

**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 be prescribed by the canon.<sup>2</sup>

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

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

120 **4. Elections:**

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

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

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

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

132 e) If any office remains unfilled after three ballots the Convention may decide to elect  
133 persons to the remaining offices by a plurality of votes cast rather than by requiring  
134 a majority of votes cast or may decide to drop from the ballot the person with the

- 135 lowest number of votes. Any motion to make such alteration in the election process  
136 shall require a majority of three fourths.  
137 f) Any person elected to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania shall  
138 assume office at the close of the convention at which they are elected.  
139 g) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern  
140 Pennsylvania or in any of its congregations shall continue in office until their  
141 successor is chosen and shall at all times well and faithfully discharge the duties of  
142 their office to the best of their ability.  
143 h) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern  
144 Pennsylvania, or in any of its congregations or other organizations, when they leave  
145 office shall deliver to their successor all records and documents appertaining to that  
146 office in whatever form they may exist.

147 **5. Other matters**

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

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

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

180 from among its members. The Secretary of Convention shall serve as secretary of the  
181 council and corporation. The Treasurer of Convention shall serve as treasurer of the council  
182 and corporation. The Chancellor of Convention shall serve as chancellor of the council and  
183 corporation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

222 **Section B. Qualification of voters**

- 223 1. In order to vote in the election of any bishop the members of convention shall meet the  
224 requirements of Article III, Section B, but with the following changes:

- 225 a) It is required that all bishops, deacons and presbyters shall have been canonically  
226 resident in the diocese for at least one year preceding the convention.  
227 b) No member who is otherwise qualified shall be denied a vote in the election because  
228 of the provisions of Article III, Section B. subsections 4, 5, or 6.

229 **Section C. Voting**

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

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

- 250 **Section A.** An Ecclesiastical Court is hereby established in accordance with the Constitution  
251 and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The court's membership, mode of nomination,  
252 qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed in the canons.  
253 **Section B.** The Ecclesiastical Court shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
254 vacancies that may occur in its own body.  
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256 **Article XI. Amendments of the Constitution**

- 257 **Section A.** A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the  
258 Secretary of Convention not later than 60 days prior to the meeting of an Annual  
259 Convention.  
260 **Section B.** The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee on Constitution and  
261 Canons which shall report on the proposed amendment at that Annual Convention.  
262 **Section C.** Voting on a proposed amendment shall be done by a vote by orders.  
263 **Section D.** If the proposed amendment is approved by a concurrent majority of both orders,  
264 the proposed amendment shall lay over to the next Annual Convention where its  
265 consideration shall be one of the first orders of business. If again approved by a concurrent  
266 majority in both orders voting separately, then the Constitution shall be amended and the  
267 amendment shall take effect at the end of that Convention.

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

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>3</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>4</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

361 present in the minutes of the meeting without distinction as to their virtual or in-person  
362 attendance. <sup>5</sup>  
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364 **Title II. Of Congregations In The Diocese**  
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366 **Canon 1. Of Congregations**

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

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

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

379 **Section D)** A Parish is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the  
380 Convention of the Diocese and<sup>6</sup> which is totally financially self-supporting and has at  
381 least 50 adult Communicants In Good Standing and has been granted Parish status by  
382 the Diocesan Convention. A Parish also maintains a place of worship, provides an  
383 adequate living for a full time priest equivalent to or exceeding the minimum salary and  
384 benefits currently required by the Diocese, remains current in payment of its assessment,  
385 and pays all its own operating expenses. Two or more Congregations may form a single  
386 Parish with the approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Convention.  
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388 **Canon 2. Of The Organizing Of Missions**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

437                           **i.**   In every Mission an Annual Meeting shall be held in January or at such other time as  
438                           the Ecclesiastical Authority may designate. Public notice of the same shall be given  
439                           at all the services on the two preceding weekends.  
440                           **ii.**   The Annual Meeting shall be presided over by the Vicar, or if the office be vacant, or  
441                           if the Vicar be absent, by the Bishop's Warden. When the Annual Meeting is called  
442                           to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.  
443                           **iii.**   Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Mission who are physically present, who  
444                           are at least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local  
445                           church, and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to  
446                           the support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church  
447                           as shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of  
448                           the Mission.  
449                           **iv.**   A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Meeting shall consist of  
15% of all the persons entitled to vote if they were present.<sup>7</sup>

- 450 v. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Mission<sup>8</sup> at the same time.  
451 vi. The Mission may nominate to the Ecclesiastical Authority not less than five nor  
452 more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be appointed as the  
453 Bishop's Committee. The length of one term of office for members of the Bishop's  
454 Committee shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,  
455 nominated each year at the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 517 **i.** In every Parish, the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held in January at a time and  
518 place designated by the Vestry. Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given at  
519 all the services on the two preceding weekends. With the consent of the  
520 Ecclesiastical Authority, the Annual Meeting may be held during a different month.
- 521 **ii.** The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive  
522 reports from the Vestry, parish officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the  
523 new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.
- 524 **iii.** Any subordinate entity wholly owned by the Parish which has any paid staff shall  
525 have its own bylaws. All such bylaws and any amendments thereto shall first be  
526 submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee for approval prior  
527 to being approved by the Vestry.<sup>9</sup>
- 528 **iv.** The Annual Parish Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector or Priest-in-  
529 Charge, or if the office be vacant, or if the Rector or Priest-in-Charge be absent, by  
530 the Senior Warden. When the Annual Parish Meeting is called to order, the  
531 qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 532 **v.** Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Parish who are physically present, who are at  
533 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
534 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
535 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
536 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all Parish Meetings.
- 537 **vi.** A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Parish Meeting shall  
538 consist of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons  
539 entitled to vote, whichever is less.

- 540           vii. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Parish at the same  
541           time.<sup>10</sup>
- 542           viii. <sup>11</sup>Each Parish shall have a Vestry consisting of not less than five nor more than  
543           twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing elected by the annual Parish Meeting.  
544           The number of persons to serve on the Vestry of the Parish shall be set by resolution  
545           of two successive Annual Parish Meetings. Upon affirmative vote of the second  
546           Annual Parish Meeting the change in number shall take immediate effect.
- 547           ix. The qualifications of persons to serve on the Vestry shall be the same as the  
548           qualifications to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting as set out above except that the  
549           person to be elected need not be present at the Meeting.
- 550           x. No cleric shall be eligible for election as a member of the Vestry.
- 551           xi. In each Parish the Vestry may by resolution designate the nominating Committee,  
552           otherwise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge together with the Senior Warden and the  
553           Junior Warden shall be the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee  
554           shall publish to the parish two weeks prior to the Annual Parish Meeting a ballot  
555           with sufficient qualified nominees to fill the vacancies on the Vestry for the  
556           upcoming year.
- 557           xii. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Parish  
558           Meeting. The nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee. Any question  
559           of the nominee's qualification to serve shall be resolved by the Rector or Priest-in-  
560           Charge prior to the election of Vestry members. In the absence of a Rector or Priest-  
561           in-Charge, the Senior Warden shall have the responsibility for determining the  
562           qualifications of any person nominated from the floor.
- 563           xiii. Each Annual Parish Meeting shall elect persons to serve on the Vestry replacing  
564           those members whose term in office has ended.
- 565           xiv. The length of one term of office for members of the Vestry shall be three years  
566           with one third of the members, or as near as may be, elected each year at the Annual  
567           Parish Meeting.

**Section C) Of Special Parish Meetings**

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

**Section D) Of Vestries**

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

- 585 for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare  
586 of the Parish; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is provided with all  
587 things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and  
588 provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Parish  
589 Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next  
590 year.
- 591 **ii.** As to civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector  
592 or Priest-in-Charge shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the  
593 President of the corporation. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge then the Senior  
594 Warden shall be the President of the Corporation.<sup>12</sup>
- 595 **iii.** The Vestry, in accordance with the Canon “Of Membership In Convention” shall  
596 elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan  
597 Convention.
- 598 **iv.** The Lay Officers of a Parish shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden,  
599 Clerk and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the  
600 Parish and at least 18 years of age. No cleric or spouse of a cleric may serve as an  
601 Officer of the Parish.
- 602 **v.** The Senior Warden shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the  
603 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, from among the members of the Vestry. If there be no  
604 Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall nominate  
605 a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
- 606 **vi.** It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector or Priest-in-  
607 Charge, to advise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge on all matters pertaining to the  
608 parish upon which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge may wish to consult the Senior  
609 Warden, and to inform the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of all matters which the Senior  
610 Warden feels the Rector needs to know.
- 611 **vii.** If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden  
612 to assume all the temporal duties of the Rector including, but not limited to,  
613 presiding at Vestry meetings, signing documents, filing reports, and maintaining the  
614 Parish Register. In addition, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to provide for  
615 the continuation of Divine Worship.
- 616 **viii.** The Junior Warden shall be elected annually from among their number by the  
617 Vestry. It shall be the duty of the Junior Warden to see to the care of the Parish’s  
618 physical property making sure that it is being kept clean and in good order and  
619 repair. In the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden is to assume the  
620 duties of the Senior Warden.
- 621 **ix.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Parish are met and that  
622 the buildings belonging to the Parish are kept in good repair and are adequately  
623 insured. Under the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall see that all things needed  
624 for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments  
625 are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the  
626 absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall, with the advice of the  
627 Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
- 628 **x.** A Clerk shall be elected annually by the Vestry from among their number to serve  
629 until a successor has been chosen. The Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes

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

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

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

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

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

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

665 **xvi. Indemnification**

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

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

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

697                   **Section A)       Books and Records**

698                   **i.   Members**

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

713                   **ii. Minutes**

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

717                   **iii. Financial**

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

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

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

724 **Section B) Preservation**

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

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

732 iii. Prior to taking any books or records away from the location specified in section  
733 1, the person taking them must notify the priest in charge or Warden of the  
734 Congregation. No one may give notice to themselves.

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

737 v. Items of historical interest should be collected and preserved in similar secure  
738 locations.

739 **Section C) Reports**

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

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

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

749  
750 **Canon 7. Of The Reduction And Dissolution Of Congregations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

779

780            **Canon 8.        Of Property**

781            **Section A)**        A Congregation or other institution or entity belonging to the Diocese or  
782                            any congregation of this Diocese shall not acquire title to real property without the prior  
783                            consent of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the  
784                            Diocesan Council. In such cases, the Congregation, institution, or entity shall be  
785                            incorporated or obtain similar legal status. Its form of incorporation shall be in  
786                            accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in harmony with  
787                            the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and the  
788                            directions of Diocesan Convention.<sup>13</sup>

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>14</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 9. 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.  
858

859

860

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

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

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

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

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

874 **ii.** No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established  
875 by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.

876 **iii.** No election shall be had until the name of the priest whom it is proposed to elect  
877 has been made known to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority  
878 shall have sixty days in which to communicate with the Vestry. No election may be  
879 had until the Vestry meets in special session to consider the comments of the  
880 Ecclesiastical Authority.

881 **iv.** The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens  
882 of the Parish, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the  
883 Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

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

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

896 **Section F) Assistants**

897 **i.** Prior to the calling of an Assistant, the Rector of the calling Parish shall submit the  
898 name of the priest he proposes to call to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The

- 899 Ecclesiastical Authority shall have 60 days to communicate with the Rector and  
900 Vestry about the Cleric they propose to call.
- 901 **ii.** The Ecclesiastical Authority may accept Letters Dimissory for the Assistant or may  
902 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 11. 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 12. 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>15</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 Meadville, 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 III. Of Diocesan Convention**

#### 957           **Canon 1. Of Membership In Convention**

##### 958           **Section A) Clergy Members**

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

961           ii.    All Priests currently in active ministry and in Good Standing in the Diocese, along  
962           with all retired Priests in Good Standing in the Diocese who are in attendance at the  
963           Diocesan Convention, shall have seat, voice, and vote in the Clergy order at that  
964           Diocesan Convention.  
965

966           iii.   All Deacons currently in active ministry and in Good Standing in the Diocese,  
967           along with all retired Deacons in Good Standing in the Diocese who are in  
968           attendance at the Diocesan Convention, shall have seat, voice, and vote in the Clergy  
969           order at that Diocesan Convention.<sup>16</sup>

##### 970           **Section B) Lay Members**

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

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

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

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

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

- 988           vi.     All Delegates to Convention shall be certified to the Credentials Committee on  
989           the form provided by the Committee and no later than March first.
- 990           vii.    Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to submit the Annual  
991           Parochial Report due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Diocesan  
992           Convention shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention.
- 993           viii.   Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to provide evidence,  
994           adequate to the Ecclesiastical Authority, of the Annual Audit required by National  
995           Canon due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Convention shall not be  
996           entitled to vote at that Convention.
- 997           ix.     Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to pay the assessment  
998           levied upon that Congregation shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention unless  
999           that Congregation has been granted relief by the Diocesan Council and is current on  
1000           that agreement. A Congregation shall be considered to have failed if their assessment  
1001           is not paid current through the end of the month that occurs no less than 15 days  
1002           prior to the start of any Convention.

1003       **Section C)     Quorum**     A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of  
1004       one third of the clergy entitled to vote and at least one lay delegate from each of one  
1005       third of the congregations in union with convention. In the absence of a quorum a  
1006       majority of those present may adjourn the convention.<sup>17</sup>

1008       **Canon 2.     Of Officers Of The Convention**

1009       **Section A)**     The Officers of Convention shall consist of a President, Secretary,  
1010       Treasurer and Chancellor.

1011       **i.     President**

- 1012           a.     The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, will be President of and preside at meetings  
1013           of the Diocesan Convention.
- 1014           b.     If there is no Bishop Diocesan then the person to preside at the Convention is  
1015           chosen in accordance with the provisions in the Diocesan Constitution.

1016       **ii.    Secretary**

- 1017           a.     Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
1018           elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing to be  
1019           Secretary of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
1020           office, the Secretary is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 1021           b.     The Secretary shall be responsible to take minutes and to produce a journal of  
1022           the proceedings of every Diocesan Convention. This journal shall be available to  
1023           the Congregations of the Diocese not more than 120 days after the adjournment  
1024           of the Convention.
- 1025           c.     The Secretary shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Secretary of  
1026           Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1027           Constitution and these Canons.
- 1028           d.     The Secretary shall deliver to his successor all papers and materials in his  
1029           possession which belong to the Diocese.

1030       **iii.   Treasurer**

- 1031           a.     Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
1032           elect either a Lay Person in Good Standing or a Cleric in Good Standing to be

- 1033 Treasurer of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
1034 office, the Treasurer is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 1035 **b.** The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the direction of the Diocesan Council,  
1036 for the collection, investment, and distribution of all money and securities due to,  
1037 held by, or payable by the Diocese and for the proper accounting thereof. The  
1038 Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and  
1039 income and expense reports of all funds under the control of the Diocese or its  
1040 officers to the Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all  
1041 assets and liabilities of the Diocese and the income and expenses of the general  
1042 operating funds to every meeting of the Diocesan Council and, as directed by  
1043 Diocesan Council, the income and expenses of all other funds under the control  
1044 of the Diocese or its officers.
- 1045 **c.** The Treasurer shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Treasurer of  
1046 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1047 Constitution and these Canons. The Treasurer and any assistants to the Treasurer  
1048 may be bonded with the expense being paid by the Diocese.
- 1049 **d.** The Treasurer shall deliver to her successor all papers and materials in the her  
1050 possession which belong to the Diocese.
- 1051 **iv. Chancellor**
- 1052 **a.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
1053 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing who is  
1054 licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be Chancellor  
1055 of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office,  
1056 the Chancellor is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 1057 **b.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan Council may  
1058 elect one or more Vice Chancellors, qualified as above, as may from time to time  
1059 appear necessary.
- 1060 **c.** The Chancellors shall function as the solicitor for and the legal advisor to, in the  
1061 following order: the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Diocesan  
1062 Council, and the Convention of the Diocese.
- 1063 **d.** The Chancellors shall be responsible to see that the Diocese follows and obeys  
1064 the National Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and these  
1065 Canons. The Chancellor shall interpret the meaning and application of these  
1066 Constitutions and Canons. His rulings may be appealed to the Diocesan  
1067 Convention or to the National Church as appropriate.
- 1068 **e.** The Chancellors shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Chancellor  
1069 of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
1070 Constitution and these Canons.
- 1071 **f.** The Chancellors shall deliver to their successors all papers and materials in their  
1072 possession which belong to the Diocese.

**Canon 3. Of Committees of Convention**

**Section A) Credentials**

- 1076 **i.** A Credentials Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1077 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1078           ii. The Credentials Committee shall consist of one Clergy Member and one Lay  
1079           Member of Convention.<sup>18</sup>

1080           iii. The Credentials Committee shall determine the right of persons to seat, voice,  
1081           and vote at Convention and shall recommend to Convention persons to whom the  
1082           Convention should grant seat and voice.

1083           iv. Any person denied a seat, voice or vote by the Credentials Committee may  
1084           appeal such denial to the Convention which shall make the final determination by a  
1085           majority vote.

1086   **Section B)           Dispatch of Business**

1087           i. A Dispatch of Business Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical  
1088           Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1089           ii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall consist of one or more Members of  
1090           Convention.

1091           iii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of Convention in  
1092           seeing that all the business of Convention is done in an efficient and expeditious  
1093           manner. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of  
1094           Convention in developing an agenda and rules of order for the Convention.

1095   **Section C)           Resolutions**

1096           i. A Resolution Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1097           elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1098           ii. The Resolutions Committee shall consist of two Clergy and two Lay Members.<sup>19</sup>

1099           iii. The Resolutions Committee shall give due consideration to all resolutions  
1100           submitted to it and shall present all such resolutions to the Diocesan Convention.

1101           iv. The Resolutions Committee shall develop any resolutions of courtesy to be  
1102           considered by the Convention.

1103           v. The Resolutions Committee shall recommend to Convention a place and date to hold  
1104           the next Annual Diocesan Convention.<sup>20</sup>

1105   **Section D)           Nominations**

1106           i. A Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1107           elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1108           ii. The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.

1109           iii. The Nominations Committee shall be responsible to present a ballot with  
1110           sufficient nominees for each office to be filled by Convention.<sup>21</sup>

1111   **Section E)           Judges of Election**

1112           i. Judges of Election shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by  
1113           each annual Diocesan Convention.

1114           ii. Three Members of Convention shall be elected to be the Judges of Election.

1115           iii. The Judges of Election shall oversee the distribution and counting of ballots for  
1116           each election as instructed by the President of the Convention.

1117  
1118   **Canon 4.           Of Nominations**

1119   **Section A)**           Any Cleric or Lay Person may, and all are encouraged to, nominate  
1120           qualified persons to fill the various offices to be chosen at each annual Convention.

- 1121           **Section B)**       The Nominations Committee of Convention shall give notice of the need  
1122                   for such nominations and shall set a final date for receiving of the same which shall be  
1123                   not less than thirty days prior to Convention.<sup>22</sup>
- 1124           **Section C)**       Any person submitting a nomination shall do so on such form provided  
1125                   and give such information as the Nominations Committee shall determine. Such  
1126                   information shall include at least the name and contact information for each nominee;  
1127                   their consent to serve if elected; a current digital photograph; and other relevant  
1128                   information.
- 1129           **Section D)**       A list of all nominees shall be published and distributed to all Delegates at  
1130                   least two weeks prior to the meeting of Convention.
- 1131           **Section E)**       Additional nominations may be made from the floor of Convention. The  
1132                   nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee and may present a short  
1133                   statement.

1134  
1135       **Canon 5.     Of Resolutions**

- 1136           **Section A)**       Resolutions properly considered by the Convention are those:
- 1137                   i. Submitted by a Cleric in Good Standing.
  - 1138                   ii. Submitted by a Lay Person in Good Standing.
  - 1139                   iii. Submitted by some Congregation of this Diocese.
  - 1140                   iv. Submitted by the Diocesan Council.
  - 1141                   v. Submitted by some other committee mentioned in these Canons.
- 1142           **Section B)**       All resolutions must bear the name of the individual or organization  
1143                   submitting the resolution.
- 1144           **Section C)**       All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary of Convention at least  
1145                   forty-five days prior to any Convention. Resolutions submitted less than forty-five days  
1146                   in advance may be considered on a two-thirds vote of the Convention.<sup>23</sup>
- 1147           **Section D)**       All resolutions submitted which would amend the Constitution or Canons  
1148                   of this Diocese are to be considered by the Constitution and Canons Committee. The  
1149                   Constitution and Canons Committee will review the resolution and
- 1150                   i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
  - 1151                   ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
    - 1152                           a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
    - 1153                           b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
    - 1154                           c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the  
1155                           resolution
- 1156           **Section E)**       Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by  
1157                   persons named in Section A i, ii, or iii of this Canon shall be considered by the  
1158                   Resolutions Committee of Convention. The Resolutions Committee will review the  
1159                   resolution and
- 1160                   i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
  - 1161                   ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
    - 1162                           a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
    - 1163                           b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
    - 1164                           c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the  
1165                           resolution

1166           **Section F)**           Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by  
1167                            Diocesan Council or other committees will be reported to Convention by the Diocesan  
1168                            Council or the committee and are assumed to have a recommendation that Convention  
1169                            adopt the resolution.  
1170

1171   **Title IV   Of Constitutional Committees**  
1172

1173   **Canon 1.   Of the Standing Committee**

1174   **Section A)**           Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one  
1175                            Lay Person in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Standing Committee.  
1176                            The election shall be done on a vote by orders.

1177   **Section B)**           The Standing Committee shall fulfill all duties prescribed for Standing  
1178                            Committees in the National Constitution and Canons and in the Constitution of this  
1179                            Diocese and in these Canons.

1180   **Section C)**           The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a President of  
1181                            the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a  
1182                            Secretary.<sup>24</sup>

1183   **Section D)**           The Standing Committee shall meet upon the call of the Bishop and from  
1184                            time to time in conformity with their own rules. They shall keep a record of their  
1185                            proceedings.

1186   **Section E)**           When a duty is to be performed, or a power exercised, by the Standing  
1187                            Committee a majority of the members shall be a quorum and a majority of the quorum  
1188                            so convened shall be competent to act, unless the contrary is expressly required by the  
1189                            National Constitution or Canons or the Constitution of this Diocese or these Canons.

1190   **Section F)**           <sup>25</sup> Members of the Standing Committee may be elected to and serve on  
1191                            the Disciplinary Board.<sup>26</sup>  
1192

1193   **Canon 2.   Of the Diocesan Council**

1194   **Section A)       Members**

1195    **i.**   The Bishop Diocesan, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, and  
1196           the Chancellor of Convention shall have seat, voice, and vote on the Diocesan  
1197           Council.

1198    **ii.**   The Lay Members of each annual Convention shall elect one Lay Person in Good  
1199           Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat, voice, and  
1200           vote.

1201    **iii.**   The Priests in Good Standing at each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in  
1202           Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat,  
1203           voice, and vote.

1204    **iv.**   The Deacons in Good Standing at every fourth annual Convention shall elect a  
1205           Deacon in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with  
1206           seat and voice but no vote.

1207   **Section B)       Officers**

1208    **i.**   The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, shall preside at, and be the President of, the  
1209           Diocesan Council. The Secretary of Convention shall be the Secretary of the  
1210           Diocesan Council. The Treasurer of Convention shall be the Treasurer of the

1211 Diocesan Council. The Chancellor of the Convention shall be the Chancellor of the  
1212 Diocesan Council.

1213 **ii.** If there is no Bishop Diocesan, the Diocesan Council shall elect annually one of the  
1214 members of Council to be the President of the Diocesan Council.

1215 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall elect each year one of the members of the Council to  
1216 serve a one year term as Vice President of the Council.

1217 **Section C) Work of the Diocesan Council**

1218 **i.** The Diocesan Council shall oversee the program and priorities of the Diocese and  
1219 make a report thereon to the annual Convention of the Diocese.

1220 **ii.** The Diocesan Council shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation known  
1221 as The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

1222 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention a  
1223 budget and schedule of assessments for the ensuing year.

1224 **iv.** The Diocesan Council may provide a means of relief to Congregations that are  
1225 having difficulty paying their assessment.

1226 **v.** The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention  
1227 minimum stipends and allowances for Clergy serving in the Diocese.

1228  
1229 **Section D) Committees**

1230 **i.** Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary to carry out  
1231 its work.

1232 **ii.** All committees shall have a definite term of existence and a stated purpose  
1233 determined by the council.

1234 **iii.** Committees shall consist of at least one member of Diocesan Council and such  
1235 other persons as Council may decide. These additional persons shall have seat, voice  
1236 and vote only as to the business of the committee. The member of Council on each  
1237 committee shall serve as liaison between the committee and Council.

1238 **iv.** The member of Council shall call the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter  
1239 each committee may effect its own organization provided that a quorum for the  
1240 transaction of business shall consist of a majority of all members of the committee.

1241 **Section E) Meetings**

1242 **i.** The Diocesan Council shall meet on a regular basis and at least once per calendar  
1243 quarter.

1244 **ii.** Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or Vice President of  
1245 the Council.

1246 **iii.** A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for  
1247 the transaction of business.

1248 **Section F) Indemnification**

1249 **i.** No member of Diocesan Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
1250 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:

1251 **a.** said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed  
1252 by these canons, and

1253 **b.** the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, wilful misconduct or  
1254 recklessness.

- 1255                   c. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of  
1256                   said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes pursuant  
1257                   to local, state, or federal law.
- 1258                   ii. The Diocese shall indemnify any Council member and may indemnify any other  
1259                   employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or  
1260                   who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed  
1261                   action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative,  
1262                   including any action by or on behalf of the Diocese by reason of the fact that she is  
1263                   or was a member of Council, employee, or agent of the Diocese, against expenses,  
1264                   including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually  
1265                   and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding  
1266                   unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is  
1267                   determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With  
1268                   respect to any such action, the Diocese may participate therein at its own expense;  
1269                   and the Diocese shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel  
1270                   selected by the Diocese to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being  
1271                   indemnified. After notice from the Diocese to such person of its election to assume  
1272                   the defense thereof, the Diocese shall not be liable to such person for any legal or  
1273                   other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense  
1274                   thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action,  
1275                   but the fees and expenses of such Counsel incurred after a notice from the Diocese  
1276                   of its assumption of the defense thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
1277

1278                   **Canon 3.     Of the Constitution and Canons Committee**

- 1279                   **Section A)**       Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one  
1280                   Lay Person in good standing to serve terms of three years on the Constitution and  
1281                   Canons Committee.
- 1282                   **Section B)**       The Bishop Diocesan and a Chancellor of the Diocese shall be members  
1283                   ex-officio of the Constitution and Canons Committee but shall not be counted in the  
1284                   determination of a quorum.
- 1285                   **Section C)**       The Constitution and Canons Committee shall effect its own organization.
- 1286                   **Section D)**       The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review and report to  
1287                   Convention on all proposals to amend the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese.
- 1288                   **Section E)**       The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review these Canons  
1289                   during the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal  
1290                   Church and propose such amendments to these Canons as they deem necessary or  
1291                   advisable.

1292

1293                   **Canon 4.     Of the Commission On Ministry**

- 1294                   **Section A)**       Composition.<sup>2728</sup>
- 1295                   i. The Commission on Ministry will have no less than five members and no more than  
1296                   nine members. The membership of the Commission on Ministry will have no less  
1297                   than two Priests in Good Standing, one Deacon in Good Standing, and two Lay  
1298                   Persons in Good Standing.

- 1299                   ii. Each member of the Commission on Ministry will serve a one-year term, which may  
1300                   be renewed by the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
1301                   iii. The Ecclesiastical Authority will nominate members of the Commission on  
1302                   Ministry at each annual Diocesan Convention.

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

1303 **Section C)** The Commission shall effect its own organization.

1304 **Section D)** The Commission shall faithfully fulfill all duties laid upon such  
1305 Commissions by the Nation Constitution and Canons and by the Constitution of this  
1306 Diocese and by these Canons.

1307 **Section E)** Additional persons may be co-opted by the Commission from time to  
1308 time because of their expertise or special knowledge. Any such co-opted members are  
1309 given seat and voice at meetings of the Commission but do not have a vote on  
1310 Commission business. Co-opted members will not be counted towards a quorum.  
1311

1312 **Canon 5. Of the Examining Chaplains**

1313 **Section A)** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each Annual Convention  
1314 shall elect three Clergy in Good Standing to be Examining Chaplains. The Examining  
1315 Chaplains shall assist the Bishop in determining whether persons seeking ordination  
1316 have knowledge, in accordance with the National Canons, sufficient for the Order they  
1317 seek.  
1318

1319 **Canon 6. Of the Ecclesiastical Court<sup>29 30</sup>**

1320 **Section A)** General

1321                   i. By virtue of Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and  
1322                   accountability to one another. The Church in this Diocese shall support its members  
1323                   in their life in Christ and work to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance,  
1324                   forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all  
1325                   involved or affected. This Canon applies to the clergy who have by their vows at  
1326                   ordination accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine,  
1327                   discipline, worship and obedience.

1328                   a. In accordance with the National Canons the Ecclesiastical Court in this diocese  
1329                   shall be known as the Disciplinary Board.

1330                   b. All proceedings under this canon shall be conducted in accordance with Title IV  
1331                   of the National Canons.

1332                   ii. Should this Diocese enter into any written agreement with one or more other  
1333                   dioceses to share Disciplinary Boards, as provided for in the National  
1334                   Canons, then that written agreement will be appended to these canons  
1335                   and, to the extent it varies any of the following provisions of this  
1336                   Canon, it shall have the full force and effect of this canon; but to the  
1337                   extent any of the provisions of this Canon are not varied by the  
1338                   aforesaid agreement, OR should there be no such agreement, then the  
1339                   Disciplinary Board of this Diocese shall be governed by the remainder of  
1340                   this Canon.<sup>31</sup>

1341 \*\*\*Such an Agreement, entitled “Regional Disciplinary Board” was entered into by  
1342 Convention 2020 and became effective January 1, 2021. See “Regional Disciplinary  
1343 Compact” appended to these Canons.\*\*\*

1344 **Section B) Membership**

- 1345 i. The Disciplinary Board shall consist of five Clergy in Good Standing and four Adult  
1346 Confirmed Lay Persons in Good Standing.<sup>32</sup>  
1347 ii. By May first of each year the Ecclesiastical authority shall nominate and the  
1348 Standing Committee shall elect three persons to serve on the Disciplinary Board for  
1349 a term of three years. Persons elected shall be from each order as required to  
1350 maintain the required make up of the Disciplinary Board.  
1351 iii. The term of office of each member of the Disciplinary Board shall commence on  
1352 July first of the year they are elected.

1353 **Section C) Vacancies**

- 1354 i. Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Disciplinary Board shall be filled  
1355 by majority vote of the Standing Committee upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical  
1356 Authority.  
1357 ii. Persons elected to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they  
1358 replace and meet the same requirements.  
1359 iii. Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy  
1360 unless sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.  
1361 iv. Persons elected to fill vacancies, other than pursuant to a challenge as provided  
1362 below, shall serve out the unexpired term of the person they replace.  
1363 v. With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement member of the  
1364 Board shall serve only for the proceedings for which the elected Board member is  
1365 not serving as a result of the challenge.

1366 **Section D) Preserving Impartiality**

- 1367 i. In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or  
1368 Hearing Panel of the Board shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or  
1369 undue bias, that member shall immediately notify the President of the Board and  
1370 request a replacement member of the Panel.  
1371 ii. Respondent's Counsel and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge any  
1372 member of a Panel for conflict of interest or undue bias by motion to the Panel for  
1373 disqualification of the challenged member. The members of the Panel not the  
1374 subjects of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether  
1375 the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that  
1376 proceeding.

1377 **Section E) President:** By June 30 of each year the Standing Committee shall  
1378 nominate and the Disciplinary Board for the ensuing year shall elect a President of the  
1379 Board to serve for the year.

1380 **Section F) Intake Officer(s):** An Intake Officer shall be appointed by the Bishop.  
1381 Additional Intake Officers, as needed, may be appointed from time to time in the same  
1382 manner. The Bishop shall publish the name(s) and contact information of the Intake  
1383 Officer(s) throughout the diocese.



- 1428                   • by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
1429                   diocese or  
1430                   • by the loose offering taken at all services when a Bishop visits a  
1431                   Congregation.  
1432           iv.     The Ecclesiastical Authority shall be the Almoner who shall oversee and  
1433           distribute these funds for appropriate purposes.  
1434           v.     The Bishops' Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or  
1435           personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.  
1436           vi.     Records of the income and expenses of the Bishops' Alms Fund are confidential  
1437           but not secret.  
1438           vii.    Reports on the usage of the Bishops' Alms Fund shall be made to the Diocesan  
1439           Council at least quarterly and annually to the Diocesan Convention. These reports  
1440           shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current balance of the  
1441           Bishops' Alms Fund.  
1442           viii.   Like all funds, the Bishops' Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included in the  
1443           Annual Audit required by these canons.  
1444

**Canon 8.     Of the Historiographer**

- 1446           **Section A)**     The Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Historiographer at each  
1447           annual Convention who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.  
1448           **Section B)**     The Historiographer shall have charge of all documents belonging to the  
1449           Diocese which relate to its history or that of any Congregation of the Diocese, of the  
1450           Journals of all Conventions of this Diocese, and of all books and papers committed to  
1451           him by the Convention or Ecclesiastical Authority.  
1452           **Section C)**     In the event of the dissolution of a Congregation of this Diocese, the  
1453           books, records, and historical information of that Congregation shall be delivered into  
1454           the custody of the Historiographer.  
1455           **Section D)**     All books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, held  
1456           by the Historiographer shall be kept in good condition and in such place as designated  
1457           by the Diocesan Council.  
1458           **Section E)**     The Historiographer shall issue proper certificates based upon the records  
1459           in his charge  
1460           **Section F)**     Subject to the exclusions provided in the Canons, all books, papers and  
1461           documents, in whatever form they may exist, shall be open to the inspection of the  
1462           Bishop Diocesan, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and  
1463           any committee of the Convention.  
1464

**Canon 9.     Of the Cathedral**

- 1466           **Section A)**     The Parish church of St. Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania is hereby designated  
1467           as the Cathedral of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.  
1468           **Section B)**     Governance of the Cathedral<sup>34</sup>  
1469           i.     The Cathedral shall be governed by a Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws not in  
1470           conflict with the National Constitution and Canons, the Constitution of this Diocese  
1471           or these Canons.

- 1472           ii. Amendments may be made to the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws in the  
1473           following manner:  
1474           a. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and the  
1475           Standing Committee for their advice and consent.  
1476           b. Consent of both the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Standing Committee having  
1477           been received, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to a meeting of the  
1478           Cathedral Congregation. A majority of two thirds of those present shall be  
1479           required to adopt the amendment.

1480       **Section C)**       The Cathedral Congregation shall be entitled to representation in the  
1481       Convention of this Diocese in accordance with the Canon on Membership in  
1482       Convention.  
1483

1484       **Canon 10.   Of The Election Of A Bishop<sup>35</sup>**

1485       **Section A)**       On the call by the Bishop Diocesan for the election of a successor, or of a  
1486       Bishop Co-Adjutor or of a Bishop Suffragan or upon the death, resignation, or  
1487       permanent disability of the Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee will initiate the  
1488       search and transition process. The Standing Committee will have the option to initiate a  
1489       search for a Bishop solely for Northwestern Pennsylvania using the Canon IV.4.B or to  
1490       initiate a search for a Bishop to be ordained for the Diocese of Northwestern  
1491       Pennsylvania and one or more other Dioceses using Canon IV.4C.

1492       **Section B)**       Procedures for The Election of a Bishop solely for Northwestern  
1493       Pennsylvania.

- 1494           i. The Standing Committee shall appoint at least six persons to serve as the Search  
1495           Committee. The persons appointed to this committee may be any Cleric in Good  
1496           Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing.  
1497           ii. The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate to  
1498           the electing Convention one or more persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.  
1499           iii. The Standing Committee may also appoint a Transition Committee made up of  
1500           Clerics in Good Standing and Lay Persons in Good Standing or the Standing  
1501           Committee may delegate the tasks or appointment of a Transition Committee to the  
1502           Search Committee.

1503       **Section C)**       Procedures for The Election of a Bishop for the Diocese of Northwestern  
1504       Pennsylvania and one or more other Dioceses

- 1505           i. The Standing Committee will enter into a formal agreement with one or more other  
1506           dioceses to conduct a Search process and Electing Convention. This agreement shall  
1507           comply with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, with the  
1508           Constitution of this Diocese and with these Canons.  
1509           ii. The Standing Committee of this Diocese shall appoint at least six persons from this  
1510           Diocese to serve as part of a Joint Search Committee. The persons appointed to this  
1511           committee may be any Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good  
1512           Standing. This Joint Search Committee shall be made up of an equal number of  
1513           representatives from each participating diocese.  
1514           iii. The Convention of this Diocese shall vote to affirm the Standing Committee's  
1515           decision to elect a bishop with one or more other dioceses. If the Convention does  
1516           not affirm the decision, the Standing Committee shall use Canon IV.4.B to initiate a

1517 search for a Bishop solely for the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. This vote  
1518 by Convention may take place as part of a special convention held as a virtual  
1519 meeting specifically for this purpose. This vote by Convention should occur as soon  
1520 as convenient following the Standing Committee's decision, but must occur before  
1521 the Search Committee publishes a profile for candidates for the next bishop.

- 1522 **iv.** A Joint Electing Convention will be held, with each Diocese running their own  
1523 separate electing convention. These separate conventions may be held in the same  
1524 space, or in separate spaces in the same facility. Regardless, all votes will be held  
1525 concurrently by all electing conventions.
- 1526 **v.** When one diocese reaches a sufficient number of votes that would normally trigger  
1527 the election of a bishop, unless all dioceses involved have also received sufficient  
1528 votes to elect the same candidate, no election will be declared until either:
- 1529 **a.** Three more ballots have been taken and there is still a sufficient number of votes  
1530 on the last ballot to declare an election in one diocese or of different candidates  
1531 in different dioceses. In that case, the candidate with sufficient votes is elected  
1532 bishop of the diocese in which that candidate was elected and the other dioceses  
1533 will continue with their own process, possibly electing other candidates or no  
1534 candidate.
- 1535 **b.** All dioceses involved in the joint election have voted such that one candidate is  
1536 elected as bishop in all dioceses.

1537 **Section D)** In addition to other procedures appropriately designed for the election  
1538 process, the following Canons shall apply to the electing convention:

- 1539 **i.** There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.
- 1540 **ii.** Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three  
1541 Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written  
1542 petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.
- 1543 **iii.** All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the  
1544 National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese, and by these  
1545 Canons
- 1546

1547 **Canon 11. Of The Election Of Deputies To The General Convention**

1548 **Section A)** The annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a  
1549 stated meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the Clergy and  
1550 Lay Members voting separately, four Priests in Good Standing and four Confirmed  
1551 Adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be Deputies to the General Convention.

1552 **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in Section A, additional  
1553 ballots shall be taken, with the Clergy and Lay members voting separately, to elect four  
1554 Priests and four Lay Persons, qualified as above, from among the remaining nominees to  
1555 be Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.

1556

1557 **Canon 12. Of The Election Of Deputies To The Provincial Synod**

1558 **Section A)** The Annual Convention following each triennial meeting of The General  
1559 Convention of The Episcopal Church shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay Members voting  
1560 separately, one Priest in Good Standing and two Confirmed Adult Lay Persons in Good  
1561 Standing to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

1562                    **Section B)**            After the election of Deputies as prescribed in section a, an additional  
1563                    ballot shall be taken, with the Clergy and Lay Members voting together, to elect and  
1564                    rank those remaining nominees to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod.  
1565

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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> The quorum requirement details were moved to the Canons from the Constitution upon second reading at Convention 2025 to aid in ensuring quorums, esp in the clergy order.
  - <sup>3</sup> 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.
  - <sup>4</sup> 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.
  - <sup>5</sup> Adopted by Convention 2021 to permit meetings to be other than in person
  - <sup>6</sup> 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.
  - <sup>7</sup> 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.
  - <sup>8</sup> 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.
  - <sup>9</sup> Convention 2013 added this section to deal with congregations that have quasi independent entities such as schools or day care
  - <sup>10</sup> Convention 2015 changed the word “Congregation” to “Parish.” See note iv above for explanation.
  - <sup>11</sup> Convention 2010 adopted Section vii and following in order to clarify the previous version of the canon and to provide for a nominating process.
  - <sup>12</sup> Convention 2009 added “Priest-in-Charge” to make clear that a Priest-in-Charge is the president of the Corporation and presiding officer.
  - <sup>13</sup> Convention 2025 modified this section to bring its wording into conformity with other canons and removed a requirement that congregations needed to be incorporated to hold real property.
  - <sup>14</sup> “Deliberately destroyed” was added by Convention 2010
  - <sup>15</sup> Meadville changed from SW Deanery to NW by Convention 2012
  - <sup>16</sup> Convention 2024 changed the way quorum is determined for Priests and Deacons.
  - <sup>17</sup> Convention 2025 Quorum requirements were added to the Canons as the second reading of a

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Constitution Amendment moved details for a Convention quorum from the Constitution to the Canons.

- 18 Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Credentials Committee from three clergy and three lay members to one from each order.
- 19 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.
- 20 Convention 2010 did away with a separate Site of the Next Convention Committee and gave this responsibility to the Resolutions Committee.
- 21 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.
- 22 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
- 23 Convention 2009 changed the deadline for resolutions from 60 days to 45 before the meeting of convention.
- 24 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.
- 25 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.
- 26 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.
- 27 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.
- 28 Convention 2025 adopted adopted changes to Section A, the Commission On Ministry composition, as it had now separated from the joint CoM with the Diocese of Western New York.
- 29 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.

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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.

30 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.

31 This section ii added by Convention 2020

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

33 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.

34 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.

35 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>35</sup>persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.

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

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- 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.