

# Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania

## Resolutions submitted to the 115th Convention

### Resolution A

**Originator:** Diocesan Council

**Subject:** 2026 Minimum Stipend and Allowances for Parochial Clergy

**Be it resolved**, that pursuant to Title IV, Canon 2,c.v each member of the clergy serving in the Diocese in a full time pastoral ministry or other stipendiary ministry as approved by the Bishop, shall receive a minimum annual cash stipend according to the following scale:

Years of Ordained Service as of January 1, 2026:

Less than two (2) years	\$47,301
Two to four (2 to 4) years	\$52,777
Four to Six (4 to 6) years	\$59,205
Six to Eight (6 to 8) years	\$63,073
Eight (8) years or more	\$66,940

The above figures represent an estimated **2.7%** increase over the 2025 figures.

**Resolved**, that each cure shall provide for its clergy, whether full time or part time, a paid vacation of four weeks (including Sundays) each year; and be it further

**Resolved**, that when a federal holiday falls on the regular day off of a cleric or on a major Feast Day, that the clergyperson be encouraged to take another day that week as the day off. The federal holidays are: New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; President's Day; Memorial Day; Juneteenth; Independence Day; Labor Day; Columbus Day; Veterans' Day; Thanksgiving Day; and Christmas Day; and be it further

**Resolved**, that clergy shall also receive an amount equal to at least one-half of their self-employment tax, fully paid premium for the Church Pension Fund, life insurance of \$25,000, and group health insurance coverage for the clergyperson and family; and be it further

**Resolved**, that each cure shall provide for its resident full-time clergy a reimbursement allowance for ordinary and necessary business and professional expense incurred on behalf of the cure; further that a reimbursement allowance worksheet is used by congregations, in establishing a fair value amount for these expenses. Ordinary and necessary expenses shall include, but not be limited to: the use of personal automobile, overnight travel including lodging and meals, books and subscriptions, vestments, and professional dues. Clergy will be reimbursed monthly for the professional use of their automobiles at the current IRS rate plus tolls and parking based upon monthly written record submitted to the treasurer of the congregation by the clergy. Reimbursement for the other expenses shall be pre-approved by the Vestry/Bishop's Committee and paid upon receipts submitted to the treasurer of the congregation; and be it further

**Resolved**, that any congregation that is financially unable to meet these minimum stipends and allowances shall, by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, consult with the Bishop. This consultation shall include consideration of total clergy support, thus providing the congregation with some flexibility in structuring the overall clergy support package. This consultation may also include the phasing in over a maximum of three years of the minimum annual stipend; and be it further

**Resolved**, that each cure shall provide use of a suitable rectory, with utilities, except for personal toll calls; or else an adequate housing allowance. Where a clergyperson lives in a rectory, an adequate Equity Allowance shall be provided in the form of a tax sheltered annuity or other similar investments; and be it further

**Resolved**, that each cure shall encourage its Rector/Vicar to seek some kind of continuing education each year, and to that end shall provide a continuing education allowance of not less than \$1,500 and two weeks paid continuing education leave. If any portion thereof be unused, this money shall be deposited in a continuing education interest-bearing account for future use and up to six weeks leave may be accrued for use as a continuing education leave. In the event the cleric changes cures, the balance of funds in this account shall be retained for the use of the clergy of the cure and not diverted for any other purpose.

**Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania  
Summarized Adopted 2026 Budget - Operations, Program & Strategy**

<u>Accounts</u>	<u>2026 Adopted</u>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Total Assessments	704,661
Trust Funds - Operations	251,275
Trust Funds - Program	119,500
Trust Funds - Strategy	436,504
Miscellaneous Income	4,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b><u>1,515,940</u></b>
<b>Expenses - Operations</b>	
<b>Personnel</b>	
Salaries / Housing Allowances	388,083
SECA & FICA	27,257
Pensions	28,154
Conferencing & Networking	6,000
Medical / Life Insurance	61,724
Worker's Compensation	3,000
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b><u>514,217</u></b>
<b>Diocesan Center Expenses</b>	
Maintenance & Supplies	30,000
Utilities	9,000
Capital Expenditures	27,000
Property Taxes	3,000
Staff Travel	35,000
Staff Travel - Assisting Bishop	32,000
Telephone & Internet	29,200
Office Operating Expenses	55,063
Diocesan Convention	25,000
Professional Services	20,000
Bishop Search	88,000
Transition Expenses	-
<b>Total Diocesan Center Expenses</b>	<b><u>353,263</u></b>
<b>Church-Wide Relations</b>	
National Church Apportionment	87,456
Conferences & Convention	5,000
<b>Total Church-Wide Relations</b>	<b><u>92,456</u></b>
<b>Total Expenses-Operations</b>	<b><u>959,936</u></b>

**Expenses - Program****Retiree's Benefits & Support**

Retirees Insurance Contribution	5,000
Surviving Spouse Insurance Contr.	2,500
<b>Total Retiree's Benefits &amp; Support</b>	<b>7,500</b>

**Mission Support**

Youth & Young Adult Ministry	35,000
Leadership Development	40,000
Aspirants Retreat	6,000
Anti-Racism & Racial Reconciliation	10,000
Clergy Retreat	10,000
Diocesan Ministry Support	1,000
<b>Total Mission Support</b>	<b>102,000</b>

**Ecumenical Relations/Community Services**

PA Council of Churches	5,000
Campus Ministry	5,000
<b>Total Ecumenical Relations</b>	<b>10,000</b>

**Total Expenses-Program** **119,500**

**Expenses - Strategy****Personnel**

Salaries / Housing Allowance	40,546
SECA & FICA	3,102
Pensions	7,857
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>51,504</b>

**Strategic Initiatives**

New Development	20,000
Erie Episcopal	200,000
Erie - St. Marks	50,000
Hermitage - Resurrection	60,000
New Castle - Trinity	30,000
Leadership Bishop Disc	25,000
<b>Total Strategic Initiatives</b>	<b>385,000</b>

**Total Expenses-Strategy** **436,504**

**Total Expenses**

**1,515,940**

**Surplus/(Deficit)** **(0)**

## Resolution C

**Originator:** The NWPA Committee on Constitution and Canons

**Subject:** Resolution to Clarify Acquisition of Property and Congregational Incorporation

**Resolved,** that Diocesan Convention amend Title II, Canon 8, Section A) to read:

*Section A)*

~~Any Congregation or other institution holding or intending to hold title to real property shall be incorporated.~~ *A Congregation or other institution or entity belonging to the Diocese or any congregation of this Diocese shall not acquire title to real property without the prior consent of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. In such cases, the Congregation, institution, or entity shall be incorporated or obtain similar legal status.* Its form of incorporation shall be in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in harmony with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and the directions of Diocesan Convention.

**Explanation:** This amendment makes the canons for acquiring property parallel to other canons regarding property decisions. It also removes the requirement present in the current canon that requires all current congregations owning property to be incorporated. This requirement is problematic since we recently discovered a number of our congregations both own property and are not incorporated, and there is no need at present for them to do the work to incorporate.

## Resolution D

**Originator:** The NWPA Committee on Constitution and Canons  
**Subject:** Resolution to Fix Typo in Canon Numbering

**Resolved,** that Diocesan Convention renumber “Title II. Of Diocesan Convention” to “Title III. of Diocesan Convention.

**Explanation:** This resolution fixes a typo made sometime between the 2021 and 2022 versions of the Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

## Resolution E

**Originator:** The NWPA Committee on Constitution and Canons  
**Subject:** Resolution to Amend the Constitution: Second Reading

To Allow the Calculation of Quorum at Diocesan Convention to be Determined by the Canons

**Resolved,** that Diocesan Convention approve the second reading to amend Article III.D.1 of the Diocesan Constitution to read:

1. **Quorum:** a quorum for the transaction of business shall be prescribed by the canon.

Previous Text:

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

**Explanation:** During the past few Diocesan Conventions, we have been in danger of not meeting the quorum requirements for clergy, in part because of the large proportion of retired clergy in our diocese, many of whom are unable to attend Diocesan Convention. This change to the Constitution would allow us, after a second reading of this amendment at the next Diocesan Convention, to change the requirements for a quorum via our Canons which require only one Diocesan Convention to amend.

## Resolution F

**Originator:** The NWPA Committee on Constitution and Canons

**Subject:** Resolution to Add Diocesan Convention Quorum to Canons in Accordance with Amendment to Constitution

**Resolved,** that Diocesan Convention create a new Title II, Canon 1, Section C) to read:

*Section C) Quorum*

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

**Explanation:** We have passed a first reading of a Constitutional change that moves the quorum requirements for Diocesan Convention from the Constitution to the Canons. If we pass the proposed second reading at this Convention, we need quorum language in our Canons. This resolution moves the language that had previously been in the Constitution to the Canons. The Constitution and Canons committee believes that this amendment, combined with the changes made in 2024 regarding the clergy entitled to vote, will allow our future conventions to meet the requirement for a quorum and ensure we have adequate representation for carrying out our business.

## Resolution G

**Originator:** The NWPA Committee on Constitution and Canons  
**Subject:** Resolution to Update the Canons on the Commission on Ministry

**Resolved,** that Diocesan Convention replace the current Title III, Canon 4, Section A with the following:

*Canon 4 Of the Commission on Ministry*

*Section A) Composition*

- i. The Commission on Ministry will have no less than five members and no more than nine members. The membership of the Commission on Ministry will have no less than two Priests in Good Standing, one Deacon in Good Standing, and two Lay Persons in Good Standing.*
- ii. Each member of the Commission on Ministry will serve a one-year term, which may be renewed by the Ecclesiastical Authority.*
- iii. The Ecclesiastical Authority will nominate members of the Commission on Ministry at each annual Diocesan Convention.*

**Explanation:** The current Canon relating the Commission on Ministry creates a joint CoM with the Diocese of Western New York. This change recreates our own CoM. The flexibility in the number of members and their terms is designed to help us through our current interim process. Once the CoM is up and running and we have a new bishop in place, the CoM can recommend changes in their structure.

## Resolution H

**Originator:** Standing Committee of Northwestern Pennsylvania  
**Subject:** Resolution for Special Convention to Elect a Bishop Diocesan

**Resolved,** that the Convention adopt the following Special Rules for the Electing Convention of the Ninth Bishop of the Diocese:

Location, Time, and Business of the Special Convention. A Special Convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania will convene at the Cathedral of St. Paul, Erie on August 8th, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. to elect the Ninth Bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania as Bishop Diocesan.

No other business will be in order.

Officers of the Special Convention. The officers of the Special Convention will be the officers of the Convention elected at the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania on October 24-25, 2025.

In Person Only. In accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania, only members of the Convention attending in person will be eligible to vote in the Special Convention. There will be no provision for proxy or remote voting.

Lay Delegates eligible to vote at the Special Convention. Lay delegates eligible to vote at the Special Convention and their alternates will be those duly elected according to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and the bylaws of the electing congregations. Unless changes are duly reported between the Annual and Special Conventions, delegates and alternates for the Annual Convention will be the same delegates and alternates for the Special Convention. Any congregation, Vestry, or Bishop's Committee electing new delegates or alternates between the Annual and Special Conventions must report the names of their new delegates and alternates to the Secretary of the Convention no later than 30 days prior to the Special Convention, August 8, 2026. Up to and during the Special Convention, clerics in charge of congregations may replace any absent delegate with a duly elected alternate by submitting the change via email to the Secretary of the Convention. If there is no cleric in charge of a congregation, a warden, secretary, or clerk of the congregation may petition up to and during the Special Convention, to replace any absent delegate with a duly elected alternate by submitting the petition via email to the Secretary of the Convention. The Committee on Credentials must certify the replacement before any alternate is registered, seated, and eligible to vote as a delegate.

Clergy eligible to vote at the Special Convention. Clergy eligible to vote at the Special Convention will be determined according to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. No more than 60 and no less than 30 calendar days before the Special Convention, August 8, 2026, the Ecclesiastical Authority will provide to the Secretary of the Convention and to the Standing Committee the list of clergy eligible to vote.

**Quorum.** A quorum for the Special Convention to elect a bishop requires a majority of all clergy eligible to vote and at least two-thirds of all congregations represented by at least one lay delegate. The Committee on Credentials will certify the presence of a quorum at the opening of the Special Convention.

**Nominations.** Nominations for election as Bishop Diocesan will be made by the Diocese's Bishop Search and Transition Committee, which will nominate the candidates identified by the search process and approved by the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee will nominate any candidates identified by the petition process who are qualified under the standards established by the Bishop Search and Transition Committee and approved by the Standing Committee. Nominations will then be closed. Nominations from the floor will not be in order.

**Ballot Preparation.** The Standing Committee will prepare the ballot, combining nominees submitted by the Diocese's Search and Transition Committee and nominees by petition presented together as the slate of nominees. The order of names on the ballot will be determined by lot without distinguishing between search committee nominees and petition nominees.

**Election Requirements.** Each vote will be taken by orders, clergy and lay, and an election will require a concurrent majority of those present and voting in each order as required the Constitution. The Committee on Credentials will report the number of members present in each order before the first ballot. For each ballot cast, the number of members present in each order will be deemed equal to the number of ballots submitted, including all valid ballots for nominees, all blank ballots, and any ballots marked "none of the above."

**Voting Process.** The election of the bishop will be conducted by scantron electronic ballot. The Secretary of the Convention will prepare paper ballots as a backup in the event the electronic ballot system fails at any time during the Convention. At the conclusion of each vote, if there is no election, the Convention will receive new ballots and vote again until the Convention elects or adjourns under these rules.

**Procedure for Certification of Votes.** The Standing Committee will establish procedures for certifying the outcome of each vote and will supervise the counting and certification as necessary. The Secretary of the Standing Committee will report the certified results of each vote to the Secretary of the Convention.

**Nominee Withdrawal.** Except as provided in these rules, all nominees will remain on the ballot for each vote. A nominee may withdraw at any time. A withdrawal must be submitted in writing to the President of the Standing Committee, either in person or by email. Once a nominee has withdrawn, that name may not be reentered on the ballot.

**Extension of the Special Convention.** If the Special Convention does not elect a Bishop Diocesan by 6:00 p.m., August 8, 2026, the Convention will adjourn until 2:00 p.m. on the afternoon of Sunday, August 9, 2026, unless the Convention, by a two-thirds vote, sets a different time for adjournment.

Failure to Elect. If the Special Convention does not elect a Bishop Diocesan by the end of Sunday, August 9, 2026, and unless the Convention, by a two-thirds vote, sets another date and time to continue the election, the Convention will adjourn sine die, and there will be no election.

Signing the Attestation of a Due and Lawful Election. Immediately following the final ballot, and provided that a Bishop Diocesan is elected, while the Special Convention remains in session, the President of the Convention will arrange to gather the signatures of a constitutional majority of the Convention attesting to the due and lawful election of the Bishop Diocesan of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

## Resolution I

**Originator:** The Joint Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination of WNY & NWPA  
**Subject:** Need for Diverse Staffing on All Levels

**Resolved**, that the newly reconstituted Diocese of NWPA live into the Gospel call of Becoming Beloved Community by intentionally identifying and transitioning from practices in governance, operations, worship and community ministry that result in complicity with racism, discrimination or exclusion toward healing through loving, liberating, life-giving relationship with all God's children.

**Resolved**, that decision-makers, including the laity, clergy and diocesan staff, be mindful of and take steps to mitigate inequitable outcomes for people of color and those from indigenous, immigrant, LGBTQ+, women, differently abled, economically vulnerable and other marginalized communities who have been historically discouraged from full participation in the Church.

**Resolved**, that every effort be made to increase representation of people of color and those who have been historically discouraged from full participation in the Diocese of NWPA through hiring, staffing and appointment at all levels of diocesan church organizations, including clergy leadership and congregational staffing as well as appointment to committees, commissions and specialized taskforces, both paid and volunteer. Where selection is by election, steps should be taken to encourage a slate of diverse candidates.

**Resolved**, that those involved in recruitment, screening and/or selection processes for hiring, appointing and staffing at both diocesan and congregational levels be informed of The Episcopal Church's Model Practices for Racial Reconciliation and Healing, receive specialized training as called for in Resolution 2024-A035<sup>1</sup> and establish Model Policies for Anti/Racism/Racial Reconciliation Work. This training shall be conducted for members of the Bishop Search Committee, diocesan leadership, and all clergy, *as currently required by The Episcopal Church*.

**Resolved**, that members of The Joint Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination of WNY and NWPA be trained in The Episcopal Church's Model Practices for Racial Reconciliation and Healing and create a summary document for distribution across NWPA congregations.

**Resolved**, that The Joint Commission to Dismantle Racism and Discrimination of WNY and NWPA, as well as The Union of Black Episcopalians (national) and The UBE Bishop James Theodore Holly Chapter (local) be utilized as resources for outreach and recruitment by the Bishop Search Committee and other recruitment processes as appropriate.

**Explanation:** What is understood today as the ministry of Becoming Beloved Community and Racial Reconciliation has not always been endorsed by The Episcopal Church. The history of our Church reveals periods of participation in and of complicity with racism and discrimination in the Church's understanding of the Gospel and of the role of the Church in society. The struggle for inclusion and full participation for all of God's children within the Church has been long and slow and remains incomplete today, as documented in the most recent Racial Justice Audit<sup>2</sup>.

All of us, regardless of our race, gender, cultural ethnicity, immigration status, economic standing, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, urban or rural background, etc., understand the world through the lens of our own unique experience and background. We have much diversity amongst us. But as a predominately white diocese, the legacy of our past continues to limit our capacity to understand how to move away from racism and discrimination. Becoming Beloved Community calls for healing through authentic relationship-building across differences, mutual learning, inclusive welcome and love.

Greater racial and cultural diversity within diocesan and congregational leadership is a resource. Inclusion strengthens our capacity for Becoming Beloved Community beyond the limitations of decision-making from a white-only perspective. Fairness and openness to learning from difference grows capacity to live in loving relationship with all God's children.

1. <https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/481?house=HD&lang=en>
2. <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/racial-reconciliation/racial-justice-audit/>

Contact Person:

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## Resolution J

**Originators:** May Anne Anibaldi, Rebecca Babo, Sarah Brock, Carol Carlson, Joyce Gieza, Melinda Hall, Monica Irwin, Zach Irwin, Tim Kroh, Kelly McDonald, MaryAnn Robinson, Laura Rutland

**Subject:** Private Use of Worship Spaces

**Whereas** under the Obama administration houses of worship were previously considered “sensitive locations,” with federal guidance indicating that immigration actions by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and other governmental agencies were to be avoided unless absolutely necessary;

**Whereas** the Trump administration sent an internal directive to DHS rescinding the designation of “sensitive locations” to houses of worship on January 20, 2025;

**Whereas** The Episcopal Church joined other faith groups in a lawsuit February 11, 2025 asserting violations of religious freedom as a result of the rescinded designation;

**Whereas** the gospel of Jesus tells to offer hospitality to the stranger and to care for the “least of these;”

**Resolved,** that the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania will comply with federal law and will seek to protect immigrants and foreigners where protection is warranted;

**Resolved,** that the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania urge its clergy and people to designate sacred space in buildings as “private;”

**Resolved,** that the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania urge its people and clergy to learn the difference in warrants and ensure that all proper procedures are followed by any arresting agency that may come into a church building;

**Resolved,** that the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania understands that by these actions, the people of this diocese are putting faith in action and attempting to embody the gospel of the one who called us to care for the stranger in our midst.

**Explanation:** Since the Mosaic law (e.g. Deuteronomy 10:18-9, Leviticus 19:33-34), followers of God have been asked to care for the stranger and foreigner in their lands. This reaches new expression in Jesus, who particularly welcomed the poor and marginalized, and explicitly told his disciple to show hospitality (e.g. Matthew 25:31-45). This call to care for the outside, the stranger, the wayfarer, and the ones needing help is repeated in numerous New Testament epistles (e.g. Hebrews 13:2, 1 Peter 4:9). As Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe has written “immigrants and refugees are not at the edges, fearful and alone, but are the very center of God’s story” and as House of Deputies President Julia Ayla Harris said, “Welcoming the stranger is not a political

act—it's a sacred obligation.”<sup>1</sup> We cannot pretend or ignore the raids happening in our cities, boroughs, and neighborhoods, nor can we ignore our obligation to use our buildings to protect immigrants.

Designating spaces as “private” does not violate the law; by so designating a space, it makes that space subject to judicial warrants rather than administrative warrants. This adds a level of protection for the people in our sacred spaces. One need not designate the entire building or the sanctuary as private; rooms or offices can be designated private.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Public Affairs, The Episcopal Church, “Episcopal Church joins religious freedom lawsuit challenging ICE enforcement actions in churches,” February 11, 2025, <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs/episcopal-church-joins-religious-freedom-lawsuit-challenging-ice-enforcement-actions-in-churches/>.

## **Petition to Change Congregational Status**

### **St. Laurence Church, Osceola Mills**

In accord with Title II, Canon 7, Section C of the Diocesan Canons, the Standing Committee, acting as Ecclesiastical Authority requests that Convention change the status of St. Laurence Church, Osceola Mills from Mission to that of Unorganized Congregation.

Therefore, be it resolved, that this 103rd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania hereby changes the status of St. Laurence Church, Osceola Mills, to that of Unorganized Congregation.