

**CONSTITUTION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

**Article I. Territory and accession**

Section A. That part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church known as The Episcopal Church, situated in the northwestern portion of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, does hereby establish itself as the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and does ordain and adopt this constitution for its governance.

Section B. The diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania consists of all members of the Episcopal Church within the Pennsylvania counties of Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield (except Morris Township), Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango, and Warren.

Section C. The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania is a constituent part of The Episcopal Church and does accede to, recognize and adopt the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church as they now exist or may hereafter be amended and acknowledges their authority over the diocese.

**Article II. Ecclesiastical Authority**

Section A. The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall be the Bishop Diocesan.

Section B. If there be no Bishop Diocesan, or if the Bishop Diocesan be unable to act or is absent from the diocese for an extended period, then the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority

Section C. If there be neither a Bishop Diocesan nor a Bishop Coadjutor able to act under the provisions of Sections A and B, then the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority.

**Article III. Convention**

**Section A. Meetings**

**1. Annual Convention**

a) There shall be a regular convention of the church in this diocese to be held annually at a time and place to be fixed by the preceding annual convention. The action of fixing the time and place of the regular annual convention shall constitute adequate notice of such meeting.

b) For good and sufficient cause the time or place of meeting of the annual convention may be changed by the ecclesiastical authority. Notice of such a change must be given by regular mail to all canonically resident clergy and to all congregations in union with the convention at least thirty days prior to the convention.

**2. Special conventions**

a) Special conventions may be held upon the call of the ecclesiastical authority.

b) Special conventions shall be called by the ecclesiastical authority upon written petition stating the reason for such convention signed by at least five clergy canonically resident in the diocese and ten adult communicants in good standing of any two or more congregations in the diocese.

c) The special convention shall be held at a time and place fixed by the ecclesiastical authority.

- 45 d) Notice of such special convention shall be given by regular mail to all the clergy  
46 canonically resident in the diocese and to all the congregations in union with the  
47 convention at least thirty days prior to the date of such special convention.  
48 e) The notice shall include the reason for calling such special convention and the  
49 business to be done by such special convention.  
50 f) No business, other than that stated in the notice, shall be transacted at such special  
51 convention except by three fourths majority vote of the members of the convention.

52 **Section B. Membership in convention**

- 53 1. The Convention shall be composed of the following members with voice and vote: The  
54 the officers of the Convention, at least one lay delegate from each of the congregations  
55 in union with the Convention, and all other clergy who have been canonically resident in  
56 the diocese for at least six months preceding the convention.  
57 2. The mode of determining the number of lay delegates, of electing lay delegates, and of  
58 admitting congregations into union with the Convention shall be prescribed  
59 by Canon.  
60 3. The mode of identifying and determining those other clergy (deacons, presbyters, and  
61 other bishops) entitled to voice and vote in convention shall be prescribed by Canon.  
62 4. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at  
63 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to submit the  
64 Annual Parochial Report.  
65 5. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at  
66 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to provide  
67 evidence, adequate to the ecclesiastical authority, of the annual audit required by canon.  
68 6. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at  
69 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to pay  
70 assessments levied upon such congregation by the authority of convention.  
71 7. No person under ecclesiastical discipline, whether clergy or lay, shall be entitled to  
72 membership.  
73 8. The Convention shall be the sole judge of the election and qualification of its members.

74 **Section C. Officers of convention**

75 **1. President of Convention**

- 76 a) The Bishop Diocesan shall be president and presiding officer at all conventions. In  
77 the absence of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one present,  
78 shall preside at convention.  
79 b) If there be no Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor to preside as called for in  
80 Article III. Section C.1.a, then the senior presbyter present (in order of length of  
81 canonical residence in the diocese) shall call the convention to order and preside  
82 until the convention shall nominate and elect a president pro-tempore.

83 **2. Secretary of Convention**

- 84 a) The annual convention shall elect a Secretary of Convention.  
85 b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be  
86 prescribed by canon.

87 **3. Treasurer of Convention**

- 88 a) The annual convention shall elect a Treasurer of Convention.

89                   b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be  
90                   prescribed by canon.

91                   **4. Chancellor of Convention**

92                   a) The annual convention shall elect a Chancellor of Convention.

93                   b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be  
94                   prescribed by canon.

95                   **Section D. Conduct of Convention**

96                   **1. Quorum:** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of one third of the  
97                   clergy entitled to vote and at least one lay delegate from each of one third of the  
98                   congregations in union with convention. In the absence of a quorum a majority of those  
99                   present may adjourn the convention from time to time.

100                   **2. Voting.** The members shall deliberate in one body and each member with voting  
101                   privileges shall have one vote. A majority of votes cast shall be required to adopt any  
102                   measure, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.

103                   **3. Voting by orders:** On the call of any five members, not all of whom may represent the  
104                   same congregation, or when called for in the Constitution or Canons, a vote by orders  
105                   shall be taken. In a vote by orders the clergy delegates and lay delegates vote separately  
106                   and a concurrent majority of votes cast in both orders shall be required to adopt any  
107                   measure, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.

108                   **4. Elections:**

109                   a) All elections to any office under this Constitution or the Canons of this diocese shall  
110                   be by written ballot.

111                   b) All delegates must vote for the number of persons to be elected to the various  
112                   offices.

113                   c) In order to be elected a person must receive a majority of votes cast unless otherwise  
114                   specified in this Constitution or in the Canons. When the Constitution or Canons call  
115                   for an election by the clergy and lay delegates voting separately then, in order to be  
116                   elected, a person must receive a concurrent majority of votes cast in each order,  
117                   unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.

118                   d) If in any election only one person should be nominated for that office, then the  
119                   election may be had by acclamation and no written balloting is required.

120                   e) If any office remains unfilled after three ballots the Convention may decide to elect  
121                   persons to the remaining offices by a plurality of votes cast rather than by requiring  
122                   a majority of votes cast or may decide to drop from the ballot the person with the  
123                   lowest number of votes. Any motion to make such alteration in the election process  
124                   shall require a majority of three fourths.

125                   f) Any person elected to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania shall  
126                   assume office at the close of the convention at which they are elected.

127                   g) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern  
128                   Pennsylvania or in any of its congregations shall continue in office until their  
129                   successor is chosen and shall at all times well and faithfully discharge the duties of  
130                   their office to the best of their ability.

131                   h) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern  
132                   Pennsylvania, or in any of its congregations or other organizations, when they leave

133 office shall deliver to their successor all records and documents appertaining to that  
134 office in whatever form they may exist.

135 **5. Other matters**

136 a) All actions of convention shall take effect upon the adjournment of that convention  
137 unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and Canons or in the act itself.

138 b) The convention may make provision in the Canons of the diocese for the adoption  
139 and amendment of rules of order to govern and organize the convention for the  
140 conduct of its business.

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142 **Article IV. The Standing Committee**

143 Section A. The annual convention shall elect persons to serve upon the Standing Committee of  
144 the diocese.

145 Section B. The Standing Committee shall consist of an equal number of clergy and lay  
146 members.

147 Section C. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and  
148 terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.

149 Section D. The Standing Committee shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
150 vacancies that may occur in its own body.

151  
152 **Article V. Diocesan Council**

153 Section A. The Diocesan Council shall consist of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor,  
154 if any, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, the Chancellor of  
155 Convention and such other persons, elected by the annual convention, as may be prescribed  
156 by canon.

157 Section B. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and  
158 terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.

159 Section C. The Diocesan Council shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
160 vacancies that may occur in its own body or among the officers of council, other than the  
161 bishop, that were elected by the convention.

162 Section D. The Diocesan Council shall be the board of directors of the Pennsylvania non-profit  
163 corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and shall have all the  
164 legal powers incident thereto and shall have the power to authorize any person to act on its  
165 behalf.

166 Section E. The Bishop Diocesan will be the chair and president of council and the corporation.  
167 A vice president for the council and corporation may be elected by council from among its  
168 members. The Secretary of Convention shall serve as secretary of the council and  
169 corporation. The Treasurer of Convention shall serve as treasurer of the council and  
170 corporation. The Chancellor of Convention shall serve as chancellor of the council and  
171 corporation.

172 Section F. It shall be the duty of the Diocesan Council to develop, prosecute, and oversee the  
173 mission and ministry of the church in the diocese, to develop a budget or budgets for the  
174 work of the diocese, to fulfill all other duties laid upon the Council by the corporate charter,  
175 by the Constitution and Canons, or by resolution of Convention, and to make full reports of  
176 its work to the Annual Convention.

177

178 **Article VI. Deputies to General Convention and Provincial Synod**

179 **Section A. Deputies to General Convention**

- 180 1. The Annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated meeting of  
181 the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the clerical and lay members voting  
182 separately, deputies and alternate deputies to the General Convention.  
183 2. The number of deputies, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms  
184 of office shall be prescribed by canon provided that a sufficient number shall be elected  
185 so as to assure that the diocese have the full number of deputies permitted by the  
186 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

187 **Section B. Deputies to the Provincial Synod**

- 188 1. The Annual Convention shall elect, by the clerical and lay members voting separately,  
189 deputies and alternate deputies to the Provincial Synod  
190 2. The number of deputies, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms  
191 of office shall be prescribed by canon provided that a sufficient number shall be elected  
192 so as to assure that the diocese have the full number of deputies permitted by the  
193 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the ordinances of the Province.  
194

195 **Article VII. Canons**

196 Section A. Canons, not in conflict with this Constitution, may be adopted by the Convention to  
197 implement the provisions of this Constitution and to prescribe the operation of this Diocese.  
198 Such proposed Canons or amendments thereto may be adopted, which shall require a two-  
199 thirds vote of the members present and eligible to vote at such Convention.

200 Section B. A Committee on Constitution and Canons is hereby established whose  
201 membership, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall  
202 be prescribed in the canons. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall have  
203 authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all vacancies that may occur in its own body.  
204

205 **Article VIII. Election of bishops**

206 **Section A. Call for election and nomination process**

- 207 1. The requirements needed for the call to elect a bishop diocesan, a bishop coadjutor, or a  
208 bishop suffragan together with the method and process for nominating persons to the  
209 office of bishop shall be prescribed by canon.

210 **Section B. Qualification of voters**

- 211 1. In order to vote in the election of any bishop the members of convention shall meet the  
212 requirements of Article III, Section B, but with the following changes:  
213 a) It is required that all bishops, deacons and presbyters shall have been canonically  
214 resident in the diocese for at least one year preceding the convention.  
215 b) No member who is otherwise qualified shall be denied a vote in the election because  
216 of the provisions of Article III, Section B. subsections 4, 5, or 6.

217 **Section C. Voting**

- 218 1. Voting shall be by written ballot with the clergy and lay members voting separately.  
219 2. If at least two thirds of the clergy eligible to vote are present and at least two thirds of  
220 the full number of lay delegates are present then a concurrent majority of votes cast in  
221 each order shall be necessary to elect.

222                   3. If a lesser number of clerical or lay delegates are present than are called for in Article  
223                   VIII, Section C subsection 2 but a quorum as specified in Article III, Section D  
224                   subsection 1 exists then a concurrent majority consisting of three fourths of votes cast  
225                   in each order shall be necessary to elect.  
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227 **Article IX. The Cathedral:**

228           Section A. The Cathedral of St. Paul in the city of Erie, established as such through the  
229           amendments of the Charter of St Paul's Church, Erie, and thus established upon a Cathedral  
230           Foundation, according to the tradition of the Anglican Communion and in conformity with  
231           the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is a constituent part of the church and  
232           convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The Cathedral and the Cathedral  
233           Congregation shall be governed by the Chapter in accordance with the Cathedral Charter,  
234           the statutes and by-laws of the Cathedral, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of  
235           Northwestern Pennsylvania and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.  
236

237 **Article X. Ecclesiastical Discipline**

238           Section A. An Ecclesiastical Court is hereby established in accordance with the Constitution  
239           and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The court's membership, mode of nomination,  
240           qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed in the canons.

241           Section B. The Ecclesiastical Court shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
242           vacancies that may occur in its own body.  
243

244 **Article XI. Amendments of the Constitution**

245           Section A. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the  
246           Secretary of Convention not later than 60 days prior to the meeting of an Annual  
247           Convention.

248           Section B. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee on Constitution and  
249           Canons which shall report on the proposed amendment at that Annual Convention.

250           Section C. Voting on a proposed amendment shall be done by a vote by orders.

251           Section D. If the proposed amendment is approved by a concurrent majority of both orders, the  
252           proposed amendment shall lay over to the next Annual Convention where its consideration  
253           shall be one of the first orders of business. If again approved by a concurrent majority in  
254           both orders voting separately, then the Constitution shall be amended and the amendment  
255           shall take effect at the end of that Convention.

256           Section E. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall review this Constitution during  
257           the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and  
258           propose amendments to this Constitution as they deem necessary or advisable.  
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CANONS OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

**Title I. General Provisions**

**Canon 1. Definition of terms**

The following terms shall for the purposes of these Canons be construed to mean as follows:

**Section A)** "Church" means The Episcopal Church.

**Section B)** "National Constitution" means the Constitution for the government of The Episcopal Church and amendments thereof.

**Section C)** "National Canons" mean the Canons for the government of The Episcopal Church.

**Section D)** "Constitution" means the Constitution of the Church in this Diocese.

**Section E)** "Canons" means the Canons of the Church in this Diocese.

**Section F)** "Cleric" means any one Bishop, Priest, Or Deacon. "Clergy" is the plural of Cleric.

**Section G)** "Canonically Resident" means that a Cleric has been duly received into this Diocese by the Ecclesiastical Authority by acceptance of Letters Dimissory duly recorded, by Ordination, or by some other mode.

**Section H)** "In Good Standing" when applied to any Canonically Resident Cleric means that the Cleric is not under Temporary Inhibition, Inhibition, or Suspension, nor has he been Deposed from the Ministry.

**Section I)** "Ecclesiastical Authority" is as defined in the Constitution.

**Section J)** "Communicant In Good Standing" means a person whose Baptism has been recorded in this Church, who has received Holy Communion in this Church at least three times during the preceding year and who for the previous year has been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and has been faithful in working, praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

**Section K)** "Lay Person in Good Standing" means any Communicant In Good Standing of some Congregation in union with the convention of this Diocese who is not prevented from receiving Holy Communion under the Disciplinary Rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

**Section L)** "Member" means any Lay or Clergy Member of Convention.

**Section M)** "Adult" means members sixteen years of age and over except in circumstances where the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires a vote by persons over the age of eighteen years.

**Section N)** "Vicar" means the Priest-in-Charge of a Mission.

**Canon 2.** Words in the singular number include the plural and in the plural number include the singular.

**Canon 3.** A masculine pronoun or title, whenever used in these canons shall be deemed to include the feminine pronoun or title. A feminine pronoun or title, whenever used in these canons shall be deemed to include the masculine pronoun or title.

304 **Canon 4. Removal of persons from office<sup>1</sup>**

305 **Section A)** Any person elected or appointed to any office under these Canons may, for  
306 cause, be removed from that office in the following manner only:

307 **i.** If serving on The Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council,  
308 Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry by a two-thirds majority  
309 vote of all members (including the person proposed to be removed) of such  
310 Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council, Standing  
311 Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry at a regular or duly called special  
312 meeting of such The Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan  
313 Council, Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry

314 **ii.** If serving in an appointed office, by a two-thirds majority vote of the Standing  
315 Committee.

316 **Section B)** Any person so removed must be given written notice that a vote was taken to  
317 remove them from office and that they have a right under this canon to appeal the  
318 removal. This notice must be sent within 10 days of the vote.

319 **Section C)** Any person so removed may appeal such removal to the Standing Committee  
320 within fifteen (15) days of the date of the notice. The Standing Committee, after hearing  
321 from all interested parties, shall vote on the appeal. A two-thirds vote of those members  
322 of the Standing Committee present shall be required to sustain the removal.

323 **Section D)** Any person being removed from the Standing Committee may appeal such  
324 removal to the Diocesan Council within fifteen (15) days of the date of the notice. The  
325 Diocesan Council, after hearing from all interested parties, shall vote on the appeal. A  
326 two-thirds vote of those members of the Diocesan Council present shall be required to  
327 sustain the removal.

328 **Section E)** This canon does not apply to the removal of Priests or Deacons from  
329 Congregations, nor the removal of Bishops from the Diocese.

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331 **Canon 5.** <sup>2</sup>If no other provisions are made in the Constitution or Canons, the Standing  
332 Committee shall have the power by majority vote to fill for the unexpired term any vacancy  
333 that may occur in any office in this Diocese.

334

335 **Title II. Of Congregations In The Diocese**

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337 **Canon 1. Of Congregations**

338 **Section A)** A Congregation is a group of persons united for the purpose of carrying out the  
339 mission of the Church, which includes acknowledging the holiness of God, hearing  
340 God's word, offering prayer and worship, celebrating the sacraments and working,  
341 praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

342 **Section B)** An Unorganized Congregation is a Congregation which has not been admitted  
343 into union with the Convention of the Diocese, but where, with the approval of the  
344 Bishop, there are members of this Church who meet for regular services at least four  
345 times a year.

346 **Section C)** A Mission is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the  
347 Convention of the Diocese and does not meet the requirements of a Parish. Two or more



348 Congregations may form a single Mission with the approval of the Bishop and the  
349 Diocesan Convention.

350 **Section D)** A Parish is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the  
351 Convention of the Diocese and<sup>3</sup> which is totally financially self-supporting and has at  
352 least 50 adult Communicants In Good Standing and has been granted Parish status by  
353 the Diocesan Convention. A Parish also maintains a place of worship, provides an  
354 adequate living for a full time priest equivalent to or exceeding the minimum salary and  
355 benefits currently required by the Diocese, remains current in payment of its assessment,  
356 and pays all its own operating expenses. Two or more Congregations may form a single  
357 Parish with the approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Convention.  
358

### **Canon 2. Of The Organizing Of Missions**

360 **Section A)** A Congregation which seeks to become a Mission shall make written application  
361 to the Bishop, over the signatures of at least ten adult persons who propose to be  
362 members thereof. This application must be on the form provided by the Bishop and must  
363 include a statement that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and  
364 recognizes the authority over them of the National and Diocesan Constitutions and  
365 Canons.

366 **Section B)** If the Bishop consents to the organizing of the Mission as thus applied for, he  
367 shall name the congregation. In consultation with the Standing Committee he shall  
368 appoint for the first year fit persons to serve as Officers of the Mission.

369 **Section C)** When a Congregation shall have given notice to the Bishop of its intention to  
370 apply for admission into union with the convention as a Mission, has presented to the  
371 Diocesan Convention a certificate from the Bishop approving such application, and also  
372 a certificate from the Bishop showing that it has ten or more adult Communicants In  
373 Good Standing, it may be admitted into union with the Convention by a majority vote of  
374 the Diocesan Convention. When thus admitted, it shall be entitled to representation in  
375 the Diocesan Convention.

376 **Section D)** The title to real estate given to or purchased for a Mission shall be vested in The  
377 Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and all trust funds, endowments, or  
378 undesignated bequests secured for the benefit of the Mission shall be deposited with the  
379 Treasurer Of The Convention.  
380

### **Canon 3. Of The Organizing Of Parishes**

382 **Section A)** A Mission which seeks to become a Parish shall make written application to the  
383 Annual Convention. This application shall include proof that:

- 384 **i.** the Congregation has at least fifty adult Communicants in Good Standing;
- 385 **ii.** the Congregation has supported itself financially, including a full time priest, for  
386 three consecutive years;
- 387 **iii.** that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and recognizes the authority  
388 over them of the National and Diocesan Constitution and Canons;
- 389 **iv.** evidence that the Congregation will be able to continue to be self-supporting and to  
390 pay the diocesan assessment and the minimum salary and benefits of a full time  
391 Rector

392 v. a certificate from the Ecclesiastical Authority approving the application of the  
393 Congregation.

394 **Section B)** The application required above shall be reviewed by the Resolutions Committee  
395 of Convention and a proper resolution changing the status of the Mission to that of a  
396 Parish shall be prepared.

397 **Section C)** A majority vote of the Convention shall change the status of the Congregation to  
398 Parish.

399

#### 400 **Canon 4. Of the Governance of Missions**

401 **Section A)** The government of a Mission is in the Ecclesiastical Authority, which may  
402 appoint as its representative a priest to be Vicar of the Mission who shall conform to the  
403 instruction of the Ecclesiastical Authority and be responsible to it. The Bishop shall be  
404 the Rector of all Missions, and the Vicar of each Mission shall make such reports as  
405 required by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

#### 406 **Section B) Annual Meetings**

407 i. In every Mission an Annual Meeting shall be held in January or at such other time as  
408 the Ecclesiastical Authority may designate. Public notice of the same shall be given  
409 at all the services on the two preceding weekends.

410 ii. The Annual Meeting shall be presided over by the Vicar, or if the office be vacant, or  
411 if the Vicar be absent, by the Bishop's Warden. When the Annual Meeting is called  
412 to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.

413 iii. Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Mission who are physically present, who are at  
414 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
415 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
416 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
417 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of the  
418 Mission.

419 iv. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Mission<sup>4</sup> at the same time.

420 v. The Mission may nominate to the Ecclesiastical Authority not less than five nor  
421 more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be appointed as the  
422 Bishop's Committee. The length of one term of office for members of the Bishop's  
423 Committee shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,  
424 nominated each year at the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

#### 425 **Section C) Of Special Mission Meetings**

426 i. A Special Mission Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the  
427 Ecclesiastical Authority. Such order shall specify the time and place of such meeting  
428 and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall be considered  
429 other than that specified in the call.

430 ii. Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
431 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
432 meeting and the business to be considered.

433 iii. The Bishop shall preside over such meeting. At the request of the Ecclesiastical  
434 Authority, the Vicar may preside. At the request of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the  
435 Bishop's Warden may preside.

#### 436 **Section D) Of The Bishop's Committee**

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- i.** A Bishop's Committee may be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to assist the Ecclesiastical Authority in governing the Mission. The Bishop's Committee shall manage and be responsible for the property and material affairs of the Mission in accordance with directions from the Ecclesiastical Authority.
  - ii.** In accordance with the canon "Of Membership in Convention" the Bishop's Committee shall annually select delegates to represent the Mission at meetings of the Diocesan Convention.
  - iii.** The Vicar, if there is one, shall preside at all meetings of the Bishop's Committee. In the absence of a Vicar, the Bishop's Warden shall preside.
  - iv.** The Lay Officers of a Mission shall consist of the Bishop's Warden, Property Warden, Clerk, and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the Mission and at least 18 years of age.
  - v.** The Bishop's Warden and Property Warden shall be appointed annually by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.
  - vi.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Mission are met and that the buildings belonging to the Mission are kept in good repair and are adequately insured. Under the Vicar, they shall see that all things needed for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the absence of a Vicar, they shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
  - vii.** A Clerk shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee to serve until a successor is appointed. The Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special Mission Meetings and of all meetings of the Bishop's Committee and shall attest to the same in the book of Minutes of the Bishop's Committee, shall maintain in the said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Mission, shall keep all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these Canons. The Clerk shall turn over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that belong to the Mission.
  - viii.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be appointed annually by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee. Under the authority of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Bishop's Committee, the Treasurer shall be responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds of the Mission and to present a report on the same to each meeting of the Bishop's Committee. Previous to the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the Ecclesiastical Authority and to the Bishop's Committee a full and accurate statement of the financial condition of the Mission. This statement shall also be read at the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Ecclesiastical Authority shall require, but the cost of such bond shall be borne by the Mission. The Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all books, documents, and funds in her possession that belong to the Mission.
  - ix.** Regular meetings of the Bishop's Committee shall be held at least quarterly.
  - x.** Special meetings of the Bishop's Committee may be called at any time at the request of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

482 **Canon 5. Of the Governance of Parishes**

483 **Section A)** This Canon supersedes and takes the place of the By-laws of all Parishes in the  
484 Diocese.

485 **Section B) Of The Annual Parish Meeting**

- 486 **i.** In every Parish, the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held in January at a time and  
487 place designated by the Vestry. Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given at  
488 all the services on the two preceding weekends. With the consent of the  
489 Ecclesiastical Authority, the Annual Meeting may be held during a different month.
- 490 **ii.** The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive  
491 reports from the Vestry, parish officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the  
492 new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.
- 493 **iii.** Any subordinate entity wholly owned by the Parish which has any paid staff shall  
494 have its own bylaws. All such bylaws and any amendments thereto shall first be  
495 submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee for approval prior  
496 to being approved by the Vestry.<sup>5</sup>
- 497 **iv.** The Annual Parish Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge,  
498 or if the office be vacant, or if the Rector or Priest-in-Charge be absent, by the  
499 Senior Warden. When the Annual Parish Meeting is called to order, the  
500 qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 501 **v.** Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Parish who are physically present, who are at  
502 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
503 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
504 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
505 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all Parish Meetings.
- 506 **vi.** A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Parish Meeting shall consist  
507 of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons entitled to  
508 vote, whichever is less.
- 509 **vii.** No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Parish at the same time.<sup>6</sup>
- 510 **viii.** <sup>7</sup>Each Parish shall have a Vestry consisting of not less than five nor more than  
511 twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing elected by the annual Parish Meeting.  
512 The number of persons to serve on the Vestry of the Parish shall be set by resolution  
513 of two successive Annual Parish Meetings. Upon affirmative vote of the second  
514 Annual Parish Meeting the change in number shall take immediate effect.
- 515 **ix.** The qualifications of persons to serve on the Vestry shall be the same as the  
516 qualifications to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting as set out above except that the  
517 person to be elected need not be present at the Meeting.
- 518 **x.** No cleric shall be eligible for election as a member of the Vestry.
- 519 **xi.** In each Parish the Vestry may by resolution designate the nominating Committee,  
520 otherwise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge together with the Senior Warden and the  
521 Junior Warden shall be the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee  
522 shall publish to the parish two weeks prior to the Annual Parish Meeting a ballot  
523 with sufficient qualified nominees to fill the vacancies on the Vestry for the  
524 upcoming year.
- 525 **xii.** Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Parish Meeting.  
526 The nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee. Any question of the

527 nominee's qualification to serve shall be resolved by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge  
528 prior to the election of Vestry members. In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-  
529 Charge, the Senior Warden shall have the responsibility for determining the  
530 qualifications of any person nominated from the floor.

531 **xiii.** Each Annual Parish Meeting shall elect persons to serve on the Vestry replacing  
532 those members whose term in office has ended.

533 **xiv.** The length of one term of office for members of the Vestry shall be three years with  
534 one third of the members, or as near as may be, elected each year at the Annual  
535 Parish Meeting.

536 **Section C) Of Special Parish Meetings**

537 **i.** A Special Parish Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the  
538 Ecclesiastical Authority or of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or by resolution of the  
539 Vestry, or on a petition to the Ecclesiastical Authority if such petition be signed by  
540 not less than one-third of the number entitled to vote at the last Annual Parish  
541 Meeting. All such orders, resolutions, or petitions shall specify the time and place of  
542 such meeting and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall  
543 be considered other than that specified in the call.

544 **ii.** Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
545 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
546 meeting, the business to be considered, and by whose order the meeting is called.

547 **iii.** Such meeting may be presided over by the Bishop. If the Bishop does not preside,  
548 the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall preside. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge,  
549 the Ecclesiastical Authority may request the Senior Warden to preside.

550 **Section D) Of Vestries**

551 **i.** In accordance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of  
552 this Diocese the Vestry shall govern the Parish and shall manage and be responsible  
553 for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare  
554 of the Parish; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is provided with all  
555 things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and  
556 provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Parish  
557 Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next  
558 year.

559 **ii.** As to civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector  
560 or Priest-in-Charge shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the  
561 President of the corporation. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge then the Senior  
562 Warden shall be the President of the Corporation.<sup>8</sup>

563 **iii.** The Vestry, in accordance with the Canon "Of Membership In Convention" shall  
564 elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan  
565 Convention.

566 **iv.** The Lay Officers of a Parish shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden,  
567 Clerk and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the  
568 Parish and at least 18 years of age. No cleric or spouse of a cleric may serve as an  
569 Officer of the Parish.

570 **v.** The Senior Warden shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the  
571 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, from among the members of the Vestry. If there be no

- 572 Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall nominate  
573 a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
- 574 **vi.** It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector or Priest-in-  
575 Charge, to advise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge on all matters pertaining to the  
576 parish upon which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge may wish to consult the Senior  
577 Warden, and to inform the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of all matters which the Senior  
578 Warden feels the Rector needs to know.
- 579 **vii.** If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to  
580 assume all the temporal duties of the Rector including, but not limited to, presiding  
581 at Vestry meetings, signing documents, filing reports, and maintaining the Parish  
582 Register. In addition, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to provide for the  
583 continuation of Divine Worship.
- 584 **viii.** The Junior Warden shall be elected annually from among their number by the  
585 Vestry. It shall be the duty of the Junior Warden to see to the care of the Parish's  
586 physical property making sure that it is being kept clean and in good order and  
587 repair. In the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden is to assume the  
588 duties of the Senior Warden.
- 589 **ix.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Parish are met and that  
590 the buildings belonging to the Parish are kept in good repair and are adequately  
591 insured. Under the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall see that all things needed  
592 for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments  
593 are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the  
594 absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall, with the advice of the  
595 Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
- 596 **x.** A Clerk shall be elected annually by the Vestry from among their number to serve  
597 until a successor has been chosen. The Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes  
598 are taken of all Annual and Special Parish Meetings and of all meetings of the Vestry  
599 and shall attest to the same in the Book of Minutes of the Vestry, shall maintain in  
600 the said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Parish, shall keep  
601 all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these canons. The Clerk  
602 shall turn over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that  
603 belong to the Parish.
- 604 **xi.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be elected annually by the  
605 Vestry from among their number. Under the authority of the Vestry, the Treasurer is  
606 responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds of the Parish.  
607 Previous to the Annual Parish Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the Vestry a  
608 full and accurate statement of the financial condition of the Parish. This statement  
609 shall also be read at the Annual Parish Meeting before the election of officers. At  
610 every meeting of the Vestry the Treasurer shall report the total assets and liabilities  
611 of the Parish and the income and expenses of the general operating funds. As  
612 directed the Treasurer shall report the income and expenses of any other funds. The  
613 Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Vestry shall require, but the cost of such  
614 bond shall be borne by the Parish. The Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all  
615 books, documents, and funds in her possession that belong to the Parish.

- 616            **xii.** The Vestry shall fill any mid-term vacancies in their number or among the officers  
617            of the Parish by majority vote.
- 618            **xiii.** Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held at least quarterly.
- 619            **xiv.** Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called at any time at the request of the  
620            Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or of any two of the members. Notice of such meeting  
621            shall be given to the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the members of  
622            the Vestry. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the  
623            business to be considered. No other business shall come before such meeting except  
624            with the unanimous consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the  
625            members of the Vestry.
- 626            **xv.** At no meeting shall it be competent for the Vestry to transact any business except  
627            there be present the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, or, in the event of the  
628            absence of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or if the office be vacant, one of the  
629            Wardens; and except there be present a quorum consisting of a majority of the  
630            elected members of the Vestry. No action affecting the rights of the Rector or Priest-  
631            in-Charge shall be taken at any meeting at which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge has  
632            not had the opportunity to be present.
- 633            **xvi. Indemnification**
- 634            **a.** No member of the Vestry shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
635            any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
- 636                   • said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office  
637                   prescribed by these canons, and
- 638                   • the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct  
639                   or recklessness
- 640                   • The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability  
641                   of said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes  
642                   pursuant to local, state, or federal law.
- 643            **b.** The Parish shall indemnify any Vestry member and may indemnify any other  
644            employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party  
645            to or who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or  
646            completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or  
647            investigative, including any action by or on behalf of the Parish by reason of the  
648            fact that he is or was a member of Vestry, employee, or agent of the parish,  
649            against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in  
650            settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such  
651            action, suit, or proceeding unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim  
652            for indemnification is determined by the Court to have constituted willful  
653            misconduct or recklessness. With respect to any such action, the Parish may  
654            participate therein at its own expense; and the Parish shall be entitled to assume  
655            the defense thereof, with Counsel selected by the Parish to the reasonable  
656            satisfaction of the party being indemnified. After notice from the Parish to such  
657            person of its election to assume the defense thereof, the Parish shall not be liable  
658            to such person for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such  
659            person in connection with the defense thereof. Such person shall have the right  
660            to employ separate Counsel in such action, but the fees and expenses of such

661 Counsel incurred after a notice from the Parish of its assumption of the defense  
662 thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
663

664 **Canon 6. Official Books, Records, And Reports**

665 **Section A) Books and Records**

666 **i. Members**

- 667 **a.** It shall be the duty of the priest in charge to keep, so far as is practicable, a list of  
668 the families and individuals within the Congregation to be retained for the use of  
669 a successor.
- 670 **b.** In every Congregation, there shall be provided a proper book or books, to be  
671 called The Parish Register, in which the priest in charge of the Congregation, or,  
672 if the Congregation be vacant, one of the Wardens, shall record the names of all  
673 persons baptized, confirmed, married, and deceased within the Congregation,  
674 with such other facts as to dates, places, and persons as are important matters of  
675 record, all of which shall be certified by the signature of the person making the  
676 records together with the names of all persons who are Communicants of the  
677 Church, with memoranda as to their reception, removal, or death.
- 678 **c.** Provision shall be made for the due recording of such other items and statistics  
679 as are required in the Annual Parochial Report prescribed by the National  
680 Canons.

681 **ii. Minutes**

- 682 **a.** Every Congregation shall maintain a permanent Minute Book in which the Clerk  
683 shall record the Minutes of all Annual and Special Parish or Mission Meetings  
684 and the Minutes of all meetings of the Vestry or Bishop's Committee.

685 **iii. Financial**

- 686 **a.** Every Congregation shall maintain paper or computer records, with adequate  
687 backups, of all the financial affairs of the Congregation. Such records shall  
688 include records of all assets and liabilities, income and expenses, and the  
689 location of the evidence showing ownership of all assets.
- 690 **b.** Statements of all investment, banking, and other accounts must be sent to the  
691 official mailing address of the Congregation and not to private homes.

692 **Section B) Preservation**

- 693 **i.** The Parish Register, Minute Book, and financial records of the Congregation shall  
694 be kept in the church, chapel, or other property belonging to the Congregation or  
695 Diocese or at such other secure location determined by the Vestry or Bishop's  
696 Committee.
- 697 **ii.** Consideration is to be given to the preservation of all items in case of natural or man  
698 made disaster when determining a secure location. Adequate backups and copies  
699 should be made and held in a different location.
- 700 **iii.** Prior to taking any books or records away from the location specified in section 1,  
701 the person taking them must notify the priest in charge or Warden of the  
702 Congregation. No one may give notice to themselves.
- 703 **iv.** Books or records may be away from the location specified in Section A for only  
704 short periods of time.



705 v. Items of historical interest should be collected and preserved in similar secure  
706 locations.

707 **Section C) Reports**

708 i. At every visitation of the Bishop, the priest in charge of the Congregation, or the  
709 Warden if there be no priest in charge, shall submit the Parish Register to the Bishop  
710 for inspection.

711 ii. The priest in charge of every Congregation, or if there be no priest in charge, the  
712 Warden and the Treasurer shall present the Annual Parochial Report to the  
713 Ecclesiastical Authority by the date specified.

714 iii. It shall be the duty of the Vestry to see that a report, acceptable to the Ecclesiastical  
715 Authority, of the Annual Audit required by the National Canons is sent to the  
716 Ecclesiastical Authority on or before September first of each year.

717

718 **Canon 7. Of The Reduction And Dissolution Of Congregations**

719 **Section A)** A Congregation may petition the Diocesan Convention for a change in status of  
720 that Congregation. With the assent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan  
721 Convention, by majority vote, may grant the petition and change the status of the  
722 Congregation.

723 **Section B)** Any one of the following items shall constitute cause for which the Diocesan  
724 Convention may change the status of a Congregation, or suspend or dissolve entirely the  
725 union of a Congregation with the Diocesan Convention:

726 i. A Congregation without a Rector, Vicar or Priest-in-Charge for three consecutive  
727 years

728 ii. A Congregation without Officers of the Congregation for three consecutive years

729 iii. A Congregation without divine service for one year.

730 iv. A Congregation whose church or chapel has become disused and closed.

731 v. A Congregation with less than ten adult Communicants for three consecutive years.

732 vi. A Congregation failing for two years to pay its assessment in full.

733 vii. A Congregation failing for two years to file its Annual Parochial Report required by  
734 the National Canons.

735 viii. A Congregation failing for two years to file the report of their Annual Audit as  
736 required by the National and Diocesan Canons.

737 **Section C)** For any of the causes listed in Section B of this Canon the Bishop, after  
738 consulting the Standing Committee, may request Diocesan Convention to change the  
739 status of a Congregation to that of a Mission or to that of an Unorganized Congregation.

740 **Section D)** With the consent of the Standing Committee the Bishop may dissolve an  
741 Unorganized Congregation.

742 **Section E)** When any Congregation shall have been dissolved, its name shall be stricken  
743 from the roll of Congregations, all of its records shall be forwarded to the diocesan  
744 office, and the title to all its property, real and personal, including money, shall forthwith  
745 vest in, and be transferred to, the corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern  
746 Pennsylvania.

747

748

749 **Canon 8. Of Property**

750 **Section A)** Any Congregation or other institution holding or intending to hold title to real  
751 property shall be incorporated. Its form of incorporation shall be in accordance with the  
752 laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in harmony with the Constitution and  
753 Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and the directions of Diocesan  
754 Convention.

755 **Section B)** All property, real and personal, held by or for the benefit of any Congregation of  
756 this Diocese is held in trust for the Diocese and The Episcopal Church. The existence of  
757 this trust, however, shall in no way limit the power and authority of the Congregation  
758 otherwise existing over such property so long as the congregation remains a part of, and  
759 subject to, this Church and its Constitution and Canons.

760 **Section C)** No mortgage, judgment lien, or indebtedness shall be incurred by any  
761 Congregation of this Diocese without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan,  
762 if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. No consent and  
763 approval shall be granted unless there is a reasonable plan for the repayment of all such  
764 obligations.

765 **Section D)** No real property titled to any Congregation or other institution of this Diocese  
766 shall be sold, given away, deliberately destroyed,<sup>9</sup> or otherwise alienated or encumbered  
767 without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, and the  
768 Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council.

769 **Section E)** All Congregations, institutions, and other entities belonging to this Diocese or  
770 any of the Congregations of this Diocese shall be adequately insured with property and  
771 liability insurance that shall conform to a minimum standard for insurance established  
772 by the Diocesan Council and shall provide to the Diocese a certificate of insurance  
773 showing the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania to be an “additional insured” on said  
774 property.

775

776 **Canon 9. Of The Priest In Charge Of A Congregation**

777 **Section A)** The priest in charge of a Congregation shall have, subject only to the rubrics of  
778 the Book of Common Prayer, the National and Diocesan Constitutions and Canons, and  
779 the godly counsel of the Bishop, the exclusive charge of all things pertaining to the  
780 spiritual interests of the Congregation. The priest shall order and direct the services of  
781 worship and music of the church and all that pertains thereto and shall have the spiritual  
782 direction and general oversight of the church school, the altar guild, and of all  
783 organizations connected with the Congregation. The priest may appoint persons to  
784 perform, under Clergy supervision, such duties pertaining to the services and to the care  
785 and decoration of the church as are properly performed by lay members.

786 **Section B)** The priest shall at all times have free access to the church or chapel and to the  
787 church hall, to open and use the same as shall be required for religious services and  
788 offices and for such parochial occasions and objects as the priest shall deem necessary.  
789 The priest may arrange, modify, or improve the furnishings, ornaments, appointments,  
790 and conveniences of the church or chapel as the priest shall deem necessary. The priest  
791 shall have control of the use of the church hall. In the exercise of these rights and duties,  
792 however, the priest shall not disturb the fabric of the building or involve the

793 Congregation or the Diocese in any expenditure of funds not authorized by the  
794 Ecclesiastical Authority or by the Officers of the Parish.

795 **Section C)** All employees of any Congregation, and all other Clergy in any Congregation,  
796 are selected by, work under the supervision of, and may be terminated by the priest in  
797 charge of that Congregation.

798 **Section D)** The priest shall preside, with the right to vote, at all meetings of the Vestry or  
799 Bishop's Committee, and no such meeting shall be held unless the priest has been duly  
800 notified of the same at least twenty-four hours previous thereto.

801 **Section E)** The priest shall at all times have and exercise such other rights and shall perform  
802 such duties as pertain to this office under the laws and usages of The Episcopal Church.

803 **Section F)** The priest shall keep such records and make such reports as may be directed by  
804 National or Diocesan Canons or by order of the Diocesan Convention.

805 **Section G)** The priest in charge of a Congregation shall give to the proper Officers thereof  
806 and to the Ecclesiastical Authority at least one month's notice, in writing, of her intent to  
807 resign such charge.

808 **Section H)** No Cleric shall officiate within the bounds of this Diocese, either by preaching,  
809 reading prayers, administering sacraments, or any other sacred functions, within the  
810 parochial, missionary, or other cure of a priest, unless the Cleric have received express  
811 permission for that purpose from the priest in charge of the cure, or, in the absence of  
812 the priest in charge, from the church Wardens or a majority of the Vestry. In the case of a  
813 vacant Mission, permission shall be obtained from the Ecclesiastical Authority. Nor  
814 shall any Cleric, not Canonically Resident, officiate within the bounds of the Diocese in  
815 a vacant Congregation without the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

816 **Section I)** A Cleric serving a Congregation may enter into a contractual agreement with  
817 another Congregation for pastoral services. Said contract shall cover all services to be  
818 provided by the Cleric to the contracting Congregation and all financial arrangements  
819 between the contracting Congregation and the Cleric. Said contract must be approved by  
820 both Vestries and the Ecclesiastical Authority.

821 **Section J)** The priest in charge of a Mission is known as a Vicar.

822

823 **Canon 10. Of The Election And Call Of A Priest For A Parish**

824 **Section A)** When the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of a Parish retires, resigns, becomes  
825 incapacitated or dies, the Wardens shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority and,  
826 with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, make due provision for services, the cost  
827 thereof to be paid by the Parish.

828 **Section B)** In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens shall take care that  
829 the church building be kept from all secular and other uses not authorized by the  
830 Church. They shall make and certify all entries in the Parish Register required by these  
831 Canons and shall make out and present to the Ecclesiastical Authority the Annual  
832 Parochial Report.

833 **Section C)** The Vestry shall elect a priest to be Rector of the Parish. The said election shall  
834 be subject to the following provisions:

835 **i.** It shall be the prerogative of the Ecclesiastical Authority to submit to the Vestry the  
836 name or names of priests to be considered by them.

- 837           ii. No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established  
838           by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.
- 839           iii. No election shall be had until the name of the priest whom it is proposed to elect has  
840           been made known to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall  
841           have sixty days in which to communicate with the Vestry. No election may be had  
842           until the Vestry meets in special session to consider the comments of the  
843           Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 844           iv. The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens of  
845           the Parish, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the  
846           Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 847   **Section D)** The call of the Rector shall be in writing, signed by the Wardens and Clerk of  
848   the Vestry for the Parish. It must express distinctly any special conditions, together with  
849   the stipulation of salary or support and provision for residence, which shall conform, at a  
850   minimum, with any resolutions regarding minimum salary and benefits. The salary may  
851   be increased or decreased as the parties may from time to time agree, due notice of  
852   which shall be given to the Ecclesiastical Authority by the Clerk of the Vestry.
- 853   **Section E)** Any priest appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to minister to a Parish as  
854   the Priest-in-Charge, but not elected by the Vestry thereof, is sent by the Ecclesiastical  
855   Authority upon such terms as to financial support, and for such a period of time, as may  
856   have been agreed upon by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the priest, and the Vestry of the  
857   Parish. This appointment and agreement shall be in writing.
- 858   **Section F) Assistants**
- 859           i. Prior to the calling of an Assistant, the Rector of the calling Parish shall submit the  
860           name of the priest he proposes to call to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The  
861           Ecclesiastical Authority shall have 60 days to communicate with the Rector and  
862           Vestry about the Cleric they propose to call.
- 863           ii. The Ecclesiastical Authority may accept Letters Dimissory for the Assistant or may  
864           grant the Assistant annual license to function within this Diocese.
- 865           iii. The provisions of Section D of this canon as to a written agreement on salary and  
866           conditions of call apply to the calling of an Assistant.

867

868   **Canon 11. Of The Parish Alms Fund**

869   **Section A)** Every congregation shall have a special monetary fund called the Alms Fund.

870   **Section B)** The purpose of the Alms fund is to care for the poor and needy and to provide  
871   scholarships to church related camps, conferences, and events.

872   **Section C)** The Alms Fund shall be funded by:

873           i. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and

874           ii. Regular contributions:

875               a. by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
876               congregation or

877               b. by the loose offering taken at all services on one weekend a month.

878   **Section D)** Every congregation shall have an Almoner who shall oversee and distribute  
879   these funds for appropriate purposes. .

880           i. If there are clergy attached to the congregation, all of the clergy shall be Almoners.



- 925                   iii. All Deacons in Good Standing in the diocese shall have seat, voice and vote in the  
926                   Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.  
927

928                   **Section B) Lay Members**

- 929                   i. All Lay Members of Diocesan Convention must be Lay Persons In Good Standing  
930                   of some Congregation in union with the Diocesan Convention.  
931                   ii. Every Congregation admitted into union with the Convention of the Diocese is  
932                   entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention two lay delegates who will have seat,  
933                   voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof unless otherwise limited by canon.  
934                   iii. Any Congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual  
935                   Parochial Report of 75 to 149 is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention three  
936                   lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.  
937                   iv. Any congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual  
938                   Parochial Report of 150 or greater is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention  
939                   four lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.  
940                   v. In order that they may be fully represented in Convention, all Congregations may  
941                   select Alternate Delegates in the same manner and with the same qualifications as  
942                   Delegates. Substitution of an Alternate Delegate for a Lay Member of Convention  
943                   must be certified to the Credentials Committee by the priest in charge of that  
944                   Congregation. If there is no priest in charge, then a previously certified Lay Member  
945                   from that Congregation shall certify the substitution.  
946                   vi. All Delegates to Convention shall be certified to the Credentials Committee on the  
947                   form provided by the Committee and no later than March first.  
948                   vii. Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to submit the Annual  
949                   Parochial Report due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Diocesan  
950                   Convention shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention.  
951                   viii. Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to provide evidence,  
952                   adequate to the Ecclesiastical Authority, of the Annual Audit required by National  
953                   Canon due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Convention shall not be  
954                   entitled to vote at that Convention.  
955                   ix. Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to pay the assessment levied  
956                   upon that Congregation shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention unless that  
957                   Congregation has been granted relief by the Diocesan Council and is current on that  
958                   agreement. A Congregation shall be considered to have failed if their assessment is  
959                   not paid current through the end of the month that occurs no less than 15 days prior  
960                   to the start of any Convention.  
961

962                   **Canon 2. Of Officers Of The Convention**

963                   **Section A)** The Officers of Convention shall consist of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and  
964                   Chancellor.

965                   **i. President**

- 966                   a. The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, will be President of and preside at meetings  
967                   of the Diocesan Convention.  
968                   b. If there is no Bishop Diocesan then the person to preside at the Convention is  
969                   chosen in accordance with the provisions in the Diocesan Constitution.

**ii. Secretary**

- a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing to be Secretary of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office, the Secretary is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- b. The Secretary shall be responsible to take minutes and to produce a journal of the proceedings of every Diocesan Convention. This journal shall be available to the Congregations of the Diocese not more than 120 days after the adjournment of the Convention.
- c. The Secretary shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Secretary of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan Constitution and these Canons.
- d. The Secretary shall deliver to his successor all papers and materials in his possession which belong to the Diocese.

**iii. Treasurer**

- a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall elect either a Lay Person in Good Standing or a Cleric in Good Standing to be Treasurer of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office, the Treasurer is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- b. The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the direction of the Diocesan Council, for the collection, investment, and distribution of all money and securities due to, held by, or payable by the Diocese and for the proper accounting thereof. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and income and expense reports of all funds under the control of the Diocese or its officers to the Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and the income and expenses of the general operating funds to every meeting of the Diocesan Council and, as directed by Diocesan Council, the income and expenses of all other funds under the control of the Diocese or its officers.
- c. The Treasurer shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Treasurer of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan Constitution and these Canons. The Treasurer and any assistants to the Treasurer may be bonded with the expense being paid by the Diocese.
- d. The Treasurer shall deliver to her successor all papers and materials in the her possession which belong to the Diocese.

**iv. Chancellor**

- a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing who is licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be Chancellor of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office, the Chancellor is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- b. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan Council may elect one or more Vice Chancellors, qualified as above, as may from time to time appear necessary.

- 1014 c. The Chancellors shall function as the solicitor for and the legal advisor to, in the  
1015 following order: the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Diocesan  
1016 Council, and the Convention of the Diocese.
- 1017 d. The Chancellors shall be responsible to see that the Diocese follows and obeys  
1018 the National Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and these  
1019 Canons. The Chancellor shall interpret the meaning and application of these  
1020 Constitutions and Canons. His rulings may be appealed to the Diocesan  
1021 Convention or to the National Church as appropriate.
- 1022 e. The Chancellors shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Chancellor  
1023 of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1024 Constitution and these Canons.
- 1025 f. The Chancellors shall deliver to their successors all papers and materials in their  
1026 possession which belong to the Diocese.  
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**Canon 3. Of Committees of Convention**

**Section A) Credentials**

- 1030 i. A Credentials Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1031 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- 1032 ii. The Credentials Committee shall consist of one Clergy Member and one Lay  
1033 Member of Convention.<sup>11</sup>
- 1034 iii. The Credentials Committee shall determine the right of persons to seat, voice, and  
1035 vote at Convention and shall recommend to Convention persons to whom the  
1036 Convention should grant seat and voice.
- 1037 iv. Any person denied a seat, voice or vote by the Credentials Committee may appeal  
1038 such denial to the Convention which shall make the final determination by a  
1039 majority vote.

**Section B) Dispatch of Business**

- 1041 i. A Dispatch of Business Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical  
1042 Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- 1043 ii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall consist of one or more Members of  
1044 Convention.
- 1045 iii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of Convention in  
1046 seeing that all the business of Convention is done in an efficient and expeditious  
1047 manner. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of  
1048 Convention in developing an agenda and rules of order for the Convention.

**Section C) Resolutions**

- 1050 i. A Resolution Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1051 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- 1052 ii. The Resolutions Committee shall consist of two Clergy and two Lay Members.<sup>12</sup>
- 1053 iii. The Resolutions Committee shall give due consideration to all resolutions submitted  
1054 to it and shall present all such resolutions to the Diocesan Convention.
- 1055 iv. The Resolutions Committee shall develop any resolutions of courtesy to be  
1056 considered by the Convention.
- 1057 v. The Resolutions Committee shall recommend to Convention a place and date to hold  
1058 the next Annual Diocesan Convention.<sup>13</sup>



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**Section D) Nominations**

- i.** A Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- ii.** The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.
- iii.** The Nominations Committee shall be responsible to present a ballot with sufficient nominees for each office to be filled by Convention.<sup>14</sup>

**Section E) Judges of Election**

- i.** Judges of Election shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- ii.** Three Members of Convention shall be elected to be the Judges of Election.
- iii.** The Judges of Election shall oversee the distribution and counting of ballots for each election as instructed by the President of the Convention.

**Canon 4. Of Nominations**

**Section A)** Any Cleric or Lay Person may, and all are encouraged to, nominate qualified persons to fill the various offices to be chosen at each annual Convention.

**Section B)** The Nominations Committee of Convention shall give notice of the need for such nominations and shall set a final date for receiving of the same which shall be not less than thirty days prior to Convention.<sup>15</sup>

**Section C)** Any person submitting a nomination shall do so on such form provided and give such information as the Nominations Committee shall determine. Such information shall include at least the name and contact information for each nominee; their consent to serve if elected; a current digital photograph; and other relevant information.

**Section D)** A list of all nominees shall be published and distributed to all Delegates at least two weeks prior to the meeting of Convention.

**Section E)** Additional nominations may be made from the floor of Convention. The nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee and may present a short statement.

**Canon 5. Of Resolutions**

**Section A)** Resolutions properly considered by the Convention are those:

- i.** Submitted by a Cleric in Good Standing.
- ii.** Submitted by a Lay Person in Good Standing.
- iii.** Submitted by some Congregation of this Diocese.
- iv.** Submitted by the Diocesan Council.
- v.** Submitted by some other committee mentioned in these Canons.

**Section B)** All resolutions must bear the name of the individual or organization submitting the resolution.

**Section C)** All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary of Convention at least forty-five days prior to any Convention. Resolutions submitted less than forty-five days in advance may be considered on a two-thirds vote of the Convention.<sup>16</sup>

**Section D)** All resolutions submitted which would amend the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese are to be considered by the Constitution and Canons Committee. The Constitution and Canons Committee will review the resolution and

- i.** Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter

- 1104           ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
- 1105           a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
- 1106           b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
- 1107           c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the
- 1108           resolution

1109       **Section E)** Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by persons  
1110       named in Section A i, ii, or iii of this Canon shall be considered by the Resolutions  
1111       Committee of Convention. The Resolutions Committee will review the resolution and

- 1112       i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
- 1113       ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
- 1114           a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
- 1115           b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
- 1116           c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the
- 1117           resolution

1118       **Section F)** Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by Diocesan  
1119       Council or other committees will be reported to Convention by the Diocesan Council or  
1120       the committee and are assumed to have a recommendation that Convention adopt the  
1121       resolution.

#### 1122 1123       **Title IV. Of Constitutional Committees**

##### 1124 1125       **Canon 1. Of the Standing Committee**

1126       **Section A)** Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one Lay  
1127       Person in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Standing Committee. The  
1128       election shall be done on a vote by orders.

1129       **Section B)** The Standing Committee shall fulfill all duties prescribed for Standing  
1130       Committees in the National Constitution and Canons and in the Constitution of this  
1131       Diocese and in these Canons.

1132       **Section C)** The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a President of the  
1133       Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a  
1134       Secretary.<sup>17</sup>

1135       **Section D)** The Standing Committee shall meet upon the call of the Bishop and from time to  
1136       time in conformity with their own rules. They shall keep a record of their proceedings.

1137       **Section E)** When a duty is to be performed, or a power exercised, by the Standing  
1138       Committee a majority of the members shall be a quorum and a majority of the quorum  
1139       so convened shall be competent to act, unless the contrary is expressly required by the  
1140       National Constitution or Canons or the Constitution of this Diocese or these Canons.

1141       **Section F)**<sup>18</sup> Members of the Standing Committee may be elected to and serve on the  
1142       Disciplinary Board.<sup>19</sup>

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1145 **Canon 2. Of the Diocesan Council**

1146 **Section A) Members**

- 1147 **i.** The Bishop Diocesan, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, and  
1148 the Chancellor of Convention shall have seat, voice, and vote on the Diocesan  
1149 Council.
- 1150 **ii.** The Lay Members of each annual Convention shall elect one Lay Person in Good  
1151 Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat, voice, and  
1152 vote.
- 1153 **iii.** The Priests in Good Standing at each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in  
1154 Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat,  
1155 voice, and vote.
- 1156 **iv.** The Deacons in Good Standing at every fourth annual Convention shall elect a  
1157 Deacon in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with  
1158 seat and voice but no vote.

1159 **Section B) Officers**

- 1160 **i.** The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, shall preside at, and be the President of, the  
1161 Diocesan Council. The Secretary of Convention shall be the Secretary of the  
1162 Diocesan Council. The Treasurer of Convention shall be the Treasurer of the  
1163 Diocesan Council. The Chancellor of the Convention shall be the Chancellor of the  
1164 Diocesan Council.
- 1165 **ii.** If there is no Bishop Diocesan, the Diocesan Council shall elect annually one of the  
1166 members of Council to be the President of the Diocesan Council.
- 1167 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall elect each year one of the members of the Council to  
1168 serve a one year term as Vice President of the Council.

1169 **Section C) Work of the Diocesan Council**

- 1170 **i.** The Diocesan Council shall oversee the program and priorities of the Diocese and  
1171 make a report thereon to the annual Convention of the Diocese.
- 1172 **ii.** The Diocesan Council shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation known  
1173 as The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.
- 1174 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention a budget  
1175 and schedule of assessments for the ensuing year.
- 1176 **iv.** The Diocesan Council may provide a means of relief to Congregations that are  
1177 having difficulty paying their assessment.
- 1178 **v.** The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention  
1179 minimum stipends and allowances for Clergy serving in the Diocese.

1180 **Section D) Committees**

- 1181 **i.** Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary to carry out  
1182 its work.
- 1183 **ii.** All committees shall have a definite term of existence and a stated purpose  
1184 determined by the council.
- 1185 **iii.** Committees shall consist of at least one member of Diocesan Council and such other  
1186 persons as Council may decide. These additional persons shall have seat, voice and  
1187 vote only as to the business of the committee. The member of Council on each  
1188 committee shall serve as liaison between the committee and Council.

- 1189           iv. The member of Council shall call the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter  
1190           each committee may effect its own organization provided that a quorum for the  
1191           transaction of business shall consist of a majority of all members of the committee.  
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**Section E) Meetings**

- 1193           i. The Diocesan Council shall meet on a regular basis and at least once per calendar  
1194           quarter.  
1195           ii. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or Vice President of  
1196           the Council.  
1197           iii. A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for the  
1198           transaction of business.  
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**Section F) Indemnification**

- 1200           i. No member of Diocesan Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
1201           any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:  
1202           a. said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed  
1203           by these canons, and  
1204           b. the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, wilful misconduct or  
1205           recklessness.  
1206           c. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of  
1207           said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes pursuant  
1208           to local, state, or federal law.  
1209           ii. The Diocese shall indemnify any Council member and may indemnify any other  
1210           employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or  
1211           who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed  
1212           action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative,  
1213           including any action by or on behalf of the Diocese by reason of the fact that she is  
1214           or was a member of Council, employee, or agent of the Diocese, against expenses,  
1215           including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually  
1216           and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding  
1217           unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is  
1218           determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With  
1219           respect to any such action, the Diocese may participate therein at its own expense;  
1220           and the Diocese shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel  
1221           selected by the Diocese to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being  
1222           indemnified. After notice from the Diocese to such person of its election to assume  
1223           the defense thereof, the Diocese shall not be liable to such person for any legal or  
1224           other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense  
1225           thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action,  
1226           but the fees and expenses of such Counsel incurred after a notice from the Diocese  
1227           of its assumption of the defense thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
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**Canon 3. Of the Constitution and Canons Committee**

**Section A)** Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one Lay Person in good standing to serve terms of three years on the Constitution and Canons Committee.

**Section B)** The Bishop Diocesan and a Chancellor of the Diocese shall be members ex-officio of the Constitution and Canons Committee but shall not be counted in the determination of a quorum.

**Section C)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall effect its own organization.

**Section D)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review and report to Convention on all proposals to amend the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese.

**Section E)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review these Canons during the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and propose such amendments to these Canons as they deem necessary or advisable.

**Canon 4. Of the Commission On Ministry**

**Section A)** This diocese shall share a Commission On Ministry with the Diocese of Western New York.<sup>20</sup>

- i.** The shared Commission on Ministry is to have a total of nine members, two Clergy in Good Standing and two Lay Persons in Good Standing from each Diocese; and an Archdeacon of one of the Dioceses, provided the Archdeacon is in Deacon's Orders.
- ii.** Each person on the Commission On Ministry shall serve a four year term.
- iii.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each annual Convention shall elect one Cleric in Good Standing or one Lay Person in Good Standing as the case requires, to replace the person whose term is expiring.
- iv.** At the end of the Archdeacon's term serving on the Commission, the Archdeacon from the other Diocese will serve a term.

**Section B)** The chair of the Commission shall be appointed from among its members by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

**Section C)** The Commission shall effect its own organization.

**Section D)** The Commission shall faithfully fulfill all duties laid upon such Commissions by the Nation Constitution and Canons and by the Constitution of this Diocese and by these Canons.

**Section E)** Additional persons may be co-opted by the Commission from time to time because of their expertise or special knowledge. Any such co-opted members are given seat and voice at meetings of the Commission but do not have a vote on Commission business. Co-opted members will not be counted towards a quorum.

**Canon 5. Of the Examining Chaplains**

**Section A)** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each Annual Convention shall elect three Clergy in Good Standing to be Examining Chaplains. The Examining Chaplains shall assist the Bishop in determining whether persons seeking ordination have knowledge, in accordance with the National Canons, sufficient for the Order they seek.

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**Canon 6. Of the Ecclesiastical Court<sup>21 22</sup>**

**Section A) General**

- i.** By virtue of Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and accountability to one another. The Church in this Diocese shall support its members in their life in Christ and work to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected. This Canon applies to the clergy who have by their vows at ordination accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine, discipline, worship and obedience.
- a.** In accordance with the National Canons the Ecclesiastical Court in this diocese shall be known as the Disciplinary Board.
- b.** All proceedings under this canon shall be conducted in accordance with Title IV of the National Canons.

**Section B) Membership**

- i.** The Disciplinary Board shall consist of five Clergy in Good Standing and four Adult Confirmed Lay Persons in Good Standing.<sup>23</sup>
- ii.** By May first of each year the Ecclesiastical authority shall nominate and the Standing Committee shall elect three persons to serve on the Disciplinary Board for a term of three years. Persons elected shall be from each order as required to maintain the required make up of the Disciplinary Board.
- iii.** The term of office of each member of the Disciplinary Board shall commence on July first of the year they are elected.

**Section C) Vacancies**

- i.** Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Disciplinary Board shall be filled by majority vote of the Standing Committee upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- ii.** Persons elected to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they replace and meet the same requirements.
- iii.** Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy unless sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.
- iv.** Persons elected to fill vacancies, other than pursuant to a challenge as provided below, shall serve out the unexpired term of the person they replace.
- v.** With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement member of the Board shall serve only for the proceedings for which the elected Board member is not serving as a result of the challenge.

**Section D) Preserving Impartiality**

- i.** In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or Hearing Panel of the Board shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or undue bias, that member shall immediately notify the President of the Board and request a replacement member of the Panel.
- ii.** 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 subjects of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether

1317 the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that  
1318 proceeding.

1319 **Section E) President:** By June 30 of each year the Standing Committee shall nominate and  
1320 the Disciplinary Board for the ensuing year shall elect a President of the Board to serve  
1321 for the year.

1322 **Section F) Intake Officer(s):** An Intake Officer shall be appointed by the Bishop.  
1323 Additional Intake Officers, as needed, may be appointed from time to time in the same  
1324 manner. The Bishop shall publish the name(s) and contact information of the Intake  
1325 Officer(s) throughout the diocese.

1326 **Section G) Investigator:** The Bishop may appoint an Investigator in consultation with the  
1327 Reference Panel and the Church Attorney.. The Investigator need not be a member of the  
1328 Episcopal Church.

1329 **Section H) Church Attorney:** The Bishop, with the consent of <sup>24</sup> the Standing Committee,  
1330 shall appoint each year an attorney to serve as Church Attorney. The person so appointed  
1331 must be a duly licensed attorney but need not reside within the diocese.

1332 **Section I) Advisors:**

1333 i. In each proceeding under this Canon, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor for the  
1334 Complainant and an Advisor for the Respondent. The Complainant and the  
1335 Respondent have the right to reject these Advisors and to name other persons as  
1336 Advisors. Persons serving as Advisors shall hold no other appointed or elected  
1337 position provided for under this Canon, and shall not include Chancellors or vice  
1338 chancellors of this or any other diocese or any person likely to be called as a witness  
1339 in the proceeding.

1340 ii. **WARNING TO RESPONDENTS:** no Advisor, Panel, or other officer named in this  
1341 canon has yet been granted confidentiality by the civil authorities. Anything told to  
1342 such a person or panel may be used against you in a civil court. Only your licensed  
1343 attorney and your confessor have such immunity.

1344 **Section J) Clerk:** The Board shall appoint a Clerk to assist the Board with records  
1345 management and administrative support. The Clerk may, but need not, be a member of  
1346 the Board.

1347 **Section K) Removal:** The Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, may  
1348 remove from office for cause any person appointed or serving under this canon.

1349 i. **Costs:** The reasonable costs and expenses of the Board, Intake Officer(s),  
1350 Investigator, Church Attorney, Advisors appointed by the Bishop, Clerk and those  
1351 providing pastoral care as directed by the Bishop shall be the obligation of the  
1352 Diocese.

1353 **Section L) Records of Proceedings**

1354 i. Records of active proceedings before the Board, including the period of any pending  
1355 appeal, shall be preserved and maintained in the custody of the Diocesan Office.

1356 ii. Records of all proceedings under this Canon shall be permanently preserved in the  
1357 archives of the diocese and in the Archives of the Episcopal Church as prescribed in  
1358 Title IV of the National Canons.

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1360 **Title V. Miscellaneous**

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**Canon 1. Of Special Offerings**

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**Section A) Bishops' Alms Fund**

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i. The Diocese shall have a special monetary fund called the Bishops' Alms Fund.

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ii. The purpose of the Bishops' Alms Fund is to care for the poor and needy and to provide scholarships to seminaries, church related camps, conferences, and events.

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iii. The Bishops' Alms Fund shall be funded by:

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a. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and

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b. Regular contributions:

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- by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the diocese or

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- by the loose offering taken at all services when a Bishop visits a Congregation.

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iv. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall be the Almoner who shall oversee and distribute these funds for appropriate purposes.

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v. The Bishops' Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.

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vi. Records of the income and expenses of the Bishops' Alms Fund are confidential but not secret.

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vii. Reports on the usage of the Bishops' Alms Fund shall be made to the Diocesan Council at least quarterly and annually to the Diocesan Convention. These reports shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current balance of the Bishops' Alms Fund.

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viii. Like all funds, the Bishops' Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included in the Annual Audit required by these canons.

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**Canon 2. Of the Historiographer**

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**Section A)** The Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Historiographer at each annual Convention who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.

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**Section B)** The Historiographer shall have charge of all documents belonging to the Diocese which relate to its history or that of any Congregation of the Diocese, of the Journals of all Conventions of this Diocese, and of all books and papers committed to him by the Convention or Ecclesiastical Authority.

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**Section C)** In the event of the dissolution of a Congregation of this Diocese, the books, records, and historical information of that Congregation shall be delivered into the custody of the Historiographer.

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**Section D)** All books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, held by the Historiographer shall be kept in good condition and in such place as designated by the Diocesan Council.

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**Section E)** The Historiographer shall issue proper certificates based upon the records in his charge

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**Section F)** Subject to the exclusions provided in the Canons, all books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, shall be open to the inspection of the

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1404 Bishop Diocesan, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and  
1405 any committee of the Convention.  
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1407 **Canon 3. Of the Cathedral**

1408 **Section A)** The Parish church of St. Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania is hereby designated as the  
1409 Cathedral of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

1410 **Section B)** Governance of the Cathedral<sup>25</sup>

- 1411 **i.** The Cathedral shall be governed by a Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws not in  
1412 conflict with the National Constitution and Canons, the Constitution of this Diocese  
1413 or these Canons.
- 1414 **ii.** Amendments may be made to the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws in the  
1415 following manner:
- 1416 **a.** Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and the  
1417 Standing Committee for their advice and consent.
- 1418 **b.** Consent of both the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Standing Committee having  
1419 been received, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to a meeting of the  
1420 Cathedral Congregation. A majority of two thirds of those present shall be  
1421 required to adopt the amendment.

1422 **Section C)** The Cathedral Congregation shall be entitled to representation in the Convention  
1423 of this Diocese in accordance with the Canon on Membership in Convention.  
1424

1425 **Canon 4. Of The Election Of A Bishop**

1426 **Section A)** On the call by the Bishop Diocesan for the election of a successor, or of a  
1427 Bishop Co-Adjutor or of a Bishop Suffragan or upon the death, resignation, or  
1428 permanent disability of the Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee shall appoint nine  
1429 persons to serve as a Search Committee and the Diocesan Council shall appoint nine  
1430 persons to serve as a Transition Committee. The persons appointed to these committees  
1431 may be any Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing.

1432 **Section B)** The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate  
1433 to the electing Convention three to five persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.

- 1434 **i.** There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.
- 1435 **ii.** Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three  
1436 Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written  
1437 petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.
- 1438 **iii.** All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the  
1439 National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese and by these  
1440 Canons.

1441 **Section C)** The Transition Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary for the consecration,  
1442 welcome, and transition to a new Bishop.  
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1445 **Canon 5. Of The Election Of Deputies To The General Convention**

1446 **Section A)** The annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated  
1447 meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay  
1448 Members voting separately, four Priests in Good Standing and four Confirmed Adult  
1449 Lay Persons in Good Standing to be Deputies to the General Convention.

1450 **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in Section A, additional ballots shall  
1451 be taken, with the Clergy and Lay members voting separately, to elect four Priests and  
1452 four Lay Persons, qualified as above, from among the remaining nominees to be  
1453 Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.

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1455 **Canon 6. Of The Election Of Deputies To The Provincial Synod**

1456 **Section A)** The Annual Convention following each triennial meeting of The General  
1457 Convention of The Episcopal Church shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay Members voting  
1458 separately, one Priest in Good Standing and two Confirmed Adult Lay Persons in Good  
1459 Standing to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

1460 **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in section a, an additional ballot  
1461 shall be taken, with the Clergy and Lay Members voting together, to elect and rank those  
1462 remaining nominees to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

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- 1 Convention 2013 adopted Canon 4 and Canon 5 in order to establish a procedure to remove persons who move, die, resign, or fail to fulfill their obligations under Article III,D,iv,g. Prior to this, there were no such provisions in these Constitution and Canons.
- 2 Convention 2013 adopted Canon 4 and Canon 5 in order to establish a procedure to remove persons who move, die, resign, or fail to fulfill their obligations under Article III,D,iv,g. Prior to this, there were no such provisions in these Constitution and Canons.
- 3 Convention 2015 inserted the words “which has been admitted into union with the Convention of the Diocese and” in order to make clear that a Parish has to be admitted in union with the Convention just like a Mission and to conform the language to the previous section about Missions.
- 4 Convention 2015 changed the word “Congregation” to “Mission.” The Canons of the Diocese define a congregation separately from the terms Mission and Parish, thus implying that no matter what status a group of people are, they can refer to themselves as a Congregation so long as they meet the expectations of Canon II.1.A. Canon II.1.C allows for multiple congregations to form one mission and Canon II.5.B.vii allows for multiple congregations to form one parish. However, the canon referring to eligibility of a lay person to vote or hold office these merged congregations mistakenly use the term ‘congregation’ and not ‘mission’ or ‘parish’ when restricted lay people to voting in only one mission or parish. This would make it canonically impossible for multiple congregations to form a leadership body for one shared mission or parish. This resolution corrects this oversight in the canons.
- 5 Convention 2013 added this section to deal with congregations that have quasi independent entities such as schools or day care
- 6 Convention 2015 changed the word “Congregation” to “Parish.” See note iv above for explanation.
- 7 Convention 2010 adopted Section vii and following in order to clarify the previous version of the canon and to provide for a nominating process.
- 8 Convention 2009 added “Priest-in-Charge” to make clear that a Priest-in-Charge is the president of the Corporation and presiding officer.
- 9 “Deliberately destroyed” was added by Convention 2010
- 10 Meadville changed from SW Deanery to NW by Convention 2012
- 11 Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Credentials Committee from three clergy and three lay members to one from each order.
- 12 Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Resolutions Committee from three from three clergy and three lay members to two from each order.
- 13 Convention 2010 did away with a separate Site of the Next Convention Committee and gave this responsibility to the Resolutions Committee.
- 14 Convention 2009 changed “slate of” to “ballot with sufficient” to clarify that the committee's task is to present sufficient nominees for each office and not to recommend particular persons.
- 15 Convention 2009 changed the deadline for nominations from no less than 60 days before convention to not less than 30 before the meeting of convention
- 16 Convention 2009 changed the deadline for resolutions from 60 days to 45 before the meeting of convention.
- 17 Convention 2014 deleted Section D which had provided for the Standing Committee to elect a Church Attorney. This was in conflict with the Canon concerning the Disciplinary Board which provided a different procedure.
- 18 Convention 2013 removed Section G which prohibited members of the Standing Committee from serving simultaneously on Diocesan Council, The Disciplinary Board and the Commission on Ministry. Since the Standing Committee is no longer part of the disciplinary process there is no longer a conflict in people serving on both bodies. As for all three bodies the voters can decide if

people should serve on more than one at a time.

19 Convention 2013 added this new section G permitting members of the Standing Committee to serve on the Disciplinary Board. Canons of the Episcopal Church require explicit permission for members of the Standing Committee to so serve.

20 Convention 2019 adopted changes to the membership of the Commission On Ministry in order to effectuate the Agreement with the Diocese of Western New York to share a Commission On Ministry. The previous Section A on Membership read as follows: Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each annual Convention shall elect nine persons to serve one year terms on the Commission On Ministry. These persons may be any Cleric in Good Standing or Lay Person in Good Standing.

21 Convention 2010 adopted an entirely new Canon 6 “Of The Ecclesiastical Court” to bring us into compliance with the National Church disciplinary canons which take effect July 1, 2011. The old Canon 6 remains in effect through June 30, 2011 and follows here:

**Canon 6. Of The Ecclesiastical Court**

**Section A)** The Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall consist of five Clergy in Good Standing and four Lay Persons in Good Standing.

**Section B)** Each annual Convention shall elect three persons to serve on the Ecclesiastical Trial Court for a term of three years. Persons elected shall be from each order as required to maintain the required make up of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court.

**Section C)** Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall be filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the Court. Persons elected to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they replace. Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy unless sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.

**Section D)** Within two months following each annual Diocesan Convention the members of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall elect from among themselves by majority vote one person to serve as Presiding Judge for a one year term.

**Section E)** Charges for which a Cleric may be made to stand trial are contained in the National Canons.

**Section F)** The mode and manner of making charges, securing presentments, and of conducting trials shall be as established in the national Canons.

**Section G)** The powers, duties and procedures of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court and the definition of terms used herein shall be governed by Title IV of the National Canons.

**Section H)** The Standing Committee shall serve as the Review Committee.

22 In the Fall of 2019 the Standing Committee signed an agreement with the Diocese of Western New York so that the two dioceses might share disciplinary resources. The agreement provides that when forming Conference Panels and Hearing Panels the Presidents of the respective Disciplinary Boards can use members from either or both Boards to form such Panels.

23 Convention 2013 removed words prohibiting members of the Standing Committee from serving on the Disciplinary Board.

24 Convention 2014 changed the wording of this Canon by deleting “in consultation with” and adding “with the consent of.” This was to make clear that the Standing Committee would have to vote on the appointment.

25 Section B was changed by Convention in 2009 to add subsection ii so as to provide a way for the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws to be amended.