

**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. Meetings of the Convention may take place as in-person, virtual, or hybrid meetings. Virtual meetings are those where arrangements have been made in advance to allow participants to attend the meeting by means of a conference telephone, internet, or similar communication equipment by which all persons participating in a meeting can effectively communicate with each other without needing to be physically present at the same location. Those attending a meeting by such means shall be deemed to be attending virtually. Hybrid meetings include some participants attending the meeting in person and others attending virtually. Any arrangements for holding a virtual or a hybrid meeting will be included in the meeting notice, including details by which a person can attend the meeting virtually. Persons shall be deemed to be present for determination of a quorum by attending either in person or virtually where arrangements for such attendance have been made. Such persons shall be entitled to vote, if qualified to do so, and have arrangements made for voting by secret ballot, where appropriate, and such persons shall be recorded as present in the minutes of the meeting without distinction as to their virtual or in-person attendance.<sup>1</sup>

**2. 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

- 46 fixing the time and place of the regular annual convention shall constitute adequate  
47 notice of such meeting.  
48 b) For good and sufficient cause the time or place of meeting of the annual convention  
49 may be changed by the ecclesiastical authority. Notice of such a change must be  
50 given by regular mail to all canonically resident clergy and to all congregations in  
51 union with the convention at least thirty days prior to the convention.

52 **3. Special conventions**

- 53 a) Special conventions may be held upon the call of the ecclesiastical authority.  
54 b) Special conventions shall be called by the ecclesiastical authority upon written  
55 petition stating the reason for such convention signed by at least five clergy  
56 canonically resident in the diocese and ten adult communicants in good standing of  
57 any two or more congregations in the diocese.  
58 c) The special convention shall be held at a time and place fixed by the ecclesiastical  
59 authority.  
60 d) Notice of such special convention shall be given by regular mail to all the clergy  
61 canonically resident in the diocese and to all the congregations in union with the  
62 convention at least thirty days prior to the date of such special convention.  
63 e) The notice shall include the reason for calling such special convention and the  
64 business to be done by such special convention.  
65 f) No business, other than that stated in the notice, shall be transacted at such special  
66 convention except by three fourths majority vote of the members of the convention.

67 **Section B. Membership in convention**

- 68 1. The Convention shall be composed of the following members with voice and vote: The  
69 officers of the Convention, at least one lay delegate from each of the congregations in  
70 union with the Convention, and all other clergy who have been canonically resident in  
71 the diocese for at least six months preceding the convention.  
72 2. The mode of determining the number of lay delegates, of electing lay delegates, and of  
73 admitting congregations into union with the Convention shall be prescribed  
74 by Canon.  
75 3. The mode of identifying and determining those other clergy (deacons, presbyters, and  
76 other bishops) entitled to voice and vote in convention shall be prescribed by Canon.  
77 4. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at  
78 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to submit the  
79 Annual Parochial Report.  
80 5. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at  
81 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to provide  
82 evidence, adequate to the ecclesiastical authority, of the annual audit required by canon.  
83 6. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at  
84 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to pay  
85 assessments levied upon such congregation by the authority of convention.  
86 7. No person under ecclesiastical discipline, whether clergy or lay, shall be entitled to  
87 membership.  
88 8. The Convention shall be the sole judge of the election and qualification of its members.

89 **Section C. Officers of convention**

- 90 **1. President of Convention**

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

98 **2. Secretary of Convention**

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

102 **3. Treasurer of Convention**

- 103 a) The annual convention shall elect a Treasurer of Convention.  
104 b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be  
105 prescribed by canon.

106 **4. Chancellor of Convention**

- 107 a) The annual convention shall elect a Chancellor of Convention.  
108 b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be  
109 prescribed by canon.

110 **Section D. Conduct of Convention**

- 111 **1. Quorum:** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of one third of the  
112 clergy entitled to vote and at least one lay delegate from each of one third of the  
113 congregations in union with convention. In the absence of a quorum a majority of those  
114 present may adjourn the convention from time to time.  
115 **2. Voting.** The members shall deliberate in one body and each member with voting  
116 privileges shall have one vote. A majority of votes cast shall be required to adopt any  
117 measure, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.  
118 **3. Voting by orders:** On the call of any five members, not all of whom may represent the  
119 same congregation, or when called for in the Constitution or Canons, a vote by orders  
120 shall be taken. In a vote by orders the clergy delegates and lay delegates vote separately  
121 and a concurrent majority of votes cast in both orders shall be required to adopt any  
122 measure, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.  
123 **4. Elections:**  
124 a) All elections to any office under this Constitution or the Canons of this diocese shall  
125 be by written ballot.  
126 b) All delegates must vote for the number of persons to be elected to the various  
127 offices.  
128 c) In order to be elected a person must receive a majority of votes cast unless otherwise  
129 specified in this Constitution or in the Canons. When the Constitution or Canons call  
130 for an election by the clergy and lay delegates voting separately then, in order to be  
131 elected, a person must receive a concurrent majority of votes cast in each order,  
132 unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.  
133 d) If in any election only one person should be nominated for that office, then the  
134 election may be had by acclamation and no written balloting is required.

- 135 e) If any office remains unfilled after three ballots the Convention may decide to elect  
136 persons to the remaining offices by a plurality of votes cast rather than by requiring  
137 a majority of votes cast or may decide to drop from the ballot the person with the  
138 lowest number of votes. Any motion to make such alteration in the election process  
139 shall require a majority of three fourths.
- 140 f) Any person elected to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania shall  
141 assume office at the close of the convention at which they are elected.
- 142 g) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern  
143 Pennsylvania or in any of its congregations shall continue in office until their  
144 successor is chosen and shall at all times well and faithfully discharge the duties of  
145 their office to the best of their ability.
- 146 h) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern  
147 Pennsylvania, or in any of its congregations or other organizations, when they leave  
148 office shall deliver to their successor all records and documents appertaining to that  
149 office in whatever form they may exist.

150 **5. Other matters**

- 151 a) All actions of convention shall take effect upon the adjournment of that convention  
152 unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and Canons or in the act itself.
- 153 b) The convention may make provision in the Canons of the diocese for the adoption  
154 and amendment of rules of order to govern and organize the convention for the  
155 conduct of its business.

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157 **Article IV. The Standing Committee**

- 158 Section A. The annual convention shall elect persons to serve upon the Standing Committee  
159 of the diocese.
- 160 Section B. The Standing Committee shall consist of an equal number of clergy and lay  
161 members.
- 162 Section C. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties,  
163 and terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.
- 164 Section D. The Standing Committee shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
165 vacancies that may occur in its own body.

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167 **Article V. Diocesan Council**

- 168 Section A. The Diocesan Council shall consist of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop  
169 Coadjutor, if any, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, the Chancellor  
170 of Convention and such other persons, elected by the annual convention, as may be  
171 prescribed by canon.
- 172 Section B. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties,  
173 and terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.
- 174 Section C. The Diocesan Council shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
175 vacancies that may occur in its own body or among the officers of council, other than the  
176 bishop, that were elected by the convention.
- 177 Section D. The Diocesan Council shall be the board of directors of the Pennsylvania non-  
178 profit corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and shall have all

179 the legal powers incident thereto and shall have the power to authorize any person to act on  
180 its behalf.

181 Section E. The Bishop Diocesan will be the chair and president of council and the  
182 corporation. A vice president for the council and corporation may be elected by council  
183 from among its members. The Secretary of Convention shall serve as secretary of the  
184 council and corporation. The Treasurer of Convention shall serve as treasurer of the council  
185 and corporation. The Chancellor of Convention shall serve as chancellor of the council and  
186 corporation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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210 **Article VII. Canons**

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

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

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220 **Article VIII. Election of bishops**

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

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

225 **Section B. Qualification of voters**

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

232 **Section C. Voting**

233 1. Voting shall be by written ballot with the clergy and lay members voting separately.  
234 2. If at least two thirds of the clergy eligible to vote are present and at least two thirds of  
235 the full number of lay delegates are present then a concurrent majority of votes cast in  
236 each order shall be necessary to elect.  
237 3. If a lesser number of clerical or lay delegates are present than are called for in Article  
238 VIII, Section C subsection 2 but a quorum as specified in Article III, Section D  
239 subsection 1 exists then a concurrent majority consisting of three fourths of votes cast  
240 in each order shall be necessary to elect.

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242 **Article IX. The Cathedral:**

243 Section A. The Cathedral of St. Paul in the city of Erie, established as such through the  
244 amendments of the Charter of St Paul's Church, Erie, and thus established upon a Cathedral  
245 Foundation, according to the tradition of the Anglican Communion and in conformity with  
246 the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is a constituent part of the church and  
247 convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The Cathedral and the Cathedral  
248 Congregation shall be governed by the Chapter in accordance with the Cathedral Charter,  
249 the statutes and by-laws of the Cathedral, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of  
250 Northwestern Pennsylvania and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.

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252 **Article X. Ecclesiastical Discipline**

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

256 Section B. The Ecclesiastical Court shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
257 vacancies that may occur in its own body.  
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259 **Article XI. Amendments of the Constitution**

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

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

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

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

271           Section E.    The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall review this Constitution during  
272                    the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and  
273                    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.

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**Canon 4. Removal of persons from office<sup>2</sup>**

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

- i.** If serving on The Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry by a two-thirds majority vote of all members (including the person proposed to be removed) of such Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry at a regular or duly called special meeting of such The Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry
- ii.** If serving in an appointed office, by a two-thirds majority vote of the Standing Committee.

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

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

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

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

**Canon 5.** <sup>3</sup>If no other provisions are made in the Constitution or Canons, the Standing Committee shall have the power by majority vote to fill for the unexpired term any vacancy that may occur in any office in this Diocese.

**Canon 6.** Meetings of any body under these canons may take place as in-person, virtual, or hybrid meetings. Virtual meetings are those where arrangements have been made in advance to allow participants to attend the meeting by means of a conference telephone, internet, or similar communication equipment by which all persons participating in a meeting can effectively communicate with each other without needing to be physically present at the same location. Those attending a meeting by such means shall be deemed to be attending virtually. Hybrid meetings include some participants attending the meeting in person and others attending virtually. Any arrangements for holding a virtual or a hybrid meeting will be included in the meeting notice, including details by which a person can attend the meeting virtually. Persons shall be deemed to be present for determination of a quorum by attending either in person or virtually where arrangements for such attendance have been made. Such persons shall be entitled to vote, if qualified to do so, and have arrangements made for voting by secret ballot, where appropriate, and such persons shall be recorded as

364 present in the minutes of the meeting without distinction as to their virtual or in-person  
365 attendance. <sup>4</sup>  
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367 **Title II. Of Congregations In The Diocese**  
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369 **Canon 1. Of Congregations**

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

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

378 **Section C)** A Mission is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the  
379 Convention of the Diocese and does not meet the requirements of a Parish. Two or more  
380 Congregations may form a single Mission with the approval of the Bishop and the  
381 Diocesan Convention.

382 **Section D)** A Parish is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the  
383 Convention of the Diocese and<sup>5</sup> which is totally financially self-supporting and has at  
384 least 50 adult Communicants In Good Standing and has been granted Parish status by  
385 the Diocesan Convention. A Parish also maintains a place of worship, provides an  
386 adequate living for a full time priest equivalent to or exceeding the minimum salary and  
387 benefits currently required by the Diocese, remains current in payment of its assessment,  
388 and pays all its own operating expenses. Two or more Congregations may form a single  
389 Parish with the approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Convention.  
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391 **Canon 2. Of The Organizing Of Missions**

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

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

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

408           **Section D)**           The title to real estate given to or purchased for a Mission shall be vested  
409                           in The Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and all trust funds, endowments, or  
410                           undesignated bequests secured for the benefit of the Mission shall be deposited with the  
411                           Treasurer Of The Convention.  
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413           **Canon 3.       Of The Organizing Of Parishes**

414           **Section A)**           A Mission which seeks to become a Parish shall make written application  
415                           to the Annual Convention. This application shall include proof that:  
416                           **i.**   the Congregation has at least fifty adult Communicants in Good Standing;  
417                           **ii.**   the Congregation has supported itself financially, including a full time priest, for  
418                           three consecutive years;  
419                           **iii.**   the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and recognizes the authority  
420                           over them of the National and Diocesan Constitution and Canons;  
421                           **iv.**   evidence that the Congregation will be able to continue to be self-supporting and  
422                           to pay the diocesan assessment and the minimum salary and benefits of a full time  
423                           Rector  
424                           **v.**   a certificate from the Ecclesiastical Authority approving the application of the  
425                           Congregation.

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

429           **Section C)**           A majority vote of the Convention shall change the status of the  
430                           Congregation to Parish.  
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432           **Canon 4.       Of the Governance of Missions**

433           **Section A)**           The government of a Mission is in the Ecclesiastical Authority, which  
434                           may appoint as its representative a priest to be Vicar of the Mission who shall conform  
435                           to the instruction of the Ecclesiastical Authority and be responsible to it. The Bishop  
436                           shall be the Rector of all Missions, and the Vicar of each Mission shall make such  
437                           reports as required by the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
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439           **Section B)       Annual Meetings**

440                           **i.**   In every Mission an Annual Meeting shall be held in January or at such other time as  
441                           the Ecclesiastical Authority may designate. Public notice of the same shall be given  
442                           at all the services on the two preceding weekends.  
443                           **ii.**   The Annual Meeting shall be presided over by the Vicar, or if the office be vacant, or  
444                           if the Vicar be absent, by the Bishop's Warden. When the Annual Meeting is called  
445                           to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.  
446                           **iii.**   Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Mission who are physically present, who  
447                           are at least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local  
448                           church, and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to  
449                           the support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church  
450                           as shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of  
451                           the Mission.  
452                           **iv.**   A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Meeting shall consist of  
453                           15% of all the persons entitled to vote if they were present.<sup>6</sup>

- 453 v. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Mission<sup>7</sup> at the same time.  
454 vi. The Mission may nominate to the Ecclesiastical Authority not less than five nor  
455 more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be appointed as the  
456 Bishop's Committee. The length of one term of office for members of the Bishop's  
457 Committee shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,  
458 nominated each year at the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

459 **Section C) Of Special Mission Meetings**

- 460 i. A Special Mission Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the  
461 Ecclesiastical Authority. Such order shall specify the time and place of such meeting  
462 and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall be considered  
463 other than that specified in the call.  
464 ii. Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
465 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
466 meeting and the business to be considered.  
467 iii. The Bishop shall preside over such meeting. At the request of the Ecclesiastical  
468 Authority, the Vicar may preside. At the request of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the  
469 Bishop's Warden may preside.

470 **Section D) Of The Bishop's Committee**

- 471 i. A Bishop's Committee may be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to assist the  
472 Ecclesiastical Authority in governing the Mission. The Bishop's Committee shall  
473 manage and be responsible for the property and material affairs of the Mission in  
474 accordance with directions from the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
475 ii. In accordance with the canon "Of Membership in Convention" the Bishop's  
476 Committee shall annually select delegates to represent the Mission at meetings of the  
477 Diocesan Convention.  
478 iii. The Vicar, if there is one, shall preside at all meetings of the Bishop's Committee.  
479 In the absence of a Vicar, the Bishop's Warden shall preside.  
480 iv. The Lay Officers of a Mission shall consist of the Bishop's Warden, Property  
481 Warden, Clerk, and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing  
482 of the Mission and at least 18 years of age.  
483 v. The Bishop's Warden and Property Warden shall be appointed annually by the  
484 Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.  
485 vi. The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Mission are met and  
486 that the buildings belonging to the Mission are kept in good repair and are  
487 adequately insured. Under the Vicar, they shall see that all things needed for the  
488 orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments are  
489 provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the  
490 absence of a Vicar, they shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority,  
491 procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.  
492 vii. A Clerk shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the  
493 members of the Bishop's Committee to serve until a successor is appointed. The  
494 Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special  
495 Mission Meetings and of all meetings of the Bishop's Committee and shall attest to  
496 the same in the book of Minutes of the Bishop's Committee, shall maintain in the  
497 said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Mission, shall keep

- 498 all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these Canons. The  
499 Clerk shall turn over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that  
500 belong to the Mission.
- 501 **viii.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be appointed annually by  
502 the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.  
503 Under the authority of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Bishop's Committee, the  
504 Treasurer shall be responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds  
505 of the Mission and to present a report on the same to each meeting of the Bishop's  
506 Committee. Previous to the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the  
507 Ecclesiastical Authority and to the Bishop's Committee a full and accurate statement  
508 of the financial condition of the Mission. This statement shall also be read at the  
509 Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Ecclesiastical  
510 Authority shall require, but the cost of such bond shall be borne by the Mission. The  
511 Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all books, documents, and funds in her  
512 possession that belong to the Mission.
- 513 **ix.** Regular meetings of the Bishop's Committee shall be held at least quarterly.
- 514 **x.** Special meetings of the Bishop's Committee may be called at any time at the request  
515 of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

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

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

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

- 520 **i.** In every Parish, the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held in January at a time and  
521 place designated by the Vestry. Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given at  
522 all the services on the two preceding weekends. With the consent of the  
523 Ecclesiastical Authority, the Annual Meeting may be held during a different month.
- 524 **ii.** The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive  
525 reports from the Vestry, parish officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the  
526 new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.
- 527 **iii.** Any subordinate entity wholly owned by the Parish which has any paid staff shall  
528 have its own bylaws. All such bylaws and any amendments thereto shall first be  
529 submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee for approval prior  
530 to being approved by the Vestry.<sup>8</sup>
- 531 **iv.** The Annual Parish Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector or Priest-in-  
532 Charge, or if the office be vacant, or if the Rector or Priest-in-Charge be absent, by  
533 the Senior Warden. When the Annual Parish Meeting is called to order, the  
534 qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 535 **v.** Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Parish who are physically present, who are at  
536 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
537 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
538 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
539 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all Parish Meetings.
- 540 **vi.** A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Parish Meeting shall  
541 consist of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons  
542 entitled to vote, whichever is less.

- 543           vii. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Parish at the same  
544           time.<sup>9</sup>
- 545           viii. <sup>10</sup>Each Parish shall have a Vestry consisting of not less than five nor more than  
546           twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing elected by the annual Parish Meeting.  
547           The number of persons to serve on the Vestry of the Parish shall be set by resolution  
548           of two successive Annual Parish Meetings. Upon affirmative vote of the second  
549           Annual Parish Meeting the change in number shall take immediate effect.
- 550           ix. The qualifications of persons to serve on the Vestry shall be the same as the  
551           qualifications to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting as set out above except that the  
552           person to be elected need not be present at the Meeting.
- 553           x. No cleric shall be eligible for election as a member of the Vestry.
- 554           xi. In each Parish the Vestry may by resolution designate the nominating Committee,  
555           otherwise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge together with the Senior Warden and the  
556           Junior Warden shall be the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee  
557           shall publish to the parish two weeks prior to the Annual Parish Meeting a ballot  
558           with sufficient qualified nominees to fill the vacancies on the Vestry for the  
559           upcoming year.
- 560           xii. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Parish  
561           Meeting. The nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee. Any question  
562           of the nominee's qualification to serve shall be resolved by the Rector or Priest-in-  
563           Charge prior to the election of Vestry members. In the absence of a Rector or Priest-  
564           in-Charge, the Senior Warden shall have the responsibility for determining the  
565           qualifications of any person nominated from the floor.
- 566           xiii. Each Annual Parish Meeting shall elect persons to serve on the Vestry replacing  
567           those members whose term in office has ended.
- 568           xiv. The length of one term of office for members of the Vestry shall be three years  
569           with one third of the members, or as near as may be, elected each year at the Annual  
570           Parish Meeting.

**Section C) Of Special Parish Meetings**

- 571           i. A Special Parish Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the  
572           Ecclesiastical Authority or of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or by resolution of the  
573           Vestry, or on a petition to the Ecclesiastical Authority if such petition be signed by  
574           not less than one-third of the number entitled to vote at the last Annual Parish  
575           Meeting. All such orders, resolutions, or petitions shall specify the time and place of  
576           such meeting and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall  
577           be considered other than that specified in the call.
- 578           ii. Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
579           weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
580           meeting, the business to be considered, and by whose order the meeting is called.
- 581           iii. Such meeting may be presided over by the Bishop. If the Bishop does not  
582           preside, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall preside. If there is no Rector or Priest-  
583           in-Charge, the Ecclesiastical Authority may request the Senior Warden to preside.
- 584           iv. Such meeting may be presided over by the Senior Warden.

**Section D) Of Vestries**

- 585           i. In accordance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of  
586           this Diocese the Vestry shall govern the Parish and shall manage and be responsible  
587

- 588 for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare  
589 of the Parish; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is provided with all  
590 things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and  
591 provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Parish  
592 Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next  
593 year.
- 594 **ii.** As to civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector  
595 or Priest-in-Charge shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the  
596 President of the corporation. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge then the Senior  
597 Warden shall be the President of the Corporation.<sup>11</sup>
- 598 **iii.** The Vestry, in accordance with the Canon “Of Membership In Convention” shall  
599 elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan  
600 Convention.
- 601 **iv.** The Lay Officers of a Parish shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden,  
602 Clerk and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the  
603 Parish and at least 18 years of age. No cleric or spouse of a cleric may serve as an  
604 Officer of the Parish.
- 605 **v.** The Senior Warden shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the  
606 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, from among the members of the Vestry. If there be no  
607 Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall nominate  
608 a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
- 609 **vi.** It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector or Priest-in-  
610 Charge, to advise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge on all matters pertaining to the  
611 parish upon which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge may wish to consult the Senior  
612 Warden, and to inform the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of all matters which the Senior  
613 Warden feels the Rector needs to know.
- 614 **vii.** If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden  
615 to assume all the temporal duties of the Rector including, but not limited to,  
616 presiding at Vestry meetings, signing documents, filing reports, and maintaining the  
617 Parish Register. In addition, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to provide for  
618 the continuation of Divine Worship.
- 619 **viii.** The Junior Warden shall be elected annually from among their number by the  
620 Vestry. It shall be the duty of the Junior Warden to see to the care of the Parish’s  
621 physical property making sure that it is being kept clean and in good order and  
622 repair. In the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden is to assume the  
623 duties of the Senior Warden.
- 624 **ix.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Parish are met and that  
625 the buildings belonging to the Parish are kept in good repair and are adequately  
626 insured. Under the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall see that all things needed  
627 for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments  
628 are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the  
629 absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall, with the advice of the  
630 Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
- 631 **x.** A Clerk shall be elected annually by the Vestry from among their number to serve  
632 until a successor has been chosen. The Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes

633 are taken of all Annual and Special Parish Meetings and of all meetings of the Vestry  
634 and shall attest to the same in the Book of Minutes of the Vestry, shall maintain in  
635 the said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Parish, shall keep  
636 all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these canons. The Clerk  
637 shall turn over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that  
638 belong to the Parish.

639 **xi.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be elected annually by  
640 the Vestry from among their number. Under the authority of the Vestry, the Treasurer  
641 is responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds of the Parish.  
642 Previous to the Annual Parish Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the Vestry a  
643 full and accurate statement of the financial condition of the Parish. This statement  
644 shall also be read at the Annual Parish Meeting before the election of officers. At  
645 every meeting of the Vestry the Treasurer shall report the total assets and liabilities  
646 of the Parish and the income and expenses of the general operating funds. As  
647 directed the Treasurer shall report the income and expenses of any other funds. The  
648 Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Vestry shall require, but the cost of such  
649 bond shall be borne by the Parish. The Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all  
650 books, documents, and funds in her possession that belong to the Parish.

651 **xii.** The Vestry shall fill any mid-term vacancies in their number or among the  
652 officers of the Parish by majority vote.

653 **xiii.** Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held at least quarterly.

654 **xiv.** Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called at any time at the request of the  
655 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or of any two of the members. Notice of such meeting  
656 shall be given to the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the members of  
657 the Vestry. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the  
658 business to be considered. No other business shall come before such meeting except  
659 with the unanimous consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the  
660 members of the Vestry.

661 **xv.** At no meeting shall it be competent for the Vestry to transact any business except  
662 there be present the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, or, in the event of the  
663 absence of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or if the office be vacant, one of the  
664 Wardens; and except there be present a quorum consisting of a majority of the  
665 elected members of the Vestry. No action affecting the rights of the Rector or Priest-  
666 in-Charge shall be taken at any meeting at which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge has  
667 not had the opportunity to be present.

668 **xvi. Indemnification**

669 **a.** No member of the Vestry shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
670 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:  
671 • said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office  
672 prescribed by these canons, and  
673 • the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct  
674 or recklessness  
675 • The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability  
676 of said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes  
677 pursuant to local, state, or federal law.

678                   b. The Parish shall indemnify any Vestry member and may indemnify any other  
679                   employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party  
680                   to or who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or  
681                   completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or  
682                   investigative, including any action by or on behalf of the Parish by reason of the  
683                   fact that he is or was a member of Vestry, employee, or agent of the parish,  
684                   against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in  
685                   settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such  
686                   action, suit, or proceeding unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim  
687                   for indemnification is determined by the Court to have constituted willful  
688                   misconduct or recklessness. With respect to any such action, the Parish may  
689                   participate therein at its own expense; and the Parish shall be entitled to assume  
690                   the defense thereof, with Counsel selected by the Parish to the reasonable  
691                   satisfaction of the party being indemnified. After notice from the Parish to such  
692                   person of its election to assume the defense thereof, the Parish shall not be liable  
693                   to such person for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such  
694                   person in connection with the defense thereof. Such person shall have the right  
695                   to employ separate Counsel in such action, but the fees and expenses of such  
696                   Counsel incurred after a notice from the Parish of its assumption of the defense  
697                   thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
698

699                   **Canon 2.       Official Books, Records, And Reports**

700                   **Section A)       Books and Records**

701                   **i.   Members**

- 702                   a. It shall be the duty of the priest in charge to keep, so far as is practicable, a list of  
703                   the families and individuals within the Congregation to be retained for the use of  
704                   a successor.  
705                   b. In every Congregation, there shall be provided a proper book or books, to be  
706                   called The Parish Register, in which the priest in charge of the Congregation, or,  
707                   if the Congregation be vacant, one of the Wardens, shall record the names of all  
708                   persons baptized, confirmed, married, and deceased within the Congregation,  
709                   with such other facts as to dates, places, and persons as are important matters of  
710                   record, all of which shall be certified by the signature of the person making the  
711                   records together with the names of all persons who are Communicants of the  
712                   Church, with memoranda as to their reception, removal, or death.  
713                   c. Provision shall be made for the due recording of such other items and statistics  
714                   as are required in the Annual Parochial Report prescribed by the National  
715                   Canons.

716                   **ii. Minutes**

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

720                   **iii. Financial**

- 721                   a. Every Congregation shall maintain paper or computer records, with adequate  
722                   backups, of all the financial affairs of the Congregation. Such records shall

723 include records of all assets and liabilities, income and expenses, and the  
724 location of the evidence showing ownership of all assets.

725 b. Statements of all investment, banking, and other accounts must be sent to the  
726 official mailing address of the Congregation and not to private homes.

727 **Section B) Preservation**

728 i. The Parish Register, Minute Book, and financial records of the Congregation shall  
729 be kept in the church, chapel, or other property belonging to the Congregation or  
730 Diocese or at such other secure location determined by the Vestry or Bishop's  
731 Committee.

732 ii. Consideration is to be given to the preservation of all items in case of natural or man  
733 made disaster when determining a secure location. Adequate backups and copies  
734 should be made and held in a different location.

735 iii. Prior to taking any books or records away from the location specified in section  
736 1, the person taking them must notify the priest in charge or Warden of the  
737 Congregation. No one may give notice to themselves.

738 iv. Books or records may be away from the location specified in Section A for only  
739 short periods of time.

740 v. Items of historical interest should be collected and preserved in similar secure  
741 locations.

742 **Section C) Reports**

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

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

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

752  
753 **Canon 3. Of The Reduction And Dissolution Of Congregations**

754 **Section A)** A Congregation may petition the Diocesan Convention for a change in  
755 status of that Congregation. With the assent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan  
756 Convention, by majority vote, may grant the petition and change the status of the  
757 Congregation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

768            **vii.**    A Congregation failing for two years to file its Annual Parochial Report required  
769                            by the National Canons.

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

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

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

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

782

783            **Canon 4.        Of Property**

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

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

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

799            **Section D)**        No real property titled to any Congregation or other institution of this  
800                            Diocese shall be sold, given away, deliberately destroyed,<sup>12</sup> or otherwise alienated or  
801                            encumbered without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one,  
802                            and the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council.

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

809

810            **Canon 5.        Of The Priest In Charge Of A Congregation**

811            **Section A)**        The priest in charge of a Congregation shall have, subject only to the  
812                            rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the National and Diocesan Constitutions and

- 813 Canons, and the godly counsel of the Bishop, the exclusive charge of all things  
814 pertaining to the spiritual interests of the Congregation. The priest shall order and direct  
815 the services of worship and music of the church and all that pertains thereto and shall  
816 have the spiritual direction and general oversight of the church school, the altar guild,  
817 and of all organizations connected with the Congregation. The priest may appoint  
818 persons to perform, under Clergy supervision, such duties pertaining to the services and  
819 to the care and decoration of the church as are properly performed by lay members.
- 820 **Section B)** The priest shall at all times have free access to the church or chapel and to  
821 the church hall, to open and use the same as shall be required for religious services and  
822 offices and for such parochial occasions and objects as the priest shall deem necessary.  
823 The priest may arrange, modify, or improve the furnishings, ornaments, appointments,  
824 and conveniences of the church or chapel as the priest shall deem necessary. The priest  
825 shall have control of the use of the church hall. In the exercise of these rights and duties,  
826 however, the priest shall not disturb the fabric of the building or involve the  
827 Congregation or the Diocese in any expenditure of funds not authorized by the  
828 Ecclesiastical Authority or by the Officers of the Parish.
- 829 **Section C)** All employees of any Congregation, and all other Clergy in any  
830 Congregation, are selected by, work under the supervision of, and may be terminated by  
831 the priest in charge of that Congregation.
- 832 **Section D)** The priest shall preside, with the right to vote, at all meetings of the  
833 Vestry or Bishop's Committee, and no such meeting shall be held unless the priest has  
834 been duly notified of the same at least twenty-four hours previous thereto.
- 835 **Section E)** The priest shall at all times have and exercise such other rights and shall  
836 perform such duties as pertain to this office under the laws and usages of The Episcopal  
837 Church.
- 838 **Section F)** The priest shall keep such records and make such reports as may be  
839 directed by National or Diocesan Canons or by order of the Diocesan Convention.
- 840 **Section G)** The priest in charge of a Congregation shall give to the proper Officers  
841 thereof and to the Ecclesiastical Authority at least one month's notice, in writing, of her  
842 intent to resign such charge.
- 843 **Section H)** No Cleric shall officiate within the bounds of this Diocese, either by  
844 preaching, reading prayers, administering sacraments, or any other sacred functions,  
845 within the parochial, missionary, or other cure of a priest, unless the Cleric have  
846 received express permission for that purpose from the priest in charge of the cure, or, in  
847 the absence of the priest in charge, from the church Wardens or a majority of the Vestry.  
848 In the case of a vacant Mission, permission shall be obtained from the Ecclesiastical  
849 Authority. Nor shall any Cleric, not Canonically Resident, officiate within the bounds of  
850 the Diocese in a vacant Congregation without the consent of the Ecclesiastical  
851 Authority.
- 852 **Section I)** A Cleric serving a Congregation may enter into a contractual agreement with  
853 another Congregation for pastoral services. Said contract shall cover all services to be  
854 provided by the Cleric to the contracting Congregation and all financial arrangements  
855 between the contracting Congregation and the Cleric. Said contract must be approved by  
856 both Vestries and the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 857 **Section J)** The priest in charge of a Mission is known as a Vicar.

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**Canon 6. Of The Election And Call Of A Priest For A Parish**

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

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

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

- i.** It shall be the prerogative of the Ecclesiastical Authority to submit to the Vestry the name or names of priests to be considered by them.
- ii.** No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.
- iii.** No election shall be had until the name of the priest whom it is proposed to elect has been made known to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall have sixty days in which to communicate with the Vestry. No election may be had until the Vestry meets in special session to consider the comments of the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- iv.** The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens of the Parish, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

**Section D)** The call of the Rector shall be in writing, signed by the Wardens and Clerk of the Vestry for the Parish. It must express distinctly any special conditions, together with the stipulation of salary or support and provision for residence, which shall conform, at a minimum, with any resolutions regarding minimum salary and benefits. The salary may be increased or decreased as the parties may from time to time agree, due notice of which shall be given to the Ecclesiastical Authority by the Clerk of the Vestry.

**Section E)** Any priest appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to minister to a Parish as the Priest-in-Charge, but not elected by the Vestry thereof, is sent by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon such terms as to financial support, and for such a period of time, as may have been agreed upon by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the priest, and the Vestry of the Parish. This appointment and agreement shall be in writing.

**Section F) Assistants**

- i.** Prior to the calling of an Assistant, the Rector of the calling Parish shall submit the name of the priest he proposes to call to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall have 60 days to communicate with the Rector and Vestry about the Cleric they propose to call.
- ii.** The Ecclesiastical Authority may accept Letters Dimissory for the Assistant or may grant the Assistant annual license to function within this Diocese.

903                   iii.     The provisions of Section D of this canon as to a written agreement on salary and  
904                   conditions of call apply to the calling of an Assistant.  
905

906     **Canon 7.     Of The Parish Alms Fund**

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

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

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

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

913             ii.    Regular contributions:

914                 a.    by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
915                         congregation or

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

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

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

920             ii.    If there are no clergy attached to the congregation then the Vestry or Bishop's  
921                   Committee shall elect annually a suitable Lay Person in Good Standing to be the  
922                   Almoner.

923         **Section E)**         The Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or  
924                   personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.

925         **Section F)**         Records of the income and expenses of the Alms Fund are confidential  
926                   but not secret.

927         **Section G)**         Reports on the usage of the Alms Fund shall be made to the Vestry or  
928                   Bishop's Committee at least quarterly and annually to the Annual Meeting of the  
929                   Congregation. These reports shall include income by category, expenses by category,  
930                   and current balance of the Alms Fund.

931         **Section H)**         Like all congregational funds, the Alms Fund is subject to and shall be  
932                   included in the Annual Audit required by these canons.  
933

934     **Canon 8.     Of Deaneries**

935         **Section A)**         The diocese shall be divided into four Deaneries as follows:

936             i.     The Northwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Erie County and the city of  
937                   Meadville in Crawford County;<sup>13</sup>

938             ii.    The Northeast Deanery comprising the Congregations in Warren County, Forest  
939                   County and McKean County;

940             iii.   The Southwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Crawford County  
941                   except for the city of Meaville, Mercer County, Lawrence County, Venango County  
942                   and Foxburg Borough of Clarion County;

943             iv.    The Southeast Deanery comprising the congregations in Jefferson County; Elk  
944                   County; Cameron County; Clarion County, except for Foxburg Borough; and  
945                   Clearfield County, except for Morris Township.

946         **Section B)**         At each annual Convention the Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a  
947                   Priest in Good Standing from each Deanery to be the Dean thereof.

948           **Section C)**           The purpose of Deaneries is to engage in mutual education, foster  
949                           fellowship and communication among the Clergy and Laity within the Deanery, and to  
950                           work and pray for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

951           **Section D)**           The Bishop shall have the power to confer upon the Deans and upon any  
952                           member of the Diocese such ecclesiastical title and assign duties appropriate thereto as  
953                           the Bishop shall deem proper. The Bishop may designate the regalia to be worn by the  
954                           recipient of the title.

955

956           **Title II.   Of Diocesan Convention**

957

958           **Canon 1.    Of Membership In Convention**

959           **Section A)       Clergy Members**

960           **i.**    The Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Co-Adjutor, if any, and Bishop Suffragan, if any, shall  
961                           have seat, voice and vote in the Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.

962           **ii.**   All Priests in Good Standing in the Diocese shall have seat, voice and vote in the  
963                           Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.

964           **iii.**   All Deacons in Good Standing in the diocese shall have seat, voice and vote in  
965                           the Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.

966

967           **Section B)       Lay Members**

968           **i.**    All Lay Members of Diocesan Convention must be Lay Persons In Good Standing  
969                           of some Congregation in union with the Diocesan Convention.

970           **ii.**   Every Congregation admitted into union with the Convention of the Diocese is  
971                           entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention two lay delegates who will have seat,  
972                           voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof unless otherwise limited by canon.

973           **iii.**   Any Congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual  
974                           Parochial Report of 75 to 149 is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention three  
975                           lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.

976           **iv.**   Any congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual  
977                           Parochial Report of 150 or greater is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention  
978                           four lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.

979           **v.**    In order that they may be fully represented in Convention, all Congregations may  
980                           select Alternate Delegates in the same manner and with the same qualifications as  
981                           Delegates. Substitution of an Alternate Delegate for a Lay Member of Convention  
982                           must be certified to the Credentials Committee by the priest in charge of that  
983                           Congregation. If there is no priest in charge, then a previously certified Lay Member  
984                           from that Congregation shall certify the substitution.

985           **vi.**   All Delegates to Convention shall be certified to the Credentials Committee on  
986                           the form provided by the Committee and no later than March first.

987           **vii.**   Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to submit the Annual  
988                           Parochial Report due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Diocesan  
989                           Convention shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention.

990           **viii.**   Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to provide evidence,  
991                           adequate to the Ecclesiastical Authority, of the Annual Audit required by National

992 Canon due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Convention shall not be  
993 entitled to vote at that Convention.

- 994 **ix.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to pay the assessment  
995 levied upon that Congregation shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention unless  
996 that Congregation has been granted relief by the Diocesan Council and is current on  
997 that agreement. A Congregation shall be considered to have failed if their assessment  
998 is not paid current through the end of the month that occurs no less than 15 days  
999 prior to the start of any Convention.

1000  
1001 **Canon 2. Of Officers Of The Convention**

1002 **Section A)** The Officers of Convention shall consist of a President, Secretary,  
1003 Treasurer and Chancellor.

1004 **i. President**

- 1005 **a.** The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, will be President of and preside at meetings  
1006 of the Diocesan Convention.  
1007 **b.** If there is no Bishop Diocesan then the person to preside at the Convention is  
1008 chosen in accordance with the provisions in the Diocesan Constitution.

1009 **ii. Secretary**

- 1010 **a.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
1011 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing to be  
1012 Secretary of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
1013 office, the Secretary is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.  
1014 **b.** The Secretary shall be responsible to take minutes and to produce a journal of  
1015 the proceedings of every Diocesan Convention. This journal shall be available to  
1016 the Congregations of the Diocese not more than 120 days after the adjournment  
1017 of the Convention.  
1018 **c.** The Secretary shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Secretary of  
1019 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1020 Constitution and these Canons.  
1021 **d.** The Secretary shall deliver to his successor all papers and materials in his  
1022 possession which belong to the Diocese.

1023 **iii. Treasurer**

- 1024 **a.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
1025 elect either a Lay Person in Good Standing or a Cleric in Good Standing to be  
1026 Treasurer of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
1027 office, the Treasurer is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.  
1028 **b.** The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the direction of the Diocesan Council,  
1029 for the collection, investment, and distribution of all money and securities due to,  
1030 held by, or payable by the Diocese and for the proper accounting thereof. The  
1031 Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and  
1032 income and expense reports of all funds under the control of the Diocese or its  
1033 officers to the Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all  
1034 assets and liabilities of the Diocese and the income and expenses of the general  
1035 operating funds to every meeting of the Diocesan Council and, as directed by

- 1036 Diocesan Council, the income and expenses of all other funds under the control  
1037 of the Diocese or its officers.
- 1038 c. The Treasurer shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Treasurer of  
1039 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1040 Constitution and these Canons. The Treasurer and any assistants to the Treasurer  
1041 may be bonded with the expense being paid by the Diocese.
- 1042 d. The Treasurer shall deliver to her successor all papers and materials in the her  
1043 possession which belong to the Diocese.
- 1044 **iv. Chancellor**
- 1045 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
1046 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing who is  
1047 licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be Chancellor  
1048 of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office,  
1049 the Chancellor is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 1050 b. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan Council may  
1051 elect one or more Vice Chancellors, qualified as above, as may from time to time  
1052 appear necessary.
- 1053 c. The Chancellors shall function as the solicitor for and the legal advisor to, in the  
1054 following order: the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Diocesan  
1055 Council, and the Convention of the Diocese.
- 1056 d. The Chancellors shall be responsible to see that the Diocese follows and obeys  
1057 the National Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and these  
1058 Canons. The Chancellor shall interpret the meaning and application of these  
1059 Constitutions and Canons. His rulings may be appealed to the Diocesan  
1060 Convention or to the National Church as appropriate.
- 1061 e. The Chancellors shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Chancellor  
1062 of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1063 Constitution and these Canons.
- 1064 f. The Chancellors shall deliver to their successors all papers and materials in their  
1065 possession which belong to the Diocese.
- 1066

**Canon 3. Of Committees of Convention**

**Section A) Credentials**

- 1069 i. A Credentials Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1070 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- 1071 ii. The Credentials Committee shall consist of one Clergy Member and one Lay  
1072 Member of Convention.<sup>14</sup>
- 1073 iii. The Credentials Committee shall determine the right of persons to seat, voice,  
1074 and vote at Convention and shall recommend to Convention persons to whom the  
1075 Convention should grant seat and voice.
- 1076 iv. Any person denied a seat, voice or vote by the Credentials Committee may  
1077 appeal such denial to the Convention which shall make the final determination by a  
1078 majority vote.

**Section B) Dispatch of Business**

1079

- 1080           i. A Dispatch of Business Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical  
1081           Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
1082           ii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall consist of one or more Members of  
1083           Convention.  
1084           iii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of Convention in  
1085           seeing that all the business of Convention is done in an efficient and expeditious  
1086           manner. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of  
1087           Convention in developing an agenda and rules of order for the Convention.

1088           **Section C)           Resolutions**

- 1089           i. A Resolution Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1090           elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
1091           ii. The Resolutions Committee shall consist of two Clergy and two Lay Members.<sup>15</sup>  
1092           iii. The Resolutions Committee shall give due consideration to all resolutions  
1093           submitted to it and shall present all such resolutions to the Diocesan Convention.  
1094           iv. The Resolutions Committee shall develop any resolutions of courtesy to be  
1095           considered by the Convention.  
1096           v. The Resolutions Committee shall recommend to Convention a place and date to hold  
1097           the next Annual Diocesan Convention.<sup>16</sup>

1098           **Section D)           Nominations**

- 1099           i. A Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1100           elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
1101           ii. The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.  
1102           iii. The Nominations Committee shall be responsible to present a ballot with  
1103           sufficient nominees for each office to be filled by Convention.<sup>17</sup>

1104           **Section E)           Judges of Election**

- 1105           i. Judges of Election shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by  
1106           each annual Diocesan Convention.  
1107           ii. Three Members of Convention shall be elected to be the Judges of Election.  
1108           iii. The Judges of Election shall oversee the distribution and counting of ballots for  
1109           each election as instructed by the President of the Convention.  
1110

1111           **Canon 4.           Of Nominations**

1112           **Section A)**           Any Cleric or Lay Person may, and all are encouraged to, nominate  
1113           qualified persons to fill the various offices to be chosen at each annual Convention.

1114           **Section B)**           The Nominations Committee of Convention shall give notice of the need  
1115           for such nominations and shall set a final date for receiving of the same which shall be  
1116           not less than thirty days prior to Convention.<sup>18</sup>

1117           **Section C)**           Any person submitting a nomination shall do so on such form provided  
1118           and give such information as the Nominations Committee shall determine. Such  
1119           information shall include at least the name and contact information for each nominee;  
1120           their consent to serve if elected; a current digital photograph; and other relevant  
1121           information.

1122           **Section D)**           A list of all nominees shall be published and distributed to all Delegates at  
1123           least two weeks prior to the meeting of Convention.

1124           **Section E)**           Additional nominations may be made from the floor of Convention. The  
1125                           nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee and may present a short  
1126                           statement.  
1127

1128           **Canon 5.     Of Resolutions**

1129           **Section A)**           Resolutions properly considered by the Convention are those:

- 1130           i. Submitted by a Cleric in Good Standing.
- 1131           ii. Submitted by a Lay Person in Good Standing.
- 1132           iii. Submitted by some Congregation of this Diocese.
- 1133           iv. Submitted by the Diocesan Council.
- 1134           v. Submitted by some other committee mentioned in these Canons.

1135           **Section B)**           All resolutions must bear the name of the individual or organization  
1136                           submitting the resolution.

1137           **Section C)**           All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary of Convention at least  
1138                           forty-five days prior to any Convention. Resolutions submitted less than forty-five days  
1139                           in advance may be considered on a two-thirds vote of the Convention.<sup>19</sup>

1140           **Section D)**           All resolutions submitted which would amend the Constitution or Canons  
1141                           of this Diocese are to be considered by the Constitution and Canons Committee. The  
1142                           Constitution and Canons Committee will review the resolution and

- 1143           i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
- 1144           ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
  - 1145           a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
  - 1146           b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
  - 1147           c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the
  - 1148                           resolution

1149           **Section E)**           Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by  
1150                           persons named in Section A i, ii, or iii of this Canon shall be considered by the  
1151                           Resolutions Committee of Convention. The Resolutions Committee will review the  
1152                           resolution and

- 1153           i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
- 1154           ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
  - 1155           a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
  - 1156           b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
  - 1157           c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the
  - 1158                           resolution

1159           **Section F)**           Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by  
1160                           Diocesan Council or other committees will be reported to Convention by the Diocesan  
1161                           Council or the committee and are assumed to have a recommendation that Convention  
1162                           adopt the resolution.

1163  
1164           **Title III.   Of Constitutional Committees**

1165  
1166           **Canon 1.     Of the Standing Committee**

1167           **Section A)**       Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one  
1168                   Lay Person in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Standing Committee.  
1169                   The election shall be done on a vote by orders.

1170           **Section B)**       The Standing Committee shall fulfill all duties prescribed for Standing  
1171                   Committees in the National Constitution and Canons and in the Constitution of this  
1172                   Diocese and in these Canons.

1173           **Section C)**       The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a President of  
1174                   the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a  
1175                   Secretary.<sup>20</sup>

1176           **Section D)**       The Standing Committee shall meet upon the call of the Bishop and from  
1177                   time to time in conformity with their own rules. They shall keep a record of their  
1178                   proceedings.

1179           **Section E)**       When a duty is to be performed, or a power exercised, by the Standing  
1180                   Committee a majority of the members shall be a quorum and a majority of the quorum  
1181                   so convened shall be competent to act, unless the contrary is expressly required by the  
1182                   National Constitution or Canons or the Constitution of this Diocese or these Canons.

1183           **Section F)**       <sup>21</sup> Members of the Standing Committee may be elected to and serve on  
1184                   the Disciplinary Board.<sup>22</sup>

1185

1186           **Canon 2.       Of the Diocesan Council**

1187           **Section A)       Members**

1188           **i.**       The Bishop Diocesan, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, and  
1189                   the Chancellor of Convention shall have seat, voice, and vote on the Diocesan  
1190                   Council.

1191           **ii.**       The Lay Members of each annual Convention shall elect one Lay Person in Good  
1192                   Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat, voice, and  
1193                   vote.

1194           **iii.**       The Priests in Good Standing at each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in  
1195                   Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat,  
1196                   voice, and vote.

1197           **iv.**       The Deacons in Good Standing at every fourth annual Convention shall elect a  
1198                   Deacon in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with  
1199                   seat and voice but no vote.

1200           **Section B)       Officers**

1201           **i.**       The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, shall preside at, and be the President of, the  
1202                   Diocesan Council. The Secretary of Convention shall be the Secretary of the  
1203                   Diocesan Council. The Treasurer of Convention shall be the Treasurer of the  
1204                   Diocesan Council. The Chancellor of the Convention shall be the Chancellor of the  
1205                   Diocesan Council.

1206           **ii.**       If there is no Bishop Diocesan, the Diocesan Council shall elect annually one of the  
1207                   members of Council to be the President of the Diocesan Council.

1208           **iii.**       The Diocesan Council shall elect each year one of the members of the Council to  
1209                   serve a one year term as Vice President of the Council.

1210           **Section C)       Work of the Diocesan Council**

- 1211 i. The Diocesan Council shall oversee the program and priorities of the Diocese and  
1212 make a report thereon to the annual Convention of the Diocese.
- 1213 ii. The Diocesan Council shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation known  
1214 as The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.
- 1215 iii. The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention a  
1216 budget and schedule of assessments for the ensuing year.
- 1217 iv. The Diocesan Council may provide a means of relief to Congregations that are  
1218 having difficulty paying their assessment.
- 1219 v. The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention  
1220 minimum stipends and allowances for Clergy serving in the Diocese.

1221  
1222 **Section D) Committees**

- 1223 i. Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary to carry out  
1224 its work.
- 1225 ii. All committees shall have a definite term of existence and a stated purpose  
1226 determined by the council.
- 1227 iii. Committees shall consist of at least one member of Diocesan Council and such  
1228 other persons as Council may decide. These additional persons shall have seat, voice  
1229 and vote only as to the business of the committee. The member of Council on each  
1230 committee shall serve as liaison between the committee and Council.
- 1231 iv. The member of Council shall call the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter  
1232 each committee may effect its own organization provided that a quorum for the  
1233 transaction of business shall consist of a majority of all members of the committee.

1234 **Section E) Meetings**

- 1235 i. The Diocesan Council shall meet on a regular basis and at least once per calendar  
1236 quarter.
- 1237 ii. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or Vice President of  
1238 the Council.
- 1239 iii. A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for  
1240 the transaction of business.

1241 **Section F) Indemnification**

- 1242 i. No member of Diocesan Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
1243 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
  - 1244 a. said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed  
1245 by these canons, and
  - 1246 b. the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, wilful misconduct or  
1247 recklessness.
  - 1248 c. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of  
1249 said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes pursuant  
1250 to local, state, or federal law.
- 1251 ii. The Diocese shall indemnify any Council member and may indemnify any other  
1252 employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or  
1253 who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed  
1254 action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative,  
1255 including any action by or on behalf of the Diocese by reason of the fact that she is

1256 or was a member of Council, employee, or agent of the Diocese, against expenses,  
1257 including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually  
1258 and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding  
1259 unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is  
1260 determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With  
1261 respect to any such action, the Diocese may participate therein at its own expense;  
1262 and the Diocese shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel  
1263 selected by the Diocese to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being  
1264 indemnified. After notice from the Diocese to such person of its election to assume  
1265 the defense thereof, the Diocese shall not be liable to such person for any legal or  
1266 other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense  
1267 thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action,  
1268 but the fees and expenses of such Counsel incurred after a notice from the Diocese  
1269 of its assumption of the defense thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
1270

**Canon 3. Of the Constitution and Canons Committee**

- 1271 **Section A)** Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one  
1272 Lay Person in good standing to serve terms of three years on the Constitution and  
1273 Canons Committee.  
1274 **Section B)** The Bishop Diocesan and a Chancellor of the Diocese shall be members  
1275 ex-officio of the Constitution and Canons Committee but shall not be counted in the  
1276 determination of a quorum.  
1277 **Section C)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall effect its own organization.  
1278 **Section D)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review and report to  
1279 Convention on all proposals to amend the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese.  
1280 **Section E)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review these Canons  
1281 during the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal  
1282 Church and propose such amendments to these Canons as they deem necessary or  
1283 advisable.  
1284  
1285

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

- 1286 **Section A)** This diocese shall share a Commission On Ministry with the Diocese of  
1287 Western New York.<sup>23</sup>  
1288 **i.** The shared Commission on Ministry is to have a total of nine members, two Clergy  
1289 in Good Standing and two Lay Persons in Good Standing from each Diocese; and an  
1290 Archdeacon of one of the Dioceses, provided the Archdeacon is in Deacon's Orders.  
1291 **ii.** Each person on the Commission On Ministry shall serve a four year term.  
1292 **iii.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each annual Convention shall  
1293 elect one Cleric in Good Standing or one Lay Person in Good Standing as the case  
1294 requires, to replace the person whose term is expiring.  
1295 **iv.** At the end of the Archdeacon's term serving on the Commission, the Archdeacon  
1296 from the other Diocese will serve a term.  
1297 **Section B)** The chair of the Commission shall be appointed from among its members  
by the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
1298 **Section C)** The Commission shall effect its own organization.

1299           **Section D)**           The Commission shall faithfully fulfill all duties laid upon such  
1300                       Commissions by the Nation Constitution and Canons and by the Constitution of this  
1301                       Diocese and by these Canons.

1302           **Section E)**           Additional persons may be co-opted by the Commission from time to  
1303                       time because of their expertise or special knowledge. Any such co-opted members are  
1304                       given seat and voice at meetings of the Commission but do not have a vote on  
1305                       Commission business. Co-opted members will not be counted towards a quorum.  
1306

1307           **Canon 5.       Of the Examining Chaplains**

1308           **Section A)**           Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each Annual Convention  
1309                       shall elect three Clergy in Good Standing to be Examining Chaplains. The Examining  
1310                       Chaplains shall assist the Bishop in determining whether persons seeking ordination  
1311                       have knowledge, in accordance with the National Canons, sufficient for the Order they  
1312                       seek.  
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1314           **Canon 6.       Of the Ecclesiastical Court<sup>24 25</sup>**

1315           **Section A)**           General  
1316                       **i.**   By virtue of Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and  
1317                       accountability to one another. The Church in this Diocese shall support its members  
1318                       in their life in Christ and work to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance,  
1319                       forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all  
1320                       involved or affected. This Canon applies to the clergy who have by their vows at  
1321                       ordination accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine,  
1322                       discipline, worship and obedience.  
1323                       **a.**   In accordance with the National Canons the Ecclesiastical Court in this diocese  
1324                       shall be known as the Disciplinary Board.  
1325                       **b.**   All proceedings under this canon shall be conducted in accordance with Title IV  
1326                       of the National Canons.  
1327                       **ii.**   Should this Diocese enter into any written agreement with one or more other  
1328                       dioceses to share Disciplinary Boards, as provided for in the National  
1329                       Canons, then that written agreement will be appended to these canons  
1330                       and, to the extent it varies any of the following provisions of this  
1331                       Canon, it shall have the full force and effect of this canon; but to the  
1332                       extent any of the provisions of this Canon are not varied by the  
1333                       aforesaid agreement, OR should there be no such agreement, then the  
1334                       Disciplinary Board of this Diocese shall be governed by the remainder of  
1335                       this Canon. <sup>26</sup>

1336                       \*\*\*Such an Agreement, entitled “Regional Disciplinary Board” was entered into by  
1337                       Convention 2020 and became effective January 1, 2021. See “Regional Disciplinary  
1338                       Compact” appended to these Canons. \*\*\*

1339           **Section B)       Membership**

1340                       **i.**   The Disciplinary Board shall consist of five Clergy in Good Standing and four Adult  
1341                       Confirmed Lay Persons in Good Standing.<sup>27</sup>  
1342                       **ii.**   By May first of each year the Ecclesiastical authority shall nominate and the  
1343                       Standing Committee shall elect three persons to serve on the Disciplinary Board for

1344 a term of three years. Persons elected shall be from each order as required to  
1345 maintain the required make up of the Disciplinary Board.

- 1346 **iii.** The term of office of each member of the Disciplinary Board shall commence on  
1347 July first of the year they are elected.

1348 **Section C) Vacancies**

- 1349 **i.** Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Disciplinary Board shall be filled  
1350 by majority vote of the Standing Committee upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical  
1351 Authority.
- 1352 **ii.** Persons elected to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they  
1353 replace and meet the same requirements.
- 1354 **iii.** Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy  
1355 unless sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.
- 1356 **iv.** Persons elected to fill vacancies, other than pursuant to a challenge as provided  
1357 below, shall serve out the unexpired term of the person they replace.
- 1358 **v.** With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement member of the  
1359 Board shall serve only for the proceedings for which the elected Board member is  
1360 not serving as a result of the challenge.

1361 **Section D) Preserving Impartiality**

- 1362 **i.** In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or  
1363 Hearing Panel of the Board shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or  
1364 undue bias, that member shall immediately notify the President of the Board and  
1365 request a replacement member of the Panel.
- 1366 **ii.** Respondent's Counsel and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge any  
1367 member of a Panel for conflict of interest or undue bias by motion to the Panel for  
1368 disqualification of the challenged member. The members of the Panel not the  
1369 subjects of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether  
1370 the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that  
1371 proceeding.

1372 **Section E) President:** By June 30 of each year the Standing Committee shall  
1373 nominate and the Disciplinary Board for the ensuing year shall elect a President of the  
1374 Board to serve for the year.

1375 **Section F) Intake Officer(s):** An Intake Officer shall be appointed by the Bishop.  
1376 Additional Intake Officers, as needed, may be appointed from time to time in the same  
1377 manner. The Bishop shall publish the name(s) and contact information of the Intake  
1378 Officer(s) throughout the diocese.

1379 **Section G) Investigator:** The Bishop may appoint an Investigator in consultation  
1380 with the Reference Panel and the Church Attorney.. The Investigator need not be a  
1381 member of the Episcopal Church.

1382 **Section H) Church Attorney:** The Bishop, with the consent of <sup>28</sup> the Standing  
1383 Committee, shall appoint each year an attorney to serve as Church Attorney. The person  
1384 so appointed must be a duly licensed attorney but need not reside within the diocese.

1385 **Section I) Advisors:**

- 1386 **i.** In each proceeding under this Canon, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor for the  
1387 Complainant and an Advisor for the Respondent. The Complainant and the  
1388 Respondent have the right to reject these Advisors and to name other persons as

1389                   Advisors. Persons serving as Advisors shall hold no other appointed or elected  
1390                   position provided for under this Canon, and shall not include Chancellors or vice  
1391                   chancellors of this or any other diocese or any person likely to be called as a witness  
1392                   in the proceeding.

- 1393                   ii. **WARNING TO RESPONDENTS:** no Advisor, Panel, or other officer named in this  
1394                   canon has yet been granted confidentiality by the civil authorities. Anything told to  
1395                   such a person or panel may be used against you in a civil court. Only your licensed  
1396                   attorney and your confessor have such immunity.

1397                   **Section J)           Clerk:** The Board shall appoint a Clerk to assist the Board with records  
1398                   management and administrative support. The Clerk may, but need not, be a member of  
1399                   the Board.

1400                   **Section K)           Removal:** The Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, may  
1401                   remove from office for cause any person appointed or serving under this canon.

- 1402                   i. **Costs:** The reasonable costs and expenses of the Board, Intake Officer(s),  
1403                   Investigator, Church Attorney, Advisors appointed by the Bishop, Clerk and those  
1404                   providing pastoral care as directed by the Bishop shall be the obligation of the  
1405                   Diocese.

1406                   **Section L)           Records of Proceedings**

- 1407                   i. Records of active proceedings before the Board, including the period of any pending  
1408                   appeal, shall be preserved and maintained in the custody of the Diocesan Office.  
1409                   ii. Records of all proceedings under this Canon shall be permanently preserved in the  
1410                   archives of the diocese and in the Archives of the Episcopal Church as prescribed in  
1411                   Title IV of the National Canons.  
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1413                   **Title IV. Miscellaneous**

1414  
1415                   **Canon 1.           Of Special Offerings**

1416                   **Section A)           Bishops' Alms Fund**

- 1417                   i. The Diocese shall have a special monetary fund called the Bishops' Alms Fund.  
1418                   ii. The purpose of the Bishops' Alms Fund is to care for the poor and needy and to  
1419                   provide scholarships to seminaries, church related camps, conferences, and events.  
1420                   iii. The Bishops' Alms Fund shall be funded by:  
1421                   a. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and  
1422                   b. Regular contributions:  
1423                   • by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
1424                   diocese or  
1425                   • by the loose offering taken at all services when a Bishop visits a  
1426                   Congregation.  
1427                   iv. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall be the Almoner who shall oversee and  
1428                   distribute these funds for appropriate purposes.  
1429                   v. The Bishops' Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or  
1430                   personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.  
1431                   vi. Records of the income and expenses of the Bishops' Alms Fund are confidential  
1432                   but not secret.

- 1433                    **vii.**    Reports on the usage of the Bishops' Alms Fund shall be made to the Diocesan  
1434                    Council at least quarterly and annually to the Diocesan Convention. These reports  
1435                    shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current balance of the  
1436                    Bishops' Alms Fund.  
1437                    **viii.**    Like all funds, the Bishops' Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included in the  
1438                    Annual Audit required by these canons.  
1439

1440                    **Canon 2.    Of the Historiographer**

- 1441                    **Section A)**    The Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Historiographer at each  
1442                    annual Convention who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.  
1443                    **Section B)**    The Historiographer shall have charge of all documents belonging to the  
1444                    Diocese which relate to its history or that of any Congregation of the Diocese, of the  
1445                    Journals of all Conventions of this Diocese, and of all books and papers committed to  
1446                    him by the Convention or Ecclesiastical Authority.  
1447                    **Section C)**    In the event of the dissolution of a Congregation of this Diocese, the  
1448                    books, records, and historical information of that Congregation shall be delivered into  
1449                    the custody of the Historiographer.  
1450                    **Section D)**    All books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, held  
1451                    by the Historiographer shall be kept in good condition and in such place as designated  
1452                    by the Diocesan Council.  
1453                    **Section E)**    The Historiographer shall issue proper certificates based upon the records  
1454                    in his charge  
1455                    **Section F)**    Subject to the exclusions provided in the Canons, all books, papers and  
1456                    documents, in whatever form they may exist, shall be open to the inspection of the  
1457                    Bishop Diocesan, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and  
1458                    any committee of the Convention.  
1459

1460                    **Canon 3.    Of the Cathedral**

- 1461                    **Section A)**    The Parish church of St. Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania is hereby designated  
1462                    as the Cathedral of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.  
1463                    **Section B)**    Governance of the Cathedral<sup>29</sup>  
1464                    **i.**    The Cathedral shall be governed by a Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws not in  
1465                    conflict with the National Constitution and Canons, the Constitution of this Diocese  
1466                    or these Canons.  
1467                    **ii.**    Amendments may be made to the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws in the  
1468                    following manner:  
1469                    **a.**    Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and the  
1470                    Standing Committee for their advice and consent.  
1471                    **b.**    Consent of both the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Standing Committee having  
1472                    been received, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to a meeting of the  
1473                    Cathedral Congregation. A majority of two thirds of those present shall be  
1474                    required to adopt the amendment.  
1475                    **Section C)**    The Cathedral Congregation shall be entitled to representation in the  
1476                    Convention of this Diocese in accordance with the Canon on Membership in  
1477                    Convention.

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**Canon 4. Of The Election Of A Bishop<sup>30</sup>**

**Section A)** On the call by the Bishop Diocesan for the election of a successor, or of a Bishop Co-Adjutor or of a Bishop Suffragan or upon the death, resignation, or permanent disability of the Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee will initiate the search and transition process. The Standing Committee will have the option to initiate a search for a Bishop solely for Northwestern Pennsylvania using the Canon IV.4.B or to initiate a search for a Bishop to be ordained for the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and one or more other Dioceses using Canon IV.4C.

**Section B)** Procedures for The Election of a Bishop solely for Northwestern Pennsylvania i.

- i.** The Standing Committee shall appoint at least six persons to serve as the Search Committee. The persons appointed to this committee may be any Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing.
- ii.** The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate to the electing Convention one or more persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.
- iii.** The Standing Committee may also appoint a Transition Committee made up of Clerics in Good Standing and Lay Persons in Good Standing or the Standing Committee may delegate the tasks or appointment of a Transition Committee to the Search Committee.

**Section C)** Procedures for The Election of a Bishop for the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and one or more other Dioceses

- i.** The Standing Committee will enter into a formal agreement with one or more other dioceses to conduct a Search process and Electing Convention. This agreement shall comply with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, with the Constitution of this Diocese and with these Canons.
- ii.** The Standing Committee of this Diocese shall appoint at least six persons from this Diocese to serve as part of a Joint Search Committee. The persons appointed to this committee may be any Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing. This Joint Search Committee shall be made up of an equal number of representatives from each participating diocese.
- iii.** The Convention of this Diocese shall vote to affirm the Standing Committee's decision to elect a bishop with one or more other dioceses. If the Convention does not affirm the decision, the Standing Committee shall use Canon IV.4.B to initiate a search for a Bishop solely for the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. This vote by Convention may take place as part of a special convention held as a virtual meeting specifically for this purpose. This vote by Convention should occur as soon as convenient following the Standing Committee's decision, but must occur before the Search Committee publishes a profile for candidates for the next bishop.
- iv.** A Joint Electing Convention will be held, with each Diocese running their own separate electing convention. These separate conventions may be held in the same space, or in separate spaces in the same facility. Regardless, all votes will be held concurrently by all electing conventions.

- 1521 v. When one diocese reaches a sufficient number of votes that would normally trigger  
1522 the election of a bishop, unless all dioceses involved have also received sufficient  
1523 votes to elect the same candidate, no election will be declared until either:  
1524 a. Three more ballots have been taken and there is still a sufficient number of votes  
1525 on the last ballot to declare an election in one diocese or of different candidates  
1526 in different dioceses. In that case, the candidate with sufficient votes is elected  
1527 bishop of the diocese in which that candidate was elected and the other dioceses  
1528 will continue with their own process, possibly electing other candidates or no  
1529 candidate.  
1530 b. All dioceses involved in the joint election have voted such that one candidate is  
1531 elected as bishop in all dioceses.

1532 **Section D)** In addition to other procedures appropriately designed for the election  
1533 process, the following Canons shall apply to the electing convention:

- 1534 i. There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.  
1535 ii. Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three  
1536 Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written  
1537 petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.  
1538 iii. All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the  
1539 National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese, and by these  
1540 Canons

1541  
1542 **Canon 5. Of The Election Of Deputies To The General Convention**

1543 **Section A)** The annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a  
1544 stated meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the Clergy and  
1545 Lay Members voting separately, four Priests in Good Standing and four Confirmed  
1546 Adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be Deputies to the General Convention.

1547 **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in Section A, additional  
1548 ballots shall be taken, with the Clergy and Lay members voting separately, to elect four  
1549 Priests and four Lay Persons, qualified as above, from among the remaining nominees to  
1550 be Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.

1551  
1552 **Canon 6. Of The Election Of Deputies To The Provincial Synod**

1553 **Section A)** The Annual Convention following each triennial meeting of The General  
1554 Convention of The Episcopal Church shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay Members voting  
1555 separately, one Priest in Good Standing and two Confirmed Adult Lay Persons in Good  
1556 Standing to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

1557 **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in section a, an additional  
1558 ballot shall be taken, with the Clergy and Lay Members voting together, to elect and  
1559 rank those remaining nominees to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod.  
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<sup>1</sup> Convention 2022, on the second reading of this subsection, adopted the language allowing for virtual and hybrid conventions. The language was adapted from the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Convention 2013 adopted Canon 4 and Canon 5 in order to establish a procedure to remove persons

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- 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 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.
  - 4 Adopted by Convention 2021 to permit meetings to be other than in person
  - 5 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.
  - 6 Adopted by Convention 2021. Previously there was no quorum specified. This was an oversight in the original Canon. Without this change a quorum would be 51%+1 which is basically impossible.
  - 7 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.
  - 8 Convention 2013 added this section to deal with congregations that have quasi independent entities such as schools or day care
  - 9 Convention 2015 changed the word “Congregation” to “Parish.” See note iv above for explanation.
  - 10 Convention 2010 adopted Section vii and following in order to clarify the previous version of the canon and to provide for a nominating process.
  - 11 Convention 2009 added “Priest-in-Charge” to make clear that a Priest-in-Charge is the president of the Corporation and presiding officer.
  - 12 “Deliberately destroyed” was added by Convention 2010
  - 13 Meadville changed from SW Deanery to NW by Convention 2012
  - 14 Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Credentials Committee from three clergy and three lay members to one from each order.
  - 15 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.
  - 16 Convention 2010 did away with a separate Site of the Next Convention Committee and gave this responsibility to the Resolutions Committee.
  - 17 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.
  - 18 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
  - 19 Convention 2009 changed the deadline for resolutions from 60 days to 45 before the meeting of convention.
  - 20 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.

- 
- 21 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.
- 22 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.
- 23 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.
- 24 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.

- 25 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.

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26 This section ii added by Convention 2020

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

28 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.

29 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.

30 Adopted by Convention in 2023. Rationale: While multiple dioceses are currently exploring arrangements to share bishops, these arrangements generally involve dioceses hiring a current bishop from another diocese and working together. We are aware of no dioceses, including Western New York or Northwestern Pennsylvania, that currently have processes in place to allow for the joint election of a new bishop for multiple jurisdictions.

The text of previous editions follows:

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

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

**Section B)** The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate to the electing Convention one or more <sup>30</sup>persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.

**i.** There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.

**ii.** Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.

**iii.** All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese and by these Canons.

**Section C)** The Transition Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary for the consecration, welcome, and transition to a new Bishop.