meeting and the roll of the Clerical members entitled to vote shall be determined from it. The list of the Clergy submitted to the Convention shall be appended to the Journal and be transmitted to the Secretary of the General Convention.

Section 4. Every Clergy person canonically resident in the Diocese shall attend every meeting of the Convention or, if unable to attend, shall send to the President of the Convention a written statement of the reasons for the absence.

## **CANON 2.**

### **Lay Representation in the Convention.**

Section 1. The Churches of this Diocese entitled to Lay representation in the Convention are those which were recorded by the Secretary of the Convention as Parish Churches or Separate Congregations on the effective date of this Canon, together with Churches thereafter constituted in accordance with Canon and received into union by act of the Convention.

Section 2. The Missions of this Diocese entitled to Lay representation in the Convention are those which were recorded by the Secretary of the Convention as such on the effective date of this Canon, together with those Missions thereafter constituted in accordance with Canon and reported as such to the Secretary of the Convention.

Section 3. A list of the Churches and Missions entitled to representation in the Convention shall be appended to the Journal of each meeting of the Convention.

Section 4. No later than April 1, the Vestry of a Church or the Vestry Committee of a Mission shall elect the Lay Delegates from that Church or Mission to the Convention and one Lay Alternate for each Lay Delegate elected. For Churches entitled to multiple Lay Delegates, the Vestry may designate the order in which the Lay Alternates are to serve in the event Lay Delegates are absent. In the event a Lay Delegate is absent and no Lay Alternate is available, the Vestry or, if the Vestry is unavailable the Rector or Vicar in consultation with the Wardens, shall appoint a person qualified to serve as a Lay Delegate and so advise the Committee on Credentials.

Section 5. The election of adult confirmed communicants in good standing as Lay Delegates and Lay Alternates to the Convention shall be certified by the Rector, Vicar, Register, Priest-in-Charge, or one of the Wardens of the Church or Mission, in duplicate, which certificate shall be in a form to be supplied by the Secretary of the Diocese. One copy of this certificate shall be sent to the Secretary of the Diocese no later than April 15, and a copy shall be given to each Delegate and each Alternate named therein.

Section 6. Lay Delegates of Churches, or in their absence, their Alternates, shall be entitled to one vote each on all questions coming before the Convention. Alternates shall not be entitled to voice and vote in the meetings of the Convention except when serving in the absence of a Lay Delegate.

Section 7. The Secretary of the Diocese shall make a roll of the Lay Delegates and Alternates certified to the Secretary as duly elected with their respective Churches and Missions. The President of the Convention shall appoint a Committee on Credentials, to be composed of one Clerical member and two Lay Delegates, to which shall be referred the credentials of all Lay Delegates. The Committee shall make its report to the Convention promptly. Until this report is received, the roll as made by the Secretary shall, unless objection is made, be accepted as the authentic roll of Lay Delegates and Alternates.

Should doubt arise as to the right of any Lay Delegate or Alternate to a seat, the Committee on Credentials shall hear the evidence presented and report its judgment. Upon this report the Convention shall determine the matter unless by a vote of two-thirds of the members present the Convention decides to hear the whole case de novo.

### **CANON 3.**

#### **Deputies to the Provincial Synod.**

At the regular meeting of the Convention preceding the meeting of the Provincial Synod, there shall be elected by ballot one member of the Clergy and two Lay persons to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod and one member of the Clergy and one Lay person to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod to serve as a Deputy if a Deputy is unavailable for a meeting of the Provincial Synod, all of whom shall serve until their successors are elected. A report shall be made to the regular meeting of the Convention following each meeting of the Synod. Qualifications for election as a Deputy or Alternate Deputy to the Provincial Synod shall be the same as for election as a Deputy to the General Convention.

### **CANON 4.**

#### **Deputies to the General Convention.**

Section 1. At a regular meeting of the Convention held more than one calendar year preceding each regular meeting of the General Convention, there shall be elected by ballot the full number of Clerical and Lay Deputies to the General Convention to which this Diocese is entitled and a majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to a choice. Following the election of the full number of Clergy and Lay Deputies, a ballot shall be taken for a like number of Clergy and Lay Alternate Deputies; and the proper number receiving the highest vote shall be declared Alternates in the order of preference of that ballot.

The Clerical Deputies shall be Presbyters or Deacons canonically resident in this Diocese, and the Lay Deputies shall be persons eligible for election to the Vestry of a Church in this Diocese.

The Deputies so elected shall serve for the regular meeting for which they are chosen and for any special meeting held prior to the next regular meeting of the General Convention unless other Deputies are elected by the Convention.

Section 2. Each of the Deputies shall signify to the Secretary of the Convention within 30 days after election whether the Deputy accepts the election. The Secretary shall issue to each Deputy who accepts election a certificate of election. Should any Deputy elected decline or fail to signify acceptance, or fail to meet the requirements for election, or should a vacancy occur otherwise, the Secretary of the Convention shall issue the certificate of election to the Alternate Deputy of the same order in which the vacancy occurs, who was first elected, or, if more than one were elected on the same ballot, who received the highest votes; and if there is more than one vacancy the others shall be filled successively in like manner.

#### Section 3.

- (a) Within 90 days of the Diocesan Convention electing them, General Convention Deputies must meet (which may be done virtually) to elect a Deputation Chair and Vice-Chair, one of whom must be a Clergy Deputy and one of whom must be a Lay Deputy.
- (b) To the extent reasonably practical, the Deputation Chair and Vice-Chair will, among other duties, help assure that:

- i. Deputies and Alternates are trained in the most current procedures of the House of Deputies, including Committee procedures;
- ii. Deputies and Alternates are provided information needed to vote knowledgeably in General Convention elections for members of church-wide bodies;
- iii. The Diocese is fully represented when General Convention votes on measures and elections before it;
- iv. Alternate Deputies are engaged in the work of General Convention;
- v. Specific concerns and resolutions offered by Diocesan Convention for consideration by General Convention are addressed;
- vi. The Diocese, especially the Diocesan Convention, receives timely and informative post-General Convention report
- vii. A written report summarizing important practices and helpful hints about the work and procedures of the General Convention and the deputation is given to the Secretary of the Diocese promptly after the General Convention to be shared with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of successive General Convention deputations.

## **CANON 5.**

### **The Church Pension Fund.**

Section 1. The Diocese of Virginia hereby ratifies and confirms its adoption of the system of the Church Pension Fund.

Section 2. In furtherance of the Church Pension Fund:

- (a) The Secretary of the Diocese shall keep the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese advised of the benefits of the Church Pension Fund for Clergy and qualified Lay employees and shall procure prompt payment of the amounts due the Church Pension Fund, or such other comparable pension fund as may be selected by the Diocese, a Church, Mission, or Related Organization, from the Diocese and the several Churches, Missions, and Related Organizations in the Diocese.
- (b) The Secretary of the Diocese shall keep the Church Pension Fund informed of the Clergy canonically resident in this Diocese, the qualified Lay employees of this Diocese, the qualified Lay employees of the Churches, Missions, and Related Organizations in this Diocese, and the beneficiaries of the Clergy and qualified Lay employees who may be entitled to receive pensions from the Church Pension Fund.
- (c) The Secretary of the Diocese shall report to the Executive Board which Churches, Missions, or Related Organizations have failed to pay in full their assessments by the Church Pension Fund and such other matters regarding the operation of the Church Pension Fund as may be appropriate.

## **CANON 6.**

### **Archdeacons, Regional Deans, and Archdeans.**

Section 1.

- (a) The Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, may appoint not more than three Archdeacons to serve at the Bishop's discretion.
- (b) Archdeacons shall be Deacons and have functional titles. They will assist the Bishop in oversight of Deacons, diaconal formation, and diaconal assignments.
- (c) An Archdeacon may function in other diaconal ministries while being Archdeacon in dialogue with and at the discretion of the Bishop.

Section 2.

- (a) The Bishop shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, one Priest in each Region as the Dean thereof. A Dean shall serve at the pleasure of the Bishop, but in no event for more than four consecutive years, and shall be the official representative of the Bishop to the Region.
- (b) A Priest may serve as Dean without resigning the Priest's cure.
- (c) The Bishop may appoint an Archdean, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee.
- (d) The Archdean shall serve at the pleasure of the Bishop and shall assist the Bishop in the oversight of the Deans and carry out such other functions as may be assigned.

- (e) The Archdean may be a regional Dean, who may continue to serve as Dean, or another Priest appointed especially for that purpose. An Archdean may serve for a maximum of four consecutive years.

## **CANON 7.**

### **The Executive Board.**

Section 1. The Executive Board shall be composed as follows:

- (a) One member elected by each Regional Council or, in the absence of the member, an alternate member elected by each Regional Council.
- (b) The Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor if there is one, and the Bishop Suffragans and Assistant Bishops if there are any.
- (c) To provide for wider diversity and equity that may not always be represented, the Bishop may appoint, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, no more than three at-large members (whether Lay or Clerical) for a one-year term, with the option of reappointment for each at-large member for no more than two additional one-year terms. The appointed at-large members shall be Clergy who are on the Official List of the Clergy of the Diocese or Lay persons eligible for election to the Vestry of a Church in the Diocese, and may not be the Dean or President of a Region or a member of the Standing Committee.

Section 2. Terms of elected members and alternate members shall expire at the end of the appropriate calendar year.

Section 3. Any two members of the Executive Board may call for a vote by orders on any motion or in any election; the vote of a Bishop shall be counted among the Clerical order. A motion or an election so called for must succeed concurrently in both orders to be effective.

Section 4. The President of the Executive Board shall be the Bishop. The Executive Board shall elect a Lay member as its Vice President and may elect a Secretary, who may be of either order and who need not be a member of the Board. It may elect such other officers as it may desire not in conflict with these Canons. Except for the President, all terms of office shall be one year.

Section 5.

- (a) The Executive Board shall prepare and recommend Diocesan programs, and the proposed funding of such programs, to the Convention for approval. The Executive Board shall be responsible for the execution of all approved programs except as the Convention may specify and between meetings of the Convention shall be responsible for the work of the Church in the Diocese.
- (b) The Executive Board shall supervise all financial affairs of the Diocese and the methods prescribed for the conduct of Diocesan business affairs.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall meet regularly, at such times and places as it may determine. Special meetings may be called by the President, or by any three members. Written notice of the time and place of any special meeting shall be mailed or otherwise delivered to each member at least seven days in advance of such meeting.

Section 7. The Bishop may appoint, subject to the approval of the Executive Board, a person to serve as the coordinator of the Board. Such person will function as the Bishop may direct.

Section 8. In the event of the absence of the President and of the Vice President, the meeting shall be presided over by a member present selected by the members present.

Section 9. One-half of the members of the Clerical order and one-half of the members of the Lay order constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any regular or special meeting of the Executive Board. The presence of a quorum is not required for taking a vote to adjourn the meeting.

## **CANON 8.**

### **Regions and Regional Councils.**

Section 1. The Diocese shall be divided into Regions in such a way that every point of the Diocese is in

a Region and every Church or Mission shall be a member unit of some Region. Assignment to a Region shall be by majority vote of all members of the Standing Committee, which may create as many Regions as it wishes, but not fewer than nine nor more than 20. Each Region must contain two or more geographically contiguous Churches.

Section 2. The Vestry or Vestry Committee of any Church or Mission which desires to change to another Region shall petition the Standing Committee for such change, stating reasons, and including with the petition a written statement setting forth the views of both Regional Councils affected by the change. The Standing Committee shall decide the change by majority vote of all its members.

Section 3. The Standing Committee shall promptly notify the Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor (if there is one), and the Bishop Suffragans (if there are any), the Executive Board, and the Secretary of the Diocese of any change in the number or composition of Regions and shall annually provide to the Convention a list of the Regions and their member Churches, which shall be published in the Journal of the Convention.

Section 4. In each Region there shall be a Regional Council, subject to the following provisions:

- (a) Each Church and Mission of the Region shall be represented by its active Clergy and as many Lay persons, elected by its Vestry or Vestry Committee, as it has Lay Delegates to the Convention. Qualifications for election to Regional Councils shall be the same as for election to a Vestry.
- (b) In any Region where no elected Officers exist or for any newly established Regions, the Dean shall call the first meeting of a Regional Council, which shall then organize itself, electing a President and then a Vice-President from among the Lay members. Each Region Council shall elect such other officers as it desires and establish a schedule of regular meetings. Special meetings may be called by any Bishop, the Dean or the President, or at the request of the representatives of any two constituent Churches.
- (c) All terms of office shall be determined by each Regional Council and shall expire at the conclusion of the regular meeting of the Convention in the appropriate year. Notice of the results of any election shall be forwarded to the Secretary of the Diocese within 30 days of the election.
- (d) Each Regional Council shall elect one member and one alternate member to serve on the Executive Board. The positions shall alternate between Lay and Clerical incumbents. The rotation of members shall be established by the Standing Committee from time to time so that as nearly as possible one-third thereof shall be elected each year. The member and alternate member must be either Lay persons eligible for election to the Vestry of a Church or Vestry Committee of a Mission in the Region, or members of its active Clergy, and may not be the Dean of the Region or a member of the Standing Committee. The member and alternate member shall be elected for a term of three years and shall both be of the same order. Vacancies shall be filled by the appropriate Regional Council for the unexpired term, with due regard as to order, except that, when the unexpired term is for three months or less, the replacement member may be of either order. Regional Council representatives on the Executive Board shall become *ex officio* members of their own Regional Council.
- (e) A Regional Council shall be governed by the Rules of Order of the next preceding regular meeting of the Convention of the Diocese, unless the Regional Council decides otherwise.

Section 5.

- (a) Each Regional Council shall be responsible for seeing that the ministrations of The Episcopal Church are made available to every person living within the boundaries of such Region and shall exercise authority for the Region as a whole in safeguarding the interests and extending the ministrations of the Church throughout its borders, so that the Region may function as a unit in matters of common concern and responsibility. A Regional Council may, for these and other purposes, and subject to the approval of the Executive Board, adopt and administer a budget.
- (b) Any proposal to found a Mission or a Church must, as provided in Canon 10 (Churches), have the approval of the Regional Council of the Region in which such Mission or Church is to be established. (c) In any case when a Church is aggrieved by an action of its Regional Council, its Rector or Vicar, with the advice and consent of its Vestry or Vestry Committee, may appeal the matter to the Standing Committee. The decision of the Standing Committee on the matter shall be final.

- (d) If a Regional Council fails to meet and act upon a request made to the Dean of the Region by the Ecclesiastical Authority within 60 days of the request, the Executive Board of the Diocese shall have the authority to act on the request on behalf of the Regional Council. A Church aggrieved by the Executive Board's exercise of authority pursuant to this Section shall have the right of appeal set forth in Section 5(c) of this Canon. Any exercise of authority by the Executive Board pursuant to this Section shall be reported within one month of its exercise to the Standing Committee and shall also be reported in full to the next meeting of the Convention.

**CANON 9.**  
**Boundaries.**

Section 1. The historical Parishes of the Diocese and their boundaries, having been fixed as of January 23, 1972, shall not be changed henceforth.

Section 2. In every Region, the Rector and Vestry of each Church and the Vicar and the Vestry Committee of each Mission shall have and exercise concurrent jurisdiction within the boundaries of the Region, and shall have equal responsibility for the extension and welfare of the Church and ministration to people within the Region.

**CANON 10.**  
**Churches.**

Section 1. A group of people (1) which acknowledges the jurisdiction of the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of Virginia, (2) among whom there is a regular program of identifiable Episcopal services (including regular celebration of the Holy Communion) at a designated place or places of worship, (3) which as a group shares in the support of the Episcopate of the Diocese, (4) which makes provision for the pastoral administrations of the church to its members, and (5) which functions under the supervision of a Priest or Deacon, shall, upon approval of a petition submitted in accordance with Section 2 of this Canon, be called a Church. A list of all Churches shall be published annually in the Journal of the Convention. All congregations designated as Parish Churches, Parishes, or Separate Congregations on the effective date of this Canon shall be classified as Churches.

Section 2. A group of people seeking Church status must signify its desire to a regular meeting of the Convention of the Diocese by petitioning the Convention for Church status. Such petition must contain the proposed name for the Church, a certification that the requirements of Section 1 of this Canon are being met, the name and address of the supervising Priest, the address or addresses of the place or places of worship, and a copy of the current budget. The petition shall be accompanied by certificates of endorsement from the Regional Council of the Region in which such group provides a place of worship and from the Executive Board.

Section 3. Each Church shall have a Vestry in conformity with Canon 11 (Election and Organization of Vestries, and Call of Congregational Meetings).

Section 4. The Vestry of a Church shall elect, from among those persons eligible to serve as Vestry members of that Church, representatives to the Regional Council and the Convention of the Diocese in the number provided by Canon.

Section 5. The Rector and Vestry of a Church as herein defined are expressly designated as the "Rector and Vestry of a Parish" for purposes of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

Section 6.

- (a) A group of people desiring to organize a Church, but who are unable to meet all the requirements of Section 1 of this Canon, may apply to be constituted as a Mission by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, or the Standing Committee itself if it is the Ecclesiastical Authority. An application for Mission status shall be accompanied by a certificate of endorsement from the Regional Council of the Region in which such group proposes to worship. A list of all Missions shall be published annually in the Journal of the Convention.

- (b) Upon the request of any Church or upon the failure of any Church to meet all the requirements of Section 1 of this Canon, or upon request by a Church for direct aid from the Diocesan Budget, the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, or the Standing Committee itself if it is the Ecclesiastical Authority, may change the status of such Church to that of a Mission. Any action taken under this section shall be reported in the Journal of the next succeeding Convention as one of the official acts of the authority taking the action.

Section 7. The minister in charge of a Mission shall be called the Vicar. A Mission shall have a Vestry Committee appointed pursuant to Canon 11.14. Further, a Mission shall be entitled to Lay and Clerical representation in the Convention and Regional Council as is afforded other Churches.

Section 8.

- (a) Any Church may, with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Regional Council of the Region in which the Mission is to be located, establish within the boundaries of such Region one or more Missions (each referred to in this Section as a "Mission of a Founding Church"). The minister in charge of a Mission of a Founding Church shall be appointed by the Rector of the founding Church with the concurrence of the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Vestry of the founding Church shall appoint or allow to be elected a Vestry Committee for the Mission of a Founding Church which shall be composed as provided in Canon 11.14. The Vestry Committee shall be charged with transacting the temporal business of the Mission of a Founding Church, except that the founding Church may retain to itself such temporal functions as it deems proper and, in any event, shall be ultimately responsible for the temporal obligations of the Mission of a Founding Church.
- (b) The Rector and Vestry of the founding Church may at any time agree with the Ecclesiastical Authority to designate a "Mission of a Founding Church" as a "Mission," and when the change in designation becomes effective, such Mission shall have the status of a Mission under these Canons and the provisions of this Section shall no longer apply to such Mission. Any Mission of a Founding Church functioning under this Section shall be so identified in the annual list of Missions.
- (c) A Mission of a Founding Church shall be entitled to Lay and Clerical representation in the Convention and Regional Council as is afforded Churches.

Section 9.

- (a) An Episcopal theological seminary located within the bounds of the Diocese may, with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Regional Council of the Region in which the Mission is to be located, establish within the boundaries of such Region one or more Missions (each referred to in this Section as a "Mission of a Theological Seminary"). The minister in charge of a Mission of a Theological Seminary established pursuant to this Section shall be appointed by the Dean and President of the theological seminary with the concurrence of the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Dean and President shall also appoint or allow to be elected a Vestry Committee for the Mission of a Theological Seminary which shall be composed as provided in Canon 11.14. The Vestry Committee shall be charged with transacting the temporal business of the Mission of a Theological Seminary, except that the theological seminary may retain to itself such temporal functions as it deems proper and, in any event, shall be ultimately responsible for the temporal obligations of the Mission of a Theological Seminary.
- (b) The Dean and President of the theological seminary may at any time agree with the Ecclesiastical Authority to designate a "Mission of a Theological Seminary" as a "Mission". When such designation becomes effective, the Mission will have the status of a Mission under these Canons and the provisions of this Section shall no longer apply to the Mission. Any Mission functioning as a Mission of a Theological Seminary under this Section shall be so identified in the annual list of Missions.
- (c) A Mission of a Theological Seminary shall be entitled to Lay and Clerical representation in the Convention and Regional Council as is afforded Churches.

Section 10: An "Inactive Church" is defined as one in which there is no functioning Vestry or Vestry Committee. The authority of an Inactive Church is assigned to the Executive Board, which may delegate this authority in specific cases to a subcommittee composed entirely of members of the Executive Board. The disposition of any property of an Inactive Church that has ceased to be occupied or used is subject to the provisions of Canon 15.3.



**CANON 11.**

**Election and Organization of Vestries, and Call of Congregational Meetings.**

Section 1. In this Canon, the term "Rector" refers to a Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Vicar, and the term "Vestry" refers to a Vestry or Vestry Committee, unless specifically noted otherwise.

Section 2. A Church shall have a Vestry which shall consist of not fewer than three or more than 12 members, except that in any Church having more than 150 confirmed communicants in good standing one or more additional members may be elected to its Vestry, provided that the total number of elected Vestry members shall not exceed 18, as set forth below:

Communicants in Good Standing	Maximum Number of Vestry Members
0-150	12
151-250	13
251-350	14
351-450	15
451-550	16
551-650	17
651-	18

Section 3. The election of Vestry members shall be held annually at such time and place as shall be designated by the Vestry or, in the event the Vestry does not act, then by the Rector or, if there is no Rector, then by the Wardens. If the time and place is not so fixed, then the election shall be held on Easter Monday in the church or regular place of worship. At least three days' notice of the time and place of each election of Vestry members shall be given in the church on an occasion of public worship or by other adequate means.

Vestry members may be elected for terms not to exceed four years. The congregation shall determine the length of terms, when the terms begin, and the number of Vestry members to be elected for such terms. The Vestry members elected and qualified under this Canon shall serve until their successors are elected and have qualified.

At all meetings of the congregation, the Rector shall preside, except that at the request of the Rector or if the Church is without a Rector the meeting shall be presided over by one of the Wardens or, in their absence, by a Vestry member selected by the Vestry.

Section 4. Only Lay persons who are confirmed adult communicants in good standing of the Church, as defined in General Convention Canon I.17, registered in the particular Church, shall be eligible for election as Vestry members of such Church. However, regardless of eligibility of a person for election, no person shall be elected at duly convened congregational meetings to consecutive full terms on a congregation's Vestry or Vestry Committee.

Section 5. All adult communicants in good standing, as defined in General Convention Canon I.17, registered in the particular Church, shall be entitled to vote at the election of Vestry members of such Church. The voting shall be by ballot in person and, unless otherwise provided by the meeting, a majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to a choice. There shall be no voting by proxy. No election shall be valid unless the participating qualified voters number at least 10 per cent of the number of active communicants qualified to vote reported for the previous year.

Section 6. The Vestry may appoint three persons to act as judges at the Vestry elections, whose duties shall be to determine the qualifications of the voters and the eligibility of persons for nomination as Vestry members.

Section 7. Every person chosen a Vestry member shall qualify by subscribing the following declaration and promise: "I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do yield my hearty assent and approbation to the doctrines, worship and discipline of The Episcopal Church; and I promise that I will faithfully execute the

office of Vestry member of \_\_\_\_\_ Church, in Region \_\_\_\_\_, in the County (or City) of \_\_\_\_\_, according to my best knowledge and skill." No person shall act as a Vestry member until this declaration and promise have been subscribed to.

Section 8. As soon as practical after a Vestry election, the Vestry members shall assemble and organize at such time and place as the Rector shall designate. If no time or place is designated by the Rector within a reasonable time, then any two Vestry members may designate a time and place, notifying the Rector and each Vestry member. The newly organized Vestry takes office at a time previously established by the congregation in a duly called meeting. The proceedings at this and every meeting of the Vestry shall be opened with one or more collects and the Lord's Prayer by the Rector or another person appointed by the Rector.

Section 9. The Vestry shall elect a Senior and a Junior Warden, a Register, and a Treasurer, who shall continue in office until their successors are elected and qualified. The Wardens shall be members of the Vestry.

Section 10. The Rector shall preside at all meetings of the Vestry. The Rector may, when absent or present, request the Vestry elect a substitute presiding officer, in which case the Rector will continue to have seat, voice, and vote. If the Church is without a Rector, one of the Wardens shall preside over meetings, or, in their absence, by a Vestry member selected by the Vestry. All Vestry meetings shall be subject to the Rector's call; but in case the Rector fails to call a meeting when requested to do so by two or more Vestry members, such Vestry members may call a meeting, giving at least three days' notice of the time and place to the Rector and to each Vestry member. A majority of the Vestry members who have qualified, exclusive of the Rector, shall constitute a quorum; but any Vestry may by resolution specify a smaller number to act as a quorum at future meetings. The Vestry may not adopt bylaws inconsistent with the Canons of the Diocese and General Convention.

Section 11. In case of a vacancy in the Vestry for any reason, the remaining members may elect a qualified member of the congregation to fill the vacancy until the next annual congregational meeting, at which time such vacancy shall be filled. Upon resolution of the Vestry and after due warning, a Vestry member may be removed from the Vestry. Any of the following actions of a Vestry member may warrant removal of the Vestry member:

- (a) Failure to qualify within 60 days of election;
- (b) Failure to continue as a communicant in good standing;
- (c) Continued failure to attend the meetings of the Vestry without adequate excuse; or
- (d) Neglect to perform faithfully and diligently the duties of Vestry members enumerated in the Canons or the bylaws of the congregation.

Section 12. Any Church having two or more congregations in different locations may apportion to each congregation the number of Vestry members to be chosen as its representation to the Vestry. A separate election shall be held by and for each congregation, at which the number of Vestry members allotted to that congregation shall be chosen in accordance with the procedure presented in the preceding provisions of this Canon. The Vestry members so chosen, together with the Rector, if there is one, shall constitute the Rector and Vestry of the Church. The Vestry members chosen by each congregation, together with the Rector, shall have the care and control of the property and transact the local business of the congregation from which elected. Each committee of the Church Vestry may appoint one Warden for its congregation, a Treasurer, and a Clerk. If Wardens have been chosen for particular congregations by committees of the Church Vestry, the Senior and Junior Wardens of the Church shall be chosen from among such Wardens.

The Church Vestry shall meet as a whole at least quarterly. Any matter upon which a majority of the committees of the Church Vestry concur that is recorded by their respective Clerks, and by the Register of the Vestry, shall be the act of the Vestry of the Church unless the Rector or, if there is none, the Senior Warden deems it proper that such matter should be acted upon in a meeting of the Church Vestry as a whole.

Section 13. In addition to the annual meeting of the congregation for the election of Vestry members, other meetings of the congregation may be called by the Vestry or, if they decline to do so, by 10 qualified voters of the congregation after at least three days notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting have been given either on an occasion of public worship or by other adequate means to the Rector, each Vestry member, and the congregation. At such meetings only those qualified to vote for Vestry members shall be entitled to vote and such meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as meetings held for the election of Vestries, except that voting by ballot need not be required.

Section 14. The Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall appoint, or else allow a Mission which is not a Mission of a Founding Church to elect, a committee of not fewer than three nor more than 12 Lay persons who are confirmed adult communicants in good standing of that Mission, as defined in General Convention Canon I.17, to be called the Vestry Committee.

## **CANON 12.**

### **Duties of Vestries, Wardens, and Parish Officers.**

Section 1. The Rector of a Church shall be elected by its Vestry, with the advice of the Bishop and in compliance with General Convention Canon III.9.3(a). The Vestry Committee of every Mission shall elect a Vicar upon nomination by the Bishop; the Vicar will serve at the pleasure of the Bishop. In accordance with General Convention Canon III.9.3(b), after consultation with the Vestry, a Priest-in-Charge may be appointed by the Bishop for any congregation in which there is no Rector. Any assistant ministers of a Church, by whatever name they may be designated, shall be selected by the Rector subject to the approval of the Vestry and in accordance with General Convention Canon III.9.3(c).

Section 2. Each Vestry shall cooperate with the Rector or Vicar in promoting the spiritual welfare of the congregation and assist the Rector or Vicar in the duties defined in General Convention Canon III.9.6.

Section 3. Each Vestry member shall support the programs of the Church through a commitment to service and a biblically based standard of proportional giving. Each Vestry member shall also continuously encourage the members of the congregation to support the programs of the Church and to give generously towards the support of those programs; and each Vestry member shall extend personally a hearty welcome to newly baptized, confirmed, received, or transferred members of the congregation.

Section 4. Each Vestry shall see that the Rector or Vicar is properly supported, that the Rector or Vicar's salary is paid in full and with regularity, together with the pension premiums and other obligations due from the Church; annually review the compensation of its Rector or Vicar in keeping with the published guidelines of the Diocese; and make all necessary provision for Church music, with the advice and consent of the Rector or Vicar, and subject to the control of the Rector or Vicar.

Section 5. Each Vestry shall commit to the Virginia Plan for Covenantal Giving and remit the resultant sum to the Treasurer of the Diocese in regular monthly installments. It shall be the joint duty of the Rector or Vicar and Vestry to submit to the Bishop by the first of March of each year a parochial report for the year ending December 31 preceding.

Section 6. Each Vestry, as the constituted agents of the Church, shall transact all its temporal business, e.g.: (a) providing for the appointment of Trustees pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia to hold title to the property of the Church; (b) making and executing all contracts for erecting, furnishing, and preserving the Church edifice and other property; (c) regulating the use of any graveyard or columbarium; (d) establishing a Finance Committee as required by Canon 25 (Finance Committees); and (e) observing Canon 13 (Business Methods in Church Affairs).

Section 7. With the assistance of the other members of the Vestry and congregation, the Wardens shall have the following duties:

- (a) To oversee the operation and maintenance of the Church property;
- (b) To see that the Church is duly prepared for every occasion of public worship, attend to the accommodations of the congregation with seats, and maintain order and decorum at the time of public worship;
- (c) To collect the offerings of the people;

- (d) To provide out of Church funds, under the direction of the Vestry, a sufficient supply of vestments and books to be used in public worship and also the elements for each celebration of the Holy Eucharist;
- (e) To see that the sexton and other employees properly discharge their duties; and
- (f) To be familiar with the current General Convention and Diocesan Constitutions and Canons for the information and guidance of the Rector, Vestry, and congregation.

Section 8. It shall be the duty of the Register of the Vestry to take charge of all records except the Parish Register and keep correct entries of all proceedings of the Vestry in a well-bound book to be provided for that purpose and to deliver the records and minute books to the Rector, Vicar, or Wardens, when the Register's term of office expires.

Section 9. The Treasurer shall take charge of all funds except Communion Alms as provided for in General Convention Canon III.9.6.(b)(6), and disburse the same under the direction of the Vestry, maintaining these accounts in accordance with the canonical requirements for the conduct of business in Church affairs, rendering reports to the Vestry and to the Convention as may be required. When the Treasurer's term of office ends, the Treasurer shall deliver all books and records pertaining to the Treasurer's office to the Wardens.

Section 10. The provisions of this Canon shall also be applicable to Vestry Committees to the extent not in conflict with other Canons.

### **CANON 13.**

#### **Business Methods in Church Affairs.**

Section 1. In every Church, Mission, and Institution connected with the Diocese, business methods shall be observed as contained in General Convention Canon I.7 and as supplemented herein.

Section 2. All trust, endowment, and other permanent funds, and all securities of whatsoever kind for which a Treasurer is responsible represented by physical evidence of ownership or indebtedness, shall be deposited or invested with due regard for the social responsibility of the Church and the social implications of the Christian faith. These funds shall be (a) deposited in one or more accounts properly earmarked, with one or more national or state banks or trust companies, or one or more savings and loan associations, the accounts of which are insured by an instrumentality of the United States, or with a Diocesan Corporation; or (b) invested in such a manner as is permitted by Title 64.2, Subtitle III, Chapter 7 (Sections 64.2-780 through 64.2-791) of the Code of Virginia (1950) as it may be amended from time to time; or (iii) invested in such manner as approved by the Executive Board. Such accounts shall be approved in writing by the Vestry or its governing body.

This section shall not be deemed to prohibit investments in securities issued in book entry form or other manner that dispenses with delivery of a certificate evidencing the ownership of the securities or the indebtedness of the issuer.

Section 3. The Treasurer shall be bonded in such sum and with such surety as the Vestry or governing body may from time to time determine.

Section 4. The Vestry or governing body shall annually cause to be audited the accounts of its Treasurer and all other custodians of funds or securities. Such audit will comply with Section 1 of this Canon and with such instructions as may be promulgated by the Executive Board. The audit shall include all accounts which exceed \$500.00 at any one time during the fiscal year.

Section 5. The Vestry or other governing body of every Church, Mission, and Related Organization shall provide for the following insurance with such insurers as may be determined by the Vestry or other governing body:

- (a) Fire and casualty insurance for buildings and tangible personal property of the Church, Mission, or Related Organization in amounts not less than their replacement cost or depreciated value, as appropriate.
- (b) Adequate comprehensive liability insurance, naming the Diocese of Virginia as an additional insured, with coverage of not less than \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence, for property damage or

personal injury occurring (1) on the property of the Church, Mission, or Related Organization, (2) as a result of the operation of motor vehicles owned or leased by the Church, Mission, or Related Organization, (3) as a result of acts or omissions of the Clergy or other employees with respect to their duties as such, or (4) as a result of acts or omissions of members or volunteers performing activities on behalf of or at the direction of the Church, Mission, or Related Organization.

- (c) Workers' compensation insurance for all employees.

#### **CANON 14.**

##### **Creation of Church Debt.**

Section 1. No indebtedness shall be incurred by a Church or Institution without the written approval of the Bishop and of the Standing Committee, except:

- (a) where the proposed indebtedness is for permanent improvements, replacements, or additions to real estate or equipment, the proposed indebtedness plus indebtedness of every kind already existing does not exceed 150% of the average annual receipts of such Church or Institution during the previous three fiscal years; or
- (b) where the proposed indebtedness is for current expenses, the proposed indebtedness plus all indebtedness theretofore incurred for current expenses and still existing does not exceed 20% of the total current receipts of such Church or Institution during the preceding fiscal year.

Section 2. The following shall not be included in computing receipts under subsections (a) and (b) of Section 1 of this Canon: (a) amounts from or for endowments, or amounts from or by bequests, except income from endowments or bequests not specifically designated to be used for other purposes, and (b) receipts specifically designated for expenditures other than the Church's ordinary operating expenses.

Section 3. The approval required under this Canon shall not be granted until a plan of payment of the indebtedness is submitted to and approved by the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

#### **CANON 15.**

##### **Church Property.**

Section 1. All real and personal property held by or for the benefit of any Church or Mission within this Diocese is held in trust for The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia. The Vestry of every Church and, when authorized by the Bishop, the Vestry Committee of a Mission shall elect Trustees for appointment pursuant to law to hold title to such property.

Section 2. No part of the real property of a Church, except abandoned property, shall be alienated, sold, exchanged, encumbered, or otherwise transferred for any purpose without the consent of the congregation in a meeting called for that purpose pursuant to the provisions of Section 13 of Canon 11 and approval of the appropriate court, if required by law, and, in the case of consecrated property or any Church or Chapel which has been used solely for worship services, the further consent of the Bishop, acting with the advice and the consent of the Standing Committee. No part of the real property of a Mission under Supervision shall be alienated without the further consent of the Bishop.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall take such steps as may be necessary to recover or secure, and take charge and custody of, any property, real or personal, belonging to any Church or bodies heretofore known as a Parish, Separate Congregation, Mission Church, or Mission within this Diocese, the legal title to which is not vested in duly constituted Trustees. Further, whenever any property, real or personal, formerly owned or used by any congregation of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia for any purpose for which religious congregations are authorized to hold property under the provisions of the Code of Virginia or any amendment thereof, has ceased to be so occupied or used by such congregation, so that the same may be regarded as abandoned property by the Executive Board, which shall have the authority to declare such property abandoned and shall have the authority to take charge and custody thereof. Upon taking charge and custody of property pursuant to this Section, the Executive Board shall take such steps as may be necessary to transfer the property to the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority or to sell it.

Section 4. The Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority is hereby authorized to acquire by deed, devise, gift, purchase, or otherwise, any real property for the use or benefit of the Diocese. Property so acquired shall be held and transferred by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority in accordance with the provisions of Section

57-16 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as from time to time amended, provided that no such real property shall be alienated, sold, exchanged, encumbered, or otherwise transferred for any purpose by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority without the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, unless prohibited by the instrument by which title to such property is acquired. The Executive Board shall have the care and maintenance of the Episcopal Residence and other property held by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority for which no other custodians are provided. The Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority may delegate all authority with respect to such property to the Executive Board, save and except the right to hold, transfer, or encumber title to real property.

Section 5. The Executive Board is hereby constituted as the proper authority of the Diocese to apply to the appropriate court of the Commonwealth for the appointment of Trustees to hold title to real property belonging to the Diocese when it may be necessary. No part of such real estate, except abandoned real property, shall be alienated, sold, encumbered, or otherwise transferred for any purpose without the consent of the Executive Board.

Section 6. A list of all real property to which the Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese hold title and of all inactive or abandoned real property shall be maintained by the Secretary of the Diocese and published annually in the Convention Journal.

Section 7. Trustees appointed pursuant to this Canon shall be indemnified by the Church or Mission electing them or, in the case of Trustees designated by the Executive Board, by the Diocese, to the fullest extent as if the Church, Mission, or Diocese were a "Corporation" and such Trustees were "Directors" within the meaning of, and as set forth in Title 13.1, Chapter 10, Article 9 (Sections 13.1-875 through 13.1-883) of the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act, as the same may be from time to time amended.

#### **CANON 16.**

##### **Parish Registers and Parochial Reports.**

Section 1. Every Rector and Vicar shall maintain a register of official acts and make the required entries in the Parish Register as required by General Convention Canon I.6.1. These records shall be made in suitable books to constitute collectively the Parish Register, to be provided by the Vestry for that purpose and to remain the property of the Vestry. When a congregation is without a Rector or Vicar, one of the Wardens shall take charge of the Parish Register and shall make, or cause to be made, all needful entries until the vacancy is filled.

Section 2. Every Rector or Vicar shall send to the Bishop or, if there is no Bishop, to the Secretary of the Diocese or the President of the Convention, on or before the first day of March of each year, the report required by General Convention Canon I.6.1 for the year ending the thirty-first day of December preceding, in such form as shall be prescribed by the Bishop or the Convention. If any congregation is without a Rector or Vicar, the report shall be sent by the Wardens. The Bishop shall compile a list of those Churches and Clergy whose reports are not sent by the first day of March and, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, take appropriate action.

#### **CANON 17.**

##### **Related Organizations.**

Section 1. Organizations related to the Diocese shall be those whose charters or statements of purpose have been reviewed and approved by the Executive Board and whose status as a Related Organization shall have been approved by the Convention.

Section 2. Every Related Organization shall operate in conformity with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Diocese.

Section 3. Every Related Organization shall conform with the applicable provisions of Canon 13 (Business Methods in Church Affairs); provided, however, that nothing in this Canon shall be construed as acceptance by the Diocese of the financial or other obligations of any Related Organization.

Section 4. The Secretary of the Diocese shall keep a current list of all active Related Organizations which shall be published in the Convention Journal.

Section 5. Every Related Organization shall furnish an annual report of its activities to the Secretary of Convention.

Section 6. The Convention of the Diocese, and the Executive Board between Conventions, shall have the authority, for proper cause, to terminate the status of a Related Organization.

#### **CANON 18.**

##### **The Secretary of the Diocese.**

The Secretary of the Diocese shall perform such duties as may otherwise be prescribed by the Constitution and Canons and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority, in the performance of which the Secretary shall have such authority as may be delegated by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority.

#### **CANON 19.**

##### **The Treasurer of the Diocese.**

###### Section 1.

- (a) All trust and permanent funds belonging to the Diocese or over which the Diocese has control, and all other funds for which the Treasurer is responsible, shall be kept in one or more accounts in the Diocese of Virginia, properly earmarked, with one or more national or state banks or trust companies, or one or more savings and loan associations, the accounts of which are insured by an instrumentality of the United States, or with a Diocesan Corporation, approved in writing by the Executive Board, and shall not be withdrawn in whole or in part except upon the signature of two designated persons.
- (b) All securities of whatsoever kind belonging to the Diocese or over which the Diocese has control shall be kept with a Diocesan Corporation or some other agency, approved in writing by the Executive Board, and shall not be withdrawn except upon the signature of two designated persons.
- (c) The Treasurer shall be bonded in such sum and with such surety as the Standing Committee may from time to time determine.
- (d) Such books of account shall be kept as, in the judgment of the Executive Board, may be necessary.
- (e) The Executive Board shall annually cause to be audited by certified public accountants the accounts of the Treasurer of the Diocese and the accounts of the Treasurer of every trust and permanent Diocesan fund.
- (f) A condensed report of the audit shall be made under the direction of the Executive Board, which shall make its report to each regular meeting of the Convention and, when requested, to any special meeting of the Convention.
- (g) All buildings and tangible personal property over which the Diocese has control shall be kept adequately insured in such amount and with such insurers as the Executive Board may determine.

Section 2. Pending the adoption of an annual budget by the Convention, the Executive Board shall prepare and furnish to the Treasurer a schedule of payments for the ensuing fiscal year, which schedule of payments shall first provide for fixed obligations and then for other objects in the program of the Diocese, within the amount of estimated receipts. This schedule of payments shall be the warrant of the Treasurer for disbursement of the amounts specified therein. Upon adoption by the Convention of an annual budget, such budget shall become the warrant of the Treasurer to make the expenditures provided therein.

#### **CANON 20.**

##### **The Registrar of the Diocese.**

Section 1. The Registrar shall be responsible to the Bishop and the Convention for the preservation of the official records of the Diocese, which shall include the Journals of the Conventions and the official records of the Bishops. The Registrar shall procure, receive, catalogue, and preserve books, papers, and other documents bearing upon the history of the Church in the Diocese.

Section 2. The Registrar shall, with the advice of the Bishop and the Secretary, issue guidelines to committees and officials of the Diocese concerning such documents as shall be considered worthy of historic preservation, such as the Journals of General Convention, The Episcopal Church Annuals, and Diocesan Episcopal Church Women Yearbooks. The Registrar shall offer advice to parishes regarding the preservation of historic materials. The Registrar shall further make proper disposition of acquisitions to the archives of The Episcopal Church or to such other repositories as may be appropriate.

#### **CANON 21.**

##### **The Standing Committee of the Diocese.**

Section 1. The Standing Committee shall annually elect a President and a Secretary from among its members.

Section 2. In addition to its other constitutional and canonical duties, the Standing Committee shall (a) serve as a Council of Advice to the Bishop, and (b) annually address the Convention on such matters concerning the mission, life, or program of the Diocese as the Standing Committee shall deem timely.

Section 3. No member of the Standing Committee chosen by the Executive Board or the Convention to fill a vacancy on that Committee as provided by the Constitution shall be ineligible to be elected to a full term, but a member of the Standing Committee who has completed within two years a full term shall not be eligible to be chosen by the Executive Board or the Convention to fill a vacancy, nor be eligible to be elected to a full term on that Committee.

#### **CANON 22.**

##### **The Commission on Ministry.**

Section 1. Membership.

- (a) The Convention shall elect six persons, three Clerical and three Lay, to the Commission on Ministry. One in each order will be elected annually to serve for a term of three years. No one so elected shall be eligible for re-election after having served two consecutive terms until after the expiration of one year, providing that nothing herein shall prevent the Bishop from nominating one or more such persons under the provisions of Section 1(b) of this Canon. Lay persons elected to the Commission shall be adult communicants in good standing of a Church or Mission in the Diocese.
- (b) The Bishop may annually appoint not more than 10 additional members for a term of one year each. Such appointments shall be subject to confirmation by the Convention. Such appointments of Lay persons shall be communicants in good standing of a Church or Mission in the Diocese.
- (c) In the case of a vacancy in the members elected pursuant to Section 1(a), the Executive Board shall fill the vacancy from the same order and that member shall serve for the balance of that term. In the case of a vacancy in the members appointed pursuant to Section 1(b), the Bishop may appoint a member to complete that one-year term.

Section 2. The duties of the Commission on Ministry shall be those prescribed in the Canons of General Convention, including, but not limited to, advising and assisting the Bishop (a) in the determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons, and (b) in the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry, and assessment of readiness therefore. The Commission may establish committees consisting of members and other persons to report to the Commission or to act on its behalf.

Section 3. The Commission on Ministry shall annually report to the Convention.

#### **CANON 23.**

##### **Meetings.**

Meetings of congregations, vestries, vestry committees, regional councils, the Executive Board, the Standing Committee, and the Convention, including elections to offices in these bodies and votes concerning the disposition or encumbrance of property, may be conducted by electronic means (including, where appropriate, telephonic means), provided that the following standards are met:



- (a) adequate notice (as defined in these Canons) is provided;
- (b) the presence of a quorum is verified;
- (c) each member entitled to vote can hear clearly and can be heard by the other attendees;
- (d) reasonable means are provided for each member in attendance to review the written terms of matters on which the body is voting before voting occurs;
- (e) in advance of voting, the names of members in attendance and eligible to vote is verified; and
- (f) the results of votes are promptly made available to voting members.

Adoption of this Canon shall not be construed to invalidate prior actions of these constitutional and canonical bodies.

#### **CANON 24.**

Reserved for future use.

#### **CANON 25.**

##### **Finance Committees.**

Section 1. The Executive Board shall serve as the diocesan body with the authority to perform the duties of a Finance Committee as required by General Convention Canon I.7. The Executive Board may appoint a subgroup of its members to exercise such authority. The Executive Board or the subgroup shall, at least annually:

- (a) Assess the conformity of the Diocese, the Churches, the Missions, and Institutions connected with the Diocese with the provisions of Canon 13 (Business Methods in Church Affairs);
- (b) Issue guidelines for audits and investment management;
- (c) Provide information to Church, Mission, and other Finance Committees as requested; and
- (d) Perform such other functions as required by Canon or as directed by the Executive Board.

Section 2. Each Church and Mission shall establish a Finance Committee of not fewer than three persons to provide assistance in financial matters to the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, Vicar, Vestry or Vestry Committee, and Treasurer in the implementation of these Canons.

Section 3. All reports of audits required by Canon 13 shall be made to the Vestry or governing body not later than August 2 of each year. Such reports, including recommendations, shall be filed with the Bishop as required by General Convention Canon; reports for Missions shall be made to the person designated by the Bishop who shall submit a consolidated report to the Bishop. The Bishop shall refer all audit reports to the Finance Committee of the Diocese for its information and recommendations.

#### **CANON 26.**

##### **Appeal of a Lay Person after Repulsion from the Holy Communion.**

Any Lay person repelled from the Holy Communion may appeal the Priest's action to the Bishop in writing, setting forth the grounds for requesting to be restored, provided that at least one of the following conditions apply: (1) the Lay person believes that the repulsion was unjust, or (2) the Lay person has truly and sincerely demonstrated readiness and willingness to comply with the requirements for being restored but believes that the repulsion is being continued unjustly. The Bishop, after considering the explanations given by the Lay person and the Priest, shall judge the case and shall communicate the decision in writing to the Lay person and the Priest. The Bishop's judgment shall be final and conclusive.

#### **CANON 27.**

##### **Ecclesiastical Discipline.**

**Section 1. Adoption of Title IV of the Canons of the General Convention.** Those provisions of Title IV of the Canons of the General Convention that are applicable to the Diocese are hereby incorporated as part of this Canon. To the extent, if any, that any of the provisions of this Canon are inconsistent with provisions of Title IV, the provisions of Title IV shall govern.

**Section 2. Disciplinary Board.** The Disciplinary Board shall consist of 11 persons, six of whom are Priests or Deacons and five of whom are Lay persons. Members of the Standing Committee shall be eligible to serve as members of the Disciplinary Board.

- (a) Priests or Deacons. The Priests or Deacons who are members of the Disciplinary Board shall be canonically resident in this Diocese.
- (b) Lay Members. The Lay members of the Disciplinary Board shall be persons eligible under the Canons for election as Lay Delegates to the Convention.
- (c) Election of Members. The members of the Disciplinary Board shall be nominated by the Standing Committee and elected by the Convention to serve for terms of three years. Members' terms shall be staggered into three classes of two Clerical and two Lay members each, provided that one such class shall have only one Lay member. A Disciplinary Board member who has served two complete three-year terms shall be ineligible to serve again until one year has elapsed.
- (d) Vacancies. Vacancies on the Disciplinary Board shall be filled as follows:
  - (i) Upon the determination that a vacancy exists, the President of the Board shall notify the Bishop of the vacancy and request appointment of a replacement member.
  - (ii) The Bishop shall appoint a replacement Disciplinary Board member in consultation with the Standing Committee.
  - (iii) With respect to a vacancy created for any reason other than pursuant to a disqualification as provided in Section 3 below, the term of any person selected as a replacement Disciplinary Board member shall expire at the conclusion of the next regular meeting of the Convention, at which Convention a person of the same order as the person whose position was vacated shall be elected to serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement Disciplinary Board member shall serve only for the proceeding for which the regularly elected Disciplinary Board member is not serving as a result of the challenge.
- (e) President. Within 60 days following the regular meeting of the Convention, the Disciplinary Board shall convene to elect a President to serve until the next regular meeting of the Convention.

**Section 3. Preserving Impartiality.** In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or Hearing Panel of the Disciplinary Board shall become aware of a conflict of interest or undue bias, that member shall be disqualified from serving and shall immediately notify the President of the Disciplinary Board and request appointment of a replacement member of the Panel. Respondent's Counsel and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge any member of a Panel for conflict of interest or undue bias by motion to the Panel for disqualification of the challenged member. The members of the Panel not the subject of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that proceeding.

**Section 4. Intake Officers.** The Intake Officers shall be appointed from time to time by the Bishop after consultation with the Disciplinary Board. The Bishop shall appoint at least two Intake Officers according to the needs of the Diocese. The Intake Officers shall not all be of the same gender. The Bishop shall publish the names and contact information of the Intake Officers throughout the Diocese.

**Section 5. Investigator.** The Bishop shall appoint one or more Investigators as needed in consultation with the President of the Disciplinary Board. Every Investigator shall be required to maintain confidentiality subject to General Convention Canon IV.11(5).

**Section 6. Church Attorney.** Within 60 days following each regular meeting of the Convention, the Disciplinary Board shall appoint a Church Attorney and one or more Assistant Church Attorneys, if deemed appropriate by the Disciplinary Board, who shall be duly licensed attorneys and who will perform the functions as described in General Convention Canon IV.2. Attorneys appointed to serve as Church Attorney or Assistant Church Attorney shall serve until their successors are appointed. Persons appointed to serve as Church Attorneys or Assistant Church Attorneys shall be persons eligible under the Canons for election as Lay Delegates to the Convention but need not reside within the Diocese. The Church Attorney may be removed by the Bishop, in consultation with the Standing Committee, for cause. If the Church Attorney and none of the Assistant Church Attorneys are able to act on a specific matter due to a conflict of interest, undue bias, unavailability, or other good reason, the Disciplinary Board shall appoint a Lay or Clergy person with knowledge of Title IV, but not necessarily a duly licensed attorney, from within or outside of the Diocese, to act as Church Attorney for such matter.

**Section 7. Pastoral Response Coordinator.** The Bishop may appoint a Pastoral Response Coordinator to serve at the will of the Bishop in coordinating the delivery of appropriate pastoral

responses provided for in General Convention Canon IV.8. The Pastoral Response Coordinator may be an Intake Officer but shall not be a person serving in any other appointed or elected capacity under this Canon.

**Section 8. Advisors.** In each proceeding under this Canon, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor for the Complainant and an Advisor for the Respondent. Persons serving as Advisors shall hold no other appointed or elected position provided for under this Canon and shall not include the Chancellor or any Vice Chancellors, or any person likely to be called as a witness in this proceeding or otherwise involved in the proceeding.

**Section 9. Clerk.** The Disciplinary Board shall appoint a Board Clerk to assist the Disciplinary Board with records management and administrative support. The Clerk may be a member of the Disciplinary Board.

**Section 10. Lay Assessor.** The Disciplinary Board may appoint a duly licensed attorney for advice on matters of law, procedure, and evidence affecting proceedings before the Conference and Hearing Panels. The Lay Assessor need not reside in or be a member of the Diocese.

**Section 11. Costs and Expenses.** The reasonable costs and expenses of the Disciplinary Board, the Intake Officer, the Investigator, the Church Attorney, the Disciplinary Board Clerk, the Pastoral Response Coordinator, and the Lay Assessor, if any, shall be the obligation of the Diocese, subject to budgetary constraints as may be established by the Executive Board.

**Section 12. Records.**

- (a) Records of Active Proceedings. The Clerk shall preserve and maintain records of active proceedings before the Disciplinary Board through the period of any pending appeal.
- (b) Permanent Records. The Bishop shall make provision for the permanent storage of records of all proceedings under this Canon at the offices of the Diocese and the Archives of the Episcopal Church, as prescribed in Title IV of the Canons of the General Convention.

**CANON 28.**

**Relationships Among Clergy and Congregations.**

Section 1. Except upon mandatory resignation by reason of age, a Rector may not resign as Rector of a Church without the consent of its Vestry, nor may any Rector canonically or lawfully elected and in charge of a Church be removed by the Vestry against the Rector's will, except as hereinafter provided.

Section 2. When a Rector or a majority of any Vestry believe the pastoral relationship between the Rector and the congregation is imperiled by dissension, it shall be the duty of either or both, before contemplating dissolution of the pastoral relationship, to lay the matter before the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority.

Section 3. If for any urgent reason a Rector or Vestry desires a dissolution of the pastoral relationship, and the parties cannot agree, either party may give notice in writing to the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority. Whenever the Standing Committee is the Ecclesiastical Authority, it shall request the Bishop Suffragan, if there is one, or the Assistant Bishop, if there is one, or if neither office is filled the Bishop of another Diocese, to perform the duties of the Bishop under this Canon.

Section 4. Whenever a Rector or a Vestry notifies the Bishop under the terms of this Canon, the Bishop shall labor for a reconciliation between the Rector and the congregation, either directly, through the Bishop's designees, or both. The Bishop may require one or more meetings with the Vestry and the Rector, either together or separately, and may require such meetings to be held with the Bishop, the Bishop's designees, or both. No later than 90 days after receiving the original notification for consultation under the provisions of this Canon, the Bishop shall issue a Pastoral Direction in writing to the Rector and the Vestry outlining a course of action to unify the congregation.

Section 5. If, in the judgment of the Bishop, the Rector, or the Vestry, the terms of the Pastoral Direction issued by the Bishop as specified in Section 4 of this Canon have not been met, or that the purposes for the Pastoral Direction have not been achieved and 90 days have passed since the issuance of the

Pastoral Direction, the Rector or the Vestry may request a final judgment on the pastoral relationship from the Bishop or the Bishop may take the initiative to proceed as follows:

- (a) The Bishop shall give notice to the Rector and Vestry that a godly judgment will be rendered in the matter after consultation with the Standing Committee and that either party has the right within 10 days to request in writing an opportunity to confer with the Standing Committee before it consults with the Bishop.
- (b) If a timely request is made, the President of the Standing Committee shall set a date for the conference, which shall be held within 30 days of receiving the request.
- (c) At the conference each party shall be entitled to representation by a third party and to present its position fully.
- (d) Within 30 days after the conference, or after the Bishop's notice if no conference is requested, the Bishop shall confer with and receive the recommendation of the Standing Committee; thereafter the Bishop, as final arbiter and judge, shall render a godly judgment.
- (e) Upon the request of either party, the Bishop shall explain the reasons for the judgment. If the explanation is in writing, copies shall be delivered to both parties.
- (f) If the pastoral relationship is to be continued, the Bishop shall require the parties to agree on definitions of responsibility and accountability for the Rector and the Vestry.
- (g) If the relationship is to be dissolved:
  - (1) The Bishop shall direct the Secretary of the Convention to record the dissolution; and
  - (2) The judgment shall include such terms and conditions including financial settlements as shall seem to the Bishop just and compassionate.
- (h) In either event, the Bishop shall offer appropriate supportive services to the Priest and the Church.

Section 6. In the event of the failure or refusal of either party to comply with the terms of the judgment, the Bishop may act as follows:

- (a) In the case of a Rector, suspend the Rector from exercising the priestly office until the Priest shall comply with the judgment.
- (b) In the case of a Vestry, recommend to the Convention of the Diocese that the Church be placed under the supervision of the Bishop as a Mission until it has complied with the judgment.

Section 7. For cause, the Bishop may extend the time periods specified in this Canon, provided that all else is done to expedite these proceedings. All parties shall be notified in writing of the length of any extension.

Section 8. Statements made during the course of proceedings under this Canon are not discoverable nor admissible in any proceedings under Title IV of the General Convention Canons or Diocesan Canon 27(Ecclesiastical Discipline), provided that this does not require the exclusion of evidence in any proceeding under the Canons which is otherwise discoverable and admissible.

Section 9. In the course of proceedings under this Canon, if a complaint is made by the Vestry against the Rector under Title IV of the General Convention Canons or Diocesan Canon 27, all proceedings under this Canon shall be suspended until the complaint has been resolved or withdrawn.

## **CANON 29.**

### **Health Insurance.**

Section 1. Any and all health insurance coverage for active and retired ordained persons or Lay employees provided or paid for by the Diocese, Churches, Diocesan Missions, or Missions of a Founding Church located within the Diocese shall be provided through the diocesan health insurance plans established by the Executive Board.

Section 2. The Executive Board shall establish forms and processes for receiving applications for exception or exemption from the mandate of Section 1 of this Canon, and for reviewing and reaching a decision regarding each application. The Executive Board may designate an appropriately constituted body and delegate to it the necessary authority to receive, review, and make recommendations to the Executive Board. A description of these forms and processes shall be furnished to the entities identified in Section 1 of this Canon, made available by the Diocese upon request, and published in the annual guidelines approved by the Executive Board.

Section 3. The Executive Board may grant such exemptions or exceptions from the mandate of Section 1 of this Canon as it deems appropriate. Each decision of the Executive Board shall be communicated to the applicant in writing together with a description of any process that the Executive Board may establish for appealing its decisions.

Section 4. In deciding on each application, the Executive Board shall be guided by the following considerations (among such others as it may deem appropriate):

- (a) consistency;
- (b) fairness;
- (c) hardship;
- (d) coverage available through spousal, military, or other plans;
- (e) the effect that the exemption or exception requested, if granted, would have on the plan as a whole; and
- (f) the precedential effect of the exemption or exception requested, if granted.

### **CANON 30.**

#### **Amendments to the Canons.**

Section 1. The Canons of this Diocese may be amended by the Convention; but no proposed amendment shall be considered by the Convention unless at least one day's notice is given in open Convention, nor until the amendment shall have been referred to and reported upon by a Committee of Convention of at least two Priests and two Lay persons. No amendment shall be adopted during the same Convention unless two-thirds of the members present concur therein. If the majority is less than two-thirds, the proposed amendment shall lie over for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Convention. Unless otherwise provided for by the Convention, all amendments shall become effective upon the adjournment of the meeting of the Convention at which final action was taken.

Section 2. Whenever a Canon is amended, enacted, or repealed in different respects by two or more independent enactments at the same Convention, including the enactment of an entire Canon, the separate enactments shall be considered as one enactment containing all of the amendments or enactments, whether or not repealed, to the extent that the changes made in separate amendments or enactments are not in conflict with each other. The Chancellor and the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitution and Canons shall make the determination whether or not there is a conflict and certify the text of the single enactment to the Secretary of the Convention.

Section 3. At the conclusion of each regular meeting of General Convention, the Chancellor and the Chairperson of the Committee on Constitution and Canons of this Diocese shall be empowered to correct numbering references in the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese to the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention. Any corrections shall be reported to the Secretary of the Diocese.

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