



**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN NORTH TEXAS
Amended and Restated, Adopted in Diocesan Conventions 1982-2022 NOTE: Some
amendments to the Constitution will have a second reading at the 2022 Diocesan Convention**

PREAMBLE

TITLE I. AUTHORITY

- ARTICLE I.1. Authority of General Convention
- ARTICLE I.2. Authority in the Diocese

TITLE II. DIOCESAN CONVENTION

- ARTICLE II.1. Members
- ARTICLE II.2. Meetings of the Diocesan Convention
- ARTICLE II.3. Congregations in Union with Diocesan Convention
- ARTICLE II.4. Diocesan Convention Authority Between Meetings
- ARTICLE II.5. Assessments

TITLE III. ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

- ARTICLE III.1. Bishops
- ARTICLE III.2. Standing Committee

TITLE IV. CHURCH PROPERTY

- ARTICLE IV.1. Title to Church Property

TITLE V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- ARTICLE V.1. Diocesan Canons
- ARTICLE V.2. Amendments to the Constitution y
- ARTICLE V.3 Amendments to the Diocesan Cannons and Certificate of Formation and Bylaws
of the Corporation
- ARTICLE V.4. Enabling Clause

PREAMBLE

We, the Laity, Bishops, Priests and Deacons of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (“The Episcopal Church” or “the Church”), resident in that portion of the State of Texas constituting what is known as The Episcopal Church in North Texas (the “Diocese”), do hereby ordain and establish the following constitution, as duly amended and restated.

TITLE I: AUTHORITY

ARTICLE I.1. AUTHORITY OF GENERAL CONVENTION

The Church in this Diocese accedes to the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church (“General Constitution and Canons”) and recognizes the authority of the General Convention of the Church.

ARTICLE I.2. AUTHORITY IN THE DIOCESE

Subject to Article I.1, the authority of the Church in this Diocese is vested in the Diocesan Convention, the Bishop, and the Standing Committee.

TITLE II. DIOCESAN CONVENTION

ARTICLE II.1. MEMBERS

The Diocese entrusts its legislation to a Diocesan Convention consisting of the following Members who shall be qualified and have seat, voice, and vote, if any, as determined in the Diocesan Canons:

1. Bishops. The Bishop, and the Bishop Coadjutor, Bishops Suffragan and Assistant Bishops, if any, of the Diocese, shall each be Members of the Diocesan Convention.

2. Priests and Deacons. All Priests and Deacons who are canonically resident in the Diocese, who are not under ecclesiastical discipline, and who have not, in contemplation of removal from the Diocese, applied for their Letters Dimissory, shall be Members of the Diocesan Convention.

3. Lay Delegates.

1. Adult Lay Delegates. Each Parish and Mission in union with the Diocesan Convention shall be entitled to Adult Lay Delegates and Alternate Adult Lay Delegates determined by the number provided by Diocesan Canons. Adult Lay Delegates and Alternates chosen by and representing the Parishes and Missions of the Diocese, which may, in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese, be entitled to such representation, shall be Members of the Diocesan Convention.

2. Youth Delegates. Youth Delegates chosen by and representing the Parishes Missions, and Mission Stations of the Diocese, which may, in accordance with the Constitution

and Canons of the Diocese, be entitled to such representation, shall be Members of the Diocesan Convention.

3. Lay Diocesan Officers. Lay Diocesan Officers as identified in the Diocesan Canons and who are not otherwise Members of the Diocesan Convention shall be Members of the Diocesan Convention.

4. Mission Station Representative. Each Mission Station may select a representative who shall be a Member of the Diocesan Convention.

ARTICLE II.2. MEETINGS OF THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

1. Annual Meeting. The Diocesan Convention shall assemble annually in a city located within the Diocese, as provided in the Diocesan Canons.

2. Special Meetings. The Bishop or a majority of all members of the Standing Committee may call a special meeting of the Diocesan Convention, giving at least thirty (30) days' notice thereof. At any special meeting of the Diocesan Convention, the only business to be transacted shall be specified in the Notice of the call, except that additional items of business may be transacted by unanimous consent of the Diocesan Convention at that special meeting.

ARTICLE II.3: CONGREGATIONS IN UNION WITH DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Every Parish, Mission, and Mission Station which shall have been created or admitted as a Parish, Mission, or Mission Station of the Church in this Diocese, in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese, shall be deemed to be in union with and entitled to representation in the Diocesan Convention, unless otherwise provided in this Constitution or the Diocesan Canons.

ARTICLE II.4. DIOCESAN CONVENTION AUTHORITY BETWEEN MEETINGS

There shall be an Executive Council, as provided in the Diocesan Canons, consisting of Laity and Clergy, which council shall, between meetings of the Diocesan Convention, carry out the policies, programs, and directives of the Diocesan Convention.

ARTICLE II.5. ASSESSMENTS

The Diocesan Convention shall have authority to raise money by Assessment or other means upon the Parishes and Missions of the Diocese, as specified in the Diocesan Canons. The Diocesan Convention shall prescribe such regulations and penalties as it may deem expedient to secure the prompt payment of Assessments, as specified in the Diocesan Canons.

TITLE III. ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY

ARTICLE III.1. BISHOPS

- 1. Bishop.** The Bishop shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.
- 2. Episcopal Elections.** The nomination, election, and consent process for a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Bishop Suffragan for the Diocese shall be as provided in the General Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and Canons. Election by the Diocesan Convention shall be by ballot and achieved upon two thirds (2/3) majority of the Members of the Diocesan Convention in each order, voting concurrently.
- 3. Assistant Bishops.** The Bishop may call an Assistant Bishop in accordance with the General Constitution and Canons.

ARTICLE III.2. STANDING COMMITTEE

- 1. Duties.** There shall be a Standing Committee of the Diocese. When the Bishop is the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Standing Committee shall be the Bishop's Council of Advice. If there be no Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan canonically authorized to act, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese for all purposes declared by the General Convention. The Standing Committee shall keep a record of all its official acts and shall report its activities to the annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention. The Standing Committee shall perform all the duties incident to its office and such other duties as provided in the General and Diocesan Constitution and Canons.
- 2. Members.** The Standing Committee shall consist of three (3) Priests entitled to be Members of the Diocesan Convention and three (3) Lay Persons who shall be Confirmed Communicants in Good Standing of a Parish or Mission of the Diocese at least eighteen (18) years of age and who shall possess such other qualifications as may be prescribed in the Diocesan Canons.
- 3. Election.** Members of the Standing Committee shall be elected by ballot by a concurrent majority of each order at an annual meeting of Diocesan Convention. Members' staggered terms of office shall be for three (3) years or until their successors are elected.

TITLE IV. CHURCH PROPERTY

ARTICLE IV.1: TITLE TO CHURCH PROPERTY

- 1. Title.** The Corporation of The Episcopal Church in North Texas, a Texas non-profit corporation (the "Diocesan Corporation" or the "Corporation"), shall hold title to all real and personal property now owned or hereinafter acquired for the benefit or use of the Diocese or any Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution. The title to all such real and personal property shall be held in trust for The Episcopal Church and the Diocese. The existence of this trust, however, shall not limit the authority of the Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution otherwise existing over

such property, except as may be specified in this Constitution and the Diocesan Canons, so long as the particular Parish, Mission, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution remains in communion with The Episcopal Church and the Diocese. The income from such property shall belong to such Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School or Diocesan Institution, which will be responsible for the direct expenses attributable thereto, but not for any administrative expenses of the Corporation. Such property may not be conveyed, leased or encumbered by Corporation without the written consent of the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of such Parish, the Standing Committee with respect to a Mission, or the governing body of the Diocesan Mission, Diocesan School or the Diocesan Institution and in accordance with this Constitution and the Diocesan Canons. No such conveyance, lease, or encumbrance will be valid unless it is executed by the Corporation. Upon dissolution of such Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan Institution, or Diocesan Institution, property held in trust for it as provided hereby shall revert to the Corporation for the use and benefit of the Diocese, as such. All other property belonging to the Diocese shall be held in the name of the Diocesan Corporation, and no conveyance or encumbrance of any kind shall be valid unless executed by such Corporation and as may otherwise be provided by the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese. In case of the liquidation, dissolution, or winding up of the Corporation, whether voluntary or involuntary, or by the operation of law, the property held by the Corporation shall be conveyed to the governing body of such Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution. The "liquidation, dilution or winding up of the Corporation," within the meaning of this Canon and the Constitution of the Diocese, shall refer to the winding up and termination of the Corporation pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Texas Business Organizations Code and not to the merger or other reorganization of the Corporation or the Diocese.

2. Tax Matters. Real property held or acquired by a Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution by purchase, gift or devise shall be conveyed by it to the Corporation if an ad valorem tax exemption based on religious or educational use is claimed. Real property held or acquired by a Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution need not be conveyed by it to the Corporation if such property is held for investment or income-producing purposes and no ad valorem tax exemption is claimed.

3. Purpose. Property held by the Corporation for the use of a Parish, Mission, Mission Station, Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution belongs beneficially to such Parish, Mission, Mission Station, or Diocesan School, or Diocesan Institution only. All other property of the Corporation shall be held for the Episcopal Church in North Texas for those exempt religious purposes within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code, as herein above described.

Such exempt religious purposes shall be those determined by the Diocesan Convention and the appropriate officers elected by it.

4. Conveyances. If it becomes necessary to sell or lease the property or otherwise dispose of it, the Corporation with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee is hereby authorized to execute such legal instruments as may be necessary to convey, lease or effect such other disposition as is herein authorized.

TITLE V. GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE V.1. DIOCESAN CANONS

- 1. Authorization.** Canons of the Diocese shall be adopted by the Diocesan Convention. Diocesan Canons shall not be inconsistent with this Constitution and the General Constitution and Canons.
- 2. Process.** The process for adding, amending, or repealing the Diocesan Canons shall be in accordance with Article V.3 herein.

ARTICLE V.2. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 1. Accession.** The Constitution of the Diocese shall not be inconsistent with the General Constitution and Canons.
- 2. Proposals.** Proposals to amend this Constitution may be made if passed by two thirds (2/3) majority of the Members of the Diocesan Convention in each order, voting concurrently, at two consecutive annual meetings of the Diocesan Convention in the form published as provided herein. Proposals for amending this Constitution originating from outside the Committee on Constitution and Canons shall be submitted in writing to the Chairman of the Committee on Constitution and Canons at least ninety (90) days prior to the first day set for the next annual Diocesan Convention. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall submit all proposals to amend this Constitution to the Secretary, at least thirty (30) days prior to the first day of the Diocesan Convention, for timely distribution by the Secretary (a) to each person described in Article II.1 and (b) to the Wardens of each Parish and Mission in union with the Diocesan Convention. No additions, deletions, or amendments may be made thereafter to the proposals as distributed until upon proper motion from the floor of the Diocesan Convention.
- 3. Presentation to Diocesan Convention.** The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall report thereon to the Diocesan Convention on the first day of the meeting. When an amendment to the Constitution has been so presented to the Diocesan Convention by the Committee, amendments thereto may be made from the floor of the Diocesan Convention if, in judgment of the presiding officer of the Diocesan Convention, such amendments are germane to the proposed amendment. No other amendments to the Constitution shall be considered at the Diocesan Convention except by unanimous consent of the Diocesan Convention.
- 4. Voting and Publication.** If the proposal, together with any amendments pertinent thereto, is passed by two thirds (2/3) majority of the Members of Convention in each order, voting concurrently, it shall be printed in the *Journal* with proper notations of title, number, and section and with a brief statement of the nature of the change. The Secretary shall post the Journal record reflecting the action of the Diocesan Convention and the wording of the amendment on the Diocesan website or otherwise make it available to the Clergy of the Diocese, Members of Convention, and others interested. Such proposal shall lay over until the next annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention. If approved by a two thirds (2/3) majority of the Members

of the Diocesan Convention in each order, voting concurrently, at the next annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention, the Constitution shall be altered or amended accordingly in the form that it was published; *provided, however*, pursuant to Canon 9.3.2 of Title III of the Diocesan Canons, the Constitution and Canons Committee may recommend unsubstantial amendments to the amendment to the Constitution adopted at the first reading thereof, that, in the judgement of the Constitution and Canons Committee, are necessary or desirable to achieve consistency and clarity with respect to such amendment. Such unsubstantial amendments may be adopted by a majority of the Members of the Convention.

5. Amendments to be Written in Full. No part of any Article or Section of this Constitution shall be amended by reference to its number, or by merely striking out or inserting words, but the Article or Section sought to be amended or altered shall be written out in full and presented as intended it will read when amended.

6. Effective Date. Each duly adopted provision of this Constitution or any duly adopted alteration, amendment, addition or repeal of an existing provision of this Constitution shall become effective immediately upon the adjournment of the Diocesan Convention at which it is adopted. Typographical errors may be corrected by the Committee on Constitution and Canons and reported to the next meeting of the Diocesan Convention.

ARTICLE V.3. AMENDMENTS TO THE DIOCESAN CANONS AND THE CERTIFICATE OF FORMATION OF AND BYLAWS OF THE CORPORATION.

1. Diocesan Canons. The adoption, amendment or repeal of a Diocesan Canon shall require the approval by two thirds (2/3) majority of the Members of the Diocesan Convention in each order, voting concurrently, at an annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention or special meeting of the Diocesan Convention called for such purpose.

2. The Certificate of Formation of the Corporation. An amendment or repeal to the Certificate of Formation of the Corporation shall require the approval by two thirds (2/3) majority of the Members of the Diocesan Convention in each order, voting concurrently, at an annual meeting of Diocesan Convention or a special meeting of Convention called for such purpose.

ARTICLE V.4. ENABLING CLAUSE

The Constitution, as has been and may be subsequently amended and restated, shall commence and be in full force and effect on and after January 1, 1983.