

**THE CANONS OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH**  
**Adopted in Conventions 1982-2014**

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## **CANON 1**

### **MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION**

#### **Sec. 1.1 Lay Delegates:**

**1.1.1 Adult Delegates.** Every Parish and Mission in union with the Convention shall elect at its Annual Parish or Mission Meeting Delegates having the same qualifications as members of the Vestry or Bishop’s Committee, with the number of delegates from each Parish and Mission being determined by the number of confirmed adult communicants in good standing reported in the Annual Parochial Report for the year ending December 31 next preceding the Diocesan Convention according to the following table:

1 through 50 – 1 Delegate	601 through 750 – 8 Delegates
51 through 100 – 2 Delegates	751 through 950 – 9 Delegates
101 through 175 – 3 Delegates	951 through 1,150 – 10 Delegates
176 through 250 – 4 Delegates	1,151 through 1,400 – 11 Delegates
251 through 350 – 5 Delegates	1,401 through 1,700 – 12 Delegates
351 through 450 – 6 Delegates	1,701 through 2,000 – 13 Delegates
451 through 600 – 7 Delegates	2,001 and over – 14 Delegates

a. In no case shall a Parish have more than fourteen (14) Adult Delegates.

b. Each Adult Delegate shall have seat, voice and one (1) vote at Convention.

c. Each Parish and Mission shall elect Alternate Adult Delegates equal in number to the number of Adult Delegates to which it is entitled. In the absence of an Adult Delegate, an Alternate Adult Delegate from the same Parish or Mission shall have all rights and privileges of an Adult Delegate. The Rector of a Parish and Vicar of a Mission, or if there is none, the Senior Warden of the congregation, shall have authority to fill such vacancies as may occur in the list of Alternate Adult Delegates between the time of such election and any meetings of the Convention.

**1.1.2 Youth Representatives.** The Vestry or Bishop’s Committee of each Parish and Mission may, at its option, also elect from its Congregation a communicant in good standing as a Youth Representative to the Convention. The Youth Representative shall be not less than sixteen (16) nor more than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of election. Each Youth Representative shall have a seat and voice but no vote at the Convention.

**1.1.3 Certification.** The selection of the Adult Delegates, Alternate Adult Delegates, and the Youth Representative, if any, shall be certified in writing by the Secretary or Clerk of the Vestry of the Parish or Mission; but, in the absence of the Secretary or Clerk, such certificates of election may be signed by one (1) of the Wardens, or by the Rector or Vicar of such Parish or Mission. The "Certificate of Election of Adult Delegates and Youth Representative" shall show upon its face that their election as Adult Delegates and Youth Representatives has been made pursuant to this Canon and submitted in the time determined by the Secretary of the Diocese.

**Sec. 1.2. Clergy.** Immediately before the meeting of each Convention, the Bishop, or in case of his or her death or inability to act, the Standing Committee, shall prepare a list of the Clergy canonically resident in the Diocese who meet the requirements of Article II of the Constitution. The list shall be filed with the Secretary of the Convention on the first day of its meeting and shall be prefixed to the Journal. Each priest or Deacon certified shall have one (1) vote at Convention..

Revised November 2012

## **CANON 2 MEETINGS OF CONVENTION**

**Sec. 2.1 Annual Convention.** The Annual Convention of this Diocese shall meet as provided in Article 3 of the Constitution.

**Sec. 2.2 Special Meetings.** Special meeting of the Convention may be called only as provided in Article 4 of the Constitution. Whenever a special meeting of the Convention is called, the Secretary of the Diocese shall transmit a written notice to the Clergy entitled to a seat in the Convention and to the Wardens of Parishes and Missions of the Diocese. The notice shall specify the business to be transacted and the time and place of the meeting.

**Sec. 2.3 Attendance.** It is the duty of Clergy entitled to a seat in the Convention and of Lay Delegates duly elected to attend all its sessions. Clergy may be absent from meetings of the Convention only by permission of the Bishop.

**Sec. 2.4 Materials.** Not later than twenty (20) days before the opening day of each Convention, the Secretary of the Diocese shall send in some manner to the Clergy and Lay Delegates the agenda, nominations, resolutions, proposals, proposed budget, and other pertinent material.

**Sec. 2.5 Rules of Procedures.** Except to the extent controlled by the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese or adopted "Rules of Procedure" the meetings of the Convention shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order.

**Sec. 2.6 Parliamentarian.** Before the Convention convenes the Bishop shall appoint a qualified Parliamentarian to advise him or her on parliamentary questions arising during the Convention.

Revised November 2010

### **CANON 3 ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Sec. 3.1 Determining Quorum.** At the opening of any Convention, the Presiding Officer shall take the chair and shall declare as the first order of business a report by the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials as to the number of Clergy and Lay Delegates in attendance and whether or not there is a quorum. If there is a quorum, the Convention shall proceed to the transaction of business pursuant to the Order of Business recommended by the Presiding Officer and adopted by the Convention. If there is no quorum the Convention is adjourned until there is a quorum.

Revised November 2009

### **CANON 4 SECRETARY OF THE DIOCESE**

**Sec. 4.1 Election.** At each Annual Convention a Secretary shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention for a term to begin with the adjournment of that Annual Convention and ending upon the adjournment of the next Annual Convention or until a successor is elected.

**Sec. 4.2 Duties.** The Secretary shall have the following duties:

4.2.1 Take the minutes of the proceedings of the Convention and the Executive Council;

4.2.2 After review of the minutes of the Convention by the Bishop, place such minutes in THE JOURNAL OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH (the "Journal");

4.2.3 Preserve such documents and records as may be in possession of the Secretary and deliver all such documents and records to the office of the Bishop for custody not later than four (4) months following adjournment of the Convention;

4.2.4 Send copies of the Journal with Episcopal charges, statements, and other records as may show the state of the Church in the Diocese, as follows: two (2) copies to the Secretary of the House of Deputies in paper or electronic format and two (2) copies to the Archives in a common format as prescribed by the Archivist of the Church;

4.2.5 Transmit to each General Convention a Certificate of the election of Clerical and Lay Deputies from this Diocese;

4.2.6 Within thirty (30) days after the adjournment of the Convention, furnish to the Treasurer of the Diocese a certified statement of the budget approved by the Convention for the ensuing year; and

4.2.7 Perform all such other duties as may be required by the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese or requested by the Bishop.

**Sec. 4.3. Assistant Secretary.** Upon request of the Secretary, the Bishop may appoint one (1) or more Assistant Secretary or Secretaries, who shall serve until the next Convention under the direction of the Secretary and assist in the discharge of the duties of such office.

**Sec. 4.4. Vacancy.** In the event the Secretary is unwilling or unable to act or continue to act in the capacity of Secretary, the Bishop shall appoint a successor Secretary who shall continue in the office until the next Convention, when a successor shall be elected.

Revised November 2011

## **CANON 5 TREASURER OF THE DIOCESE**

**Sec. 5.1 Election.** At each Annual Convention a Treasurer shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention and shall continue in office until a successor is elected. The Treasurer shall have demonstrated appropriate training and experience in financial management.

**Sec. 5.2 Duties.** The Treasurer shall have the following duties:

5.2.1 To receive and disburse all monies collected by or under the authority of the Convention, monies distributed by the Diocesan Corporation, and any special or designated monies;

5.2.2 Maintain appropriate accounts of all funds on a calendar year basis in books and records kept and maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

5.2.3 Render to the Convention annually an accounting for all monies collected and disbursed for the calendar year ended prior to the date of the Convention, which accounting shall be subject to audit at the direction of the Executive Council;

5.2.4 Render to the Executive Council such reports as may be requested from time to time;

5.2.5 Preserve such accounting books and records as may be in the possession of the Treasurer and to deliver all prior years' books and records to the office of the Bishop for custody and deliver all current year books and records to any successor Treasurer following Convention each year;

5.2.6 Provide access to all books and records in the Treasurer's control to any auditor(s) as requested by the Executive Council, from time to time during any calendar year; and

5.2.7 Perform all such other duties as may be required by the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese or requested by the Bishop.

**Sec. 5.3 Assistant.** Upon request of the Treasurer, the Bishop may appoint one (1) or more Assistant Treasurer(s) who shall serve until the next Convention under the direction of the Treasurer and assist in the discharge of the duties of such office. The Assistant Treasurer(s) shall meet the same qualifications as Treasurer.

**Sec. 5.4 Vacancy.** In the event the Treasurer is unwilling or unable to act or continue to act in the capacity of Treasurer, the Bishop shall appoint a successor Treasurer who shall continue in the office until the next Convention, when a successor shall be elected.

**Sec. 5.5 Bonding.** The Treasurer and any Assistant Treasurers appointed by the Bishop shall be bonded with such sureties and in such amounts as shall be determined by the Executive Council.

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## **CANON 6 CHANCELLOR OF THE DIOCESE**

**Sec. 6.1 Election.** At each Annual Convention, a Chancellor shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention and shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.

**Sec. 6.2 Qualifications.** The Chancellor shall possess the following qualifications:

6.2.1 Be an attorney in good standing duly licensed to practice law within the State of Texas.

6.2.2 Be actively engaged in the practice of law at the time of appointment.

**Sec. 6.3 Duties.** The Chancellor shall have the following duties:

6.3.1. In general, to be the legal advisor to the Bishop, the Standing Committee, and the Corporation of the Diocese of Fort Worth; and

6.3.2 To answer and respond to all legal questions submitted by the Bishop, the Standing Committee, or the Corporation of the Diocese of Fort Worth, including without limitation, any questions concerning governance and property of the Diocese or of any of its entities or congregations.

6.3.3 It is not the duty of the Chancellor to render legal advice to Parishes, Missions, or Diocesan Entities other than those listed above, unless the Bishop so directs on terms acceptable to the Chancellor and the Parish, Mission or Diocesan Institution.

**Sec. 6.4 Assistants.** Upon request of the Chancellor, the Bishop may appoint one (1) or more Assistant Chancellor(s), who shall meet the qualifications of Chancellor, serve until the next Convention under the direction of the Chancellor, and assist in the discharge of the duties of such office.

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## **CANON 7 REGISTRAR OF THE DIOCESE**

**Sec. 7.1 Election.** A Registrar shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Annual Convention and hold office for a period of one (1) year after election or until a successor is elected.

**Sec. 7.2 Register.** The Registrar shall keep and maintain a separate book which shall be known as the "Register," which shall include:

7.2.1 The names and addresses of Clergy canonically resident in this Diocese;

7.2.2 The dates of ordination and reception of the Clergy canonically resident in this Diocese;

7.2.3 The dates of all dismissals, depositions or deaths of the Clergy occurring in this Diocese; and

7.2.4. The names and addresses of all Parishes and Missions connected with this Diocese, including:

a. The dates of organization, admission and succession of Clergy in charge of such Parishes and Missions, so far as it can be ascertained; and

b. Such other particulars as may be necessary to indicate the status and history of such Parishes and Missions.

**Sec. 7.3 Vacancy.** In the event the Registrar is unwilling or unable to act or continue to act in such capacity, the Bishop shall appoint a successor Registrar who shall continue in such office until the next Annual Convention, when a successor shall be elected.

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## **CANON 8**

### **HISTORIOGRAPHER OF THE DIOCESE**

**Sec. 8.1 Election.** An Historiographer shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention and hold office for a period of one (1) year after election or until a successor is elected.

**Sec. 8.2 Duties.** The Historiographer shall have the following duties:

8.2.1 Receive, file, index, and preserve any books, papers, journals, reports, manuscripts, pamphlets, or other documents pertaining to the Church or its history, and shall from time to time endeavor to increase such collection;

8.2.2 Encourage the appointment of historiographers in each Parish and Mission;

8.2.3 Provide each Parish or Mission historiographer with literature to aid in collecting and preserving the books, papers, journals, reports, manuscripts, pamphlets, newspaper stories, or other documents which relate to the life and history of the congregation of the Parish or Mission and encourage the writing of parochial histories;

8.2.4 Report to the Convention of the Diocese the official acts of the Historiographer and the status of all materials in custody or charge of the Historiographer, with suggestions as to the arrangement, increase or preservation of such materials;

8.2.5 Issue proper certificates of any fact contained in materials in the charge of the Historiographer, if requested by the Bishop; and

8.2.6 Oversee a program designed to promote an appreciation of the history of the Diocese and of the Church.

**Sec. 8.3 Vacancy.** In the event the Historiographer is unwilling or unable to act or continue to act in such capacity, the Bishop shall appoint a successor Historiographer who shall continue in such office until the next Annual Convention, when a successor shall be elected.

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## **CANON 9**

### **THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

**Sec. 9.1 Election.** The Standing Committee shall be elected, vacancies filled, and terms of office fixed, as provided in Article 10 of the Constitution of this Diocese.

**Sec. 9.2 Officers.** The Committee shall choose a President and a Secretary who shall be members of the Standing Committee.



**Sec. 9.3 Quorum.** Four (4) of its members shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

**Sec. 9.4 Duties.** The Committee shall perform all the duties incident to its office and such other duties as are, or shall be, provided in the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese.

**Sec. 9.5 Loans.** The Standing Committee shall not approve any loan which shall obligate the Diocese without the prior approval in writing of the Bishop and the Finance Committee of the Executive Council. The Standing Committee shall monitor all loans that it approves.

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## **CANON 10 THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**Sec. 10.1 Authority of Executive Council.** The Executive Council shall carry out the program and policies adopted by the Diocesan Convention. Except as may be provided for by the Diocesan Convention, by the Constitution or these Canons or otherwise delegated to other Diocesan officials or entities, the Executive Council shall have charge of the coordination, development, and implementation of the ministry and mission of the Diocese.

**Sec. 10.2 Specific Duties and Procedures of Executive Council.** Consistent with Sec. 10.1; the duties of Executive Council prescribed elsewhere in these canons; and not changing the purpose, responsibilities and duties of organizations currently defined in the canons, the Executive Council shall have the following duties:

10.2.1 Administer and carry on the work of the Church in this Diocese.

- a. The Executive Council shall adopt by-laws and operating procedures.
- b. Decisions of the Executive Council shall be made by majority vote.
- c. There shall be an administrative staff to assist the Bishop and Executive Council.
- d. The Executive Council may contract for administrative and mission needs.

10.2.2 Analyze concerns and needs; develop short and long range goals and plans; and formulate and initiate programs for the Diocese.

10.2.3 Provide for the maintenance of sound and accepted best practices in the affairs of the Diocese, its organizations, its institutions, and congregations, which may include: reviewing and approving by-laws; adopting operating policies and procedures for the conduct of business; and providing written comments on applications to establish or amend diocesan institutions.

10.2.4 Review and evaluate the effectiveness of diocesan structure, programs and services and take action to improve the effectiveness of diocesan structure, programs and services.

10.2.5 Provide oversight of the financial affairs of the Diocese to include, but not limited to: ensuring a participatory, transparent, and accountable budget process; submitting a proposed budget annually to the Convention; assessing congregations to support the approved budget; providing for the regular review of the financial condition and position of the diocese; acting on recommendations concerning arrearages or requests for reduction in assessments; and acting on recommendations to amend the budget.

### **Sec. 10.3 Members**

10.3.1 Members with Vote. The following shall have seat, voice and vote in the Executive Council for such time as they lawfully hold their Diocesan positions as:

- a. The Bishop, who also shall serve as President;
- b. The Bishop Coadjutor (1st Vice President), if there be one;
- c. The President of the Standing Committee (2nd Vice President);
- d. The President of the Diocesan Corporation (3rd Vice President);
- e. One (1) Clerical and two (2) Lay Representatives for each Deanery elected as set forth in Canon 35.

10.3.2 Members without Vote. The following shall have seat and voice but no vote in the Executive Council:

- a. The Suffragan Bishop or Bishops, if there be any;
- b. The Assistant Bishop or Bishops, if there be any;
- c. The Treasurer of the Diocese;
- d. The Dean of each Deanery in which the Dean is not a Clerical or Lay Representative under Section 10.3.1.e;
- e. The Sub-Dean of each Deanery in which the Sub-Dean is not a Clerical or Lay Representative under Section 10.3.1.e;
- f. The Secretary of the Diocese, who shall serve as Secretary of the Executive Council;

10.3.3 Terms and Vacancies.

a. The one (1) Clerical and two (2) Lay Representatives for each Deanery are elected to three year terms as set forth in Canon 35. No elected member who has served two (2) successive terms shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of one (1) year after the expiration of his or her last period of service.

b. In the event a vacancy occurs among those elected by a Deanery, the Deanery shall elect a qualified person for the unexpired term of the seat vacated. Any unexpired term of less than two (2) years shall not count as a successive term under section 10.3.3.a above.

c. In case of the Bishop is absent for any reason, the senior ranking Vice President present shall act for him or her. In case of a vacancy in the Episcopate, the senior ranking Vice President shall succeed to President.

**Sec. 10.4 Meetings.** The Executive Council shall meet each year in January, March, May, September and December, and it shall be the duty of every member of the Executive Council to attend meetings regularly.

10.4.1 In case of the continued absence of a member from regular meetings of the Executive Council for a period of two (2) successive meetings without valid excuse, that member of the Executive Council may be removed by majority vote of the Executive Council members present and the vacancy shall be filled pursuant to Sec. 10.3.3.b.

10.4.2 Special meetings of the Executive Council may be called for any purpose by the President; by the President of the Standing Committee or by request of any five members of the Executive Council.

## **Sec. 10.5 Organization**

10.5.1 The Executive Council shall have the advice and assistance of two types of organizations:

a. Those required by the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and incorporated into the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth;

b. Those established by Convention and/ or Executive Council;

10.5.2 The Executive Council shall make decisions as a single body, but shall organize into the following committees to carry out the work of Executive Council and for oversight, responsiveness, and advocacy for the organizations identified in 10.5.1: Congregation Development, Christian Formation, Structures, Management and Finance. Prior to the first meeting of the Executive Council after the end of the Annual Convention each year, the Bishop, the President of the Standing Committee, and the President of the Corporation shall meet and initially assign new members of the Executive Council to one of the committees. Each committee may increase its membership with Executive Council approval to ensure that the group has the expertise to carry out the work assigned to it. The additional members will have

seat, voice, and vote in the committee, but not in the Executive Council. Each group may elect its own Chair. Each committee shall provide a written report at each meeting of the Executive Council of its activities since the last Executive Council meeting. Each committee shall designate its own clerk, who does not need to be a member of the Executive Council.

**a. Congregation Development.** This committee serves as the Executive Council's Link with programs and services for the missionary work in the Diocese and development of congregations, which may include: church plants; overseeing missions and assisting congregations moving from mission to parish status; and leadership development, stewardship and congregation life and ministry for all congregations. Also, this committee oversees the communication efforts of the Diocese and recommends allocation of resources for congregation development and assistance.

**b. Christian Formation.** This committee serves as the Executive Council's link to programs and services to promote and further the work of Christian education and formation throughout the Diocese for all age levels and to recommend allocation of resources for Christian education and formation.

**c. Structures.** This committee carries out the Executive Council's responsibilities for the review and evaluation of the effectiveness of diocesan structure, programs and services and for the maintenance of sound and accepted best practices in the affairs of the Diocese, its organizations, institutions, and congregations.

**d. Management.** This committee shall meet regularly between meetings of the Executive Council to monitor progress on Executive Council initiatives and resolves, undertake work delegated by the Executive Council, recommend action on time sensitive matters, appoint persons for organizations established by the Executive Council in Sec. 10.5.3, and develop the agenda for each Executive Council meeting. Its members shall be the Bishop Diocesan, the President of the Standing Committee, the President of the Diocesan Corporation, the Diocesan Treasurer, the Diocesan Chancellor, Chair of the Finance Committee, Director of Communications, and one member of the Executive Council from each of the other groups of the Executive Council.

10.5.3 The Executive Council may recognize or establish, help define the scope of work, hold accountable, and support organizations as it deems appropriate and necessary to carry out the work of the Diocese. Ad hoc organizations shall be given a specific mandate and time frame for completing their work. The chairs and members of the organizations do not need to be members of the Executive Council, except as stated elsewhere in the canons. An organization may fill vacancies in its membership or increase its membership. An organization may disband when its mission is complete. For organizations established by the Executive Council, the Management Group (sic) will appoint persons to those organizations. The Management Group (sic) may be assisted by the Nominations Committee per Canon 45. Each organization will be assigned to one of the Executive Council committees. An organization shall keep full records of its proceedings and shall provide a written report at each meeting of the Executive Council of its activities since the last Executive Council meeting.

**10.5.4 Finance Committee.** The Finance Committee of the Executive Council is the diocesan body with the authority to give effect to the required business methods in church affairs required by Canon I.7 of the Canons of the Episcopal Church (General Canons). The members of the Finance Committee shall be determined as the other Executive Council committees defined in Section 10.5.2. The duties of the Finance Committee are as follows:

a. In addition to the duties assigned to it by Canon, the Bishop, the Executive Council or the Convention, the Finance Committee shall assure compliance with Canon I.7 of the General Canons concerning “Of Business Methods in Church Affairs” and the Canons of this Diocese, maintain coordination of the financial affairs of the Diocese, except as may be delegated by Convention to other Diocesan bodies; provided for clarity and accuracy of the collection and disbursement of all funds, and cooperation between the various officers, corporate bodies, Diocesan committees, working groups, and other entities, establishing its own rules therefore; and keep a record of its meetings, all of which shall be submitted regularly to the Executive Council and annually to the Convention.

b. The Finance Committee shall act as advisor to the Bishop and Executive Council in financial matters and, upon request, as advisor to the Parishes and Missions.

c. The Finance Committee shall see that appropriate annual audits of the Diocese, the Congregations, and all institutions are performed by qualified auditors as provided in General Canon I.7.

d. The Finance Committee shall serve as the budget committee of the Diocese as provided in Section 10.6 below, working with the Treasurer and other groups and institutions of the Diocese to develop and propose each annual budget to the Executive Council, pursuant to budget policies of the Diocese, and see that a budget system is introduced into all Parishes and Missions.

The Treasurer of the Diocese and President of the Diocesan Corporation shall be members of the Finance Committee.

**Sec. 10.6 Budget.** On or before the September meeting of the Executive Council in each year, the Finance Committee shall submit to the Executive Council the draft of an annual budget setting forth the opportunities and needs of the Diocese together with the proposed apportionment to the program of the Episcopal Church for the next fiscal year. The Executive Council shall make such amendments and revisions as it deems necessary and shall submit the proposed budget to the Annual Convention. A table setting forth the amounts to be assessed each Parish and Mission shall be presented to the Convention. As soon as possible after the September Executive Council meeting and not less than twenty (20) days before Convention, the budget shall be sent to every Parish and Mission for distribution to its delegates. The Convention may amend the proposed budget as it deems fit and shall adopt a Diocesan budget for the next fiscal year. Within twenty (20) days following the adjournment of the Annual Convention, the Diocesan budget shall be sent to the Vestry or Bishop's Committee of every Parish or Mission. The Executive Council has the authority for serious cause to amend the budget between Annual Conventions.

**Sec. 10.7 Reports.** The Executive Council shall report to the Annual Convention concerning its work and expenditures during the previous and current fiscal years and its budget and plans for the next year and shall make such special reports as the Convention or the Bishop may request.

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## **CANON 11 DEPUTIES TO THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD**

The deputies and alternate deputies to the Provincial Synod of Province VII shall be those elected as Deputies or Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.

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## **CANON 12 TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH**

**Sec. 12.1 Election.** There shall be elected by the Annual Convention three (3) Trustees of the University of the South, consisting of one (1) Clerical and two (2) Lay persons.

**Sec. 12.2 Term.** One (1) Trustee is to be elected each year for a three (3) year term. If a Trustee has served two (2) consecutive terms he or she may not serve again until at least one (1) year after the expiration of his or her period of service; provided, however, that a Trustee who serves a term of less than two (2) years to which he or she has been elected to fill a vacancy, shall be eligible for election to two (2) full terms.

**Sec. 12.3 Vacancy.** If a position becomes vacant for any reason, the unexpired term shall be filled by appointment of the Bishop until the next Annual Convention where the term can be filled by vote..

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## **CANON 13 COMMISSION ON MINISTRY**

**Sec. 13.1 Members.** There shall be a Commission on Ministry consisting of not fewer than six (6) and not more than eighteen (18) members which shall include Lay Persons, Deacons, and Priests. The Bishop shall appoint the Chairman.

**Sec. 13.2 Term.** One-third (1/3) of the members shall be appointed by the Bishop at each Annual Convention, for a three (3) year term. Should vacancies occur on the Commission

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between Annual Conventions, the Bishop shall appoint a member to serve the balance of the term for which appointed. A member who has served two (2) consecutive terms shall not be eligible for re-election until the lapse of one (1) year. However, a member who was appointed to fill an unexpired term of less than two (2) years shall be eligible for nomination to two (2) full terms.

**Sec. 13.3 Organization.** The Commission may adopt rules for its work, subject to the approval of the Bishop, provided they are consistent with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of the Diocese. The Commission shall appoint a Committee for the Ministry of the Laity, a Committee for the Ministry of the Diaconate, and a Committee for the Ministry of the Priesthood.

**Sec. 13.4 Laity.** The Committee on Ministry of the Laity shall assist the Bishop in the following:

13.4.1 Determining present and future needs for ministry in the Diocese;

13.4.2 Developing and implementing resources and opportunities for ministry of the Laity;

13.4.3 Licensing of Lay Ministers.

**Sec. 13.5 Diaconate.** The Committee for Ministry of the Diaconate shall assist the Bishop in the following:

13.5.1 The design and oversight of the ongoing process of recruitment, discernment, formation, and assessment of readiness for ordination to the Diaconate in the Diocese;

**Sec. 13.6 Priesthood.** The Committee for the Ministry of the Priesthood shall assist the Bishop in the following:

13.6.1 The design and oversight of the ongoing process of recruitment, discernment, formation, and assessment of readiness for ordination to the Priesthood in the Diocese;

**Sec. 13.7 Examinations.** Appoint a Board of Examining Chaplains who shall be responsible for examining candidates for Holy Orders in the canonical areas outlined in the Constitution and Canons of the Church.

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## **CANON 14 COMMISSION ON CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AND ALLIED ARTS**

**Sec. 14.1 Members.** The Commission on Church Architecture and Allied Arts shall consist of the Bishop and three (3) Clergy and three (3) Lay Persons appointed annually by the Bishop.

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At least three (3) members shall be skilled in church architecture and ecclesiastical art.

**Sec. 14.2 Advice.** The duty of the Commission is to give counsel and advice on questions and plans of architecture and art submitted by any Parish, Mission or Diocesan Institution.

**Sec. 14.3 Plan Approval.** All Parishes, Missions and Diocesan Institutions receiving financial aid from the Diocese, including Assessment adjustments, or seeking approval to encumber Diocesan Corporation Property, must submit to the Commission and obtain its approval of plans for the proposed erection of church structures or major alterations to existing church structures.

Revised November 2009

## **CANON 15 EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS**

### **Sec. 15.1. Definitions:**

**1. Episcopal Schools.** All schools or other educational facilities providing secular education for young people equivalent to that provided by nursery schools, pre-schools, kindergarten, grade schools, grammar schools, or high school levels, and located on any premises used for the benefit of or operated under the control, auspices, or approval of any Parish, Mission, organization, or Institution of the Diocese, or any combination or group thereof, shall be an "Episcopal School." No such school shall be established, maintained, or operated by any Parish, Mission, organization, or Institution of the Diocese, or any combination or group thereof, without the written approval and consent of the Bishop.

**2. Diocesan School.** A Diocesan School is operated under the control, auspices, or approval of the diocese, as a Diocesan Institution, as part of the mission and ministry of the Diocese.

**3. Parochial School.** A Parochial School is operated under the control, auspices, or approval of a Parish or Mission of the Diocese as part of the mission and ministry of that Parish or Mission.

**4. Episcopal Identity.** The Episcopal Identity of the school shall be affirmatively expressed within its mission and governance, its structure, and its operations.

### **Sec. 15.2. Commission on Episcopal Schools.**

1. A Commission on Episcopal Schools is established. Immediately prior to the annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention, the Bishop shall appoint members of the Commission consisting of no fewer than 3 or more than 9 members. 7 (sic) members shall be either Clergy canonically resident in the Diocese, not subject to ecclesiastical discipline, or Confirmed Communicants in Good Standing in a Parish or Mission of the Diocese, and 2



educators or heads of schools of the affected schools (sic). Each Commission member shall have a term of 3 years.

2. It shall be the duty of the Commission to:

a. Publish, with consent of the Bishop, Standards for Episcopal Schools in the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth (“Standards”);

b. Define, with the consent of the Bishop, specific components of Episcopal Identity to be required in governance and operations to ensure that the mission, curriculum and programs of the Episcopal Schools are congruent with The Episcopal Church traditions and to give general supervision to each such Episcopal School to ensure its continuing Episcopal Identity;

c. Confirm compliance by each Diocesan or Parochial School with the Standards; and

d. Perform such other functions regarding such Episcopal Schools as the Bishop may require.

**Sec. 15.3 Standards.** All such Episcopal Schools shall comply with such Standards, which Standards are incorporated herein by reference and shall have the authority of canons of the Diocese. The Standards for certification shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Each Episcopal School shall either (1) maintain accreditation by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES) or (2) maintain annual certification by the Commission on Episcopal Schools. Each Episcopal School shall be a member of the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES).

2. The accession to the authority of the Church, governance, administration, educational philosophy, worship and religious studies of each Episcopal School shall affirmatively reflect Episcopal Identity as defined by the Commission and the Bishop.

3. Each Episcopal School shall maintain tax exempt status and use Episcopal business methods and other business methods required by the Commission.

4. Each Episcopal School shall comply with the Constitution and Canons and applicable policies of the Church and the Diocese and comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances affecting the school operations.

5. Each Episcopal School shall report to the Commission annually, in a form required by the Commission.

**Sec. 15.4. Diocesan Schools.** A separate Board of Trustees ("Board") shall manage each Diocesan School. An initial board of twelve (12) trustees shall be appointed by the Bishop and

confirmed by the Convention. At each subsequent Convention the Bishop shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the Convention, four (4) trustees who shall serve for three (3) years.

**Sec. 15.5. Failure of Compliance.** Any such school that fails to comply with the provisions of this Canon shall not be entitled to be located on any property that is used for the benefit of any Parish, Mission, institution, or organization of the Diocese; and neither shall it be entitled to be operated under the control, auspices, or approval of any such Parish, Mission, institution, or organization of the Diocese.

**Sec. 15.6. Reports and Inspections.** The Commission and Bishop shall have the right at any time, and from time to time, to require and obtain such additional information and reports as may be deemed necessary by the Commission and Bishop to ensure compliance with this Canon, and the Commission and Bishop shall likewise have the right at any time, and from time to time, to inspect or cause to be inspected, facilities and records in each such Episcopal School in order to monitor compliance with the provisions of this Canon. The Bishop shall have the right at any time to appoint one or more representatives to assist the Bishop in ensuring compliance with the Canon.

**Sec. 15.7. Report.** The Commission shall report annually in writing to the Convention.

Revised November 2014

## **CANON 16**

### **ASSESSMENT OF PARISHES AND MISSIONS**

**Sec. 16.1 Assessments.** The Executive Council shall assess all Parishes and Missions to support the budget as established by the Diocesan Convention.

**Sec. 16.2 Reductions.** The Council may reduce the assessment of any Parish or Mission in case of undue financial hardship. Also, the Finance Committee shall meet with representatives of such Vestry or Mission to determine the existence and degree of such hardship and may make recommendation to the Council to reduce the assessment or take other action. The reduced assessment then becomes the full assessment of said Parish or Mission for that year only.

**Sec. 16.3 Payments.** Annual assessments of Parishes and Missions are to be paid in twelve (12) equal payments on or before the twentieth (20) day of each month.

**Sec. 16.4 Arrearages.**

16.4.1 If any Parish or Mission becomes a total of two (2) months in arrears in payment of the monthly installments on its annual assessment, the Rector, Wardens and Treasurer shall meet with the Finance Committee of the Executive Council at a time set by the Chairman of the Finance Committee in order to explain the cause of the arrearage and their plan for bringing the monthly installments current.

16.4.2 If any Parish or Mission becomes three months in arrears in payment of the monthly installments on its annual assessment, the Bishop and Finance Committee may recommend to the Executive Council a means of dealing with the problem commensurate in their judgment with its cause. The Executive Council may consider such recommendation at its next regular meeting or at a meeting called for the purpose of considering such recommendation upon seven days' notice given to all members of the Executive Council stating the purpose of the meeting. The Rector, Treasurer, and Vestry shall be sent a copy of the recommendation of the Bishop and Finance Committee and be invited to appear and speak at such meeting. The Executive Council may then take such action as it deems appropriate including recommending that the next following convention of the Diocese act by a concurrent majority of both orders to change that Parish to Mission status.

16.4.3 Calculation of arrearage shall be the total amount of assessment unpaid within the prior four (4) years and the current calendar year.

**Sec. 16.5 Report.** The Finance Committee shall report to Convention the names of all Parishes and Missions whose annual assessments are more than three (3) months in arrears as of thirty (30) days preceding the Convention. Such Parishes and Missions may be seated but shall have neither voice nor vote at such Convention, unless the Convention grants either or both such right(s) by a concurrent majority of both orders.

Revised November 2009

## **CANON 17 CORPORATION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH**

**Sec. 17.1 Duties.** Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth is a non-profit and charitable organization organized under Texas laws, also known as the "Diocesan Corporation." In addition to its regular powers, it may receive, hold, manage and administer funds and properties acquired by gift or by will or otherwise for the use and benefit of the Diocese and any Diocesan Institutions.

**Sec. 17.2 Management.** The management of its affairs shall be conducted and administered by a Board of Trustees of five (5) elected members, all of whom are either Lay Communicants in good standing of a Parish or Mission in the Diocese or members of the Clergy canonically resident in the Diocese, in addition to the Bishop of the Diocese, who shall serve as Chairman of the Board or may designate the President or other officer of the Corporation to serve as such. The Board of Trustees shall have the power and authority to conduct the affairs of said Corporation in accordance with its charter and by-laws and in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese from time-to-time adopted.

**Sec. 17.3 Election; Vacancy.** One (1) member of the Board of Trustees shall be elected at each Annual Convention and each member shall serve a term of five (5) years. The terms of members shall be so arranged that the term of only one (1) member shall expire annually. The Board of Trustees shall fill any vacancy which occurs on the Board until the annual election. The

Bishop shall nominate the members of the Board of Trustees.

**Sec. 17.4 By-Laws.** The Board of Trustees shall adopt its own by-laws and shall elect such officers as its by-laws may require.

**Sec. 17.5 Report.** The Board of Trustees shall submit a report at each Annual Convention covering its operations for the preceding fiscal year and showing its financial condition. If and when required by the Standing Committee of the Diocese, the Board of Trustees shall make such additional reports and furnish such additional information as may be requested. The books and records of the Board of Trustees shall at all times be open for inspection and examination by the Standing Committee of the Diocese or its representatives.

**Sec. 17.6 Risk Management Committee.** Each year following the Annual Convention the Bishop as Chairman of the Board shall appoint one (1) member of the Executive Council from each Deanery, the President of the Board of Trustees of the Diocesan Corporation, the Chancellor of the Diocese, and such other persons as the Bishop may deem to be qualified by experience and training to act as the Risk Management Committee of the Diocese. The Risk Management Committee shall be a committee of the Diocesan Corporation and shall identify legal risks and recommend requirements to minimize legal risks, including requirements for insurance protection for personnel, property and liability for the Diocese, Parishes and Missions, and all other Diocesan Entities and such other duties assigned by the Corporation, Executive Council or Bishop.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 18**

### **TITLE TO PROPERTY**

**Sec. 18.1 Title in Corporation.** The Title to all property now owned and hereafter acquired by the Diocesan Corporation for its use and benefit and for the use and benefit of Parishes, Missions and Diocesan Institutions shall be held in the name of said Corporation and may only be conveyed or encumbered with the approval of the Board of Trustees and in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth. All of the assets and properties of the Corporation and accumulations thereof shall be held and administered to effectuate its purpose. In case of the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Corporation, whether voluntary or involuntary, or by operation of law, the property held by the Corporation in trust for the use of a particular Parish, Mission or Diocesan School shall be conveyed to the governing body of such Parish, Mission or School. In case of the liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Corporation, whether voluntary or involuntary, or by operation of law, the other assets or properties of the Corporation shall be distributed in such manner as the Board of Trustees of the Corporation shall direct, provided, however, that any such distribution shall be such as is calculated to be exclusively to carry out the purposes for which the Corporation is formed or for one (1) or more other exempt purposes within the meaning of the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended, or any similar federal statute then in effect and rules and regulations pursuant thereto. "The liquidation, dissolution or

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winding up of the Corporation,” within the meaning of this Canon and of the Constitution of the Diocese, shall refer to the actual cessation of operation of the Corporation and not to the merger or subdivision of the Corporation or the Diocese.

**Sec. 18.2 Held in Trust.** Real property acquired by the Corporation for the use of a particular Parish, Mission or Diocesan School shall be held by the Corporation in trust for the use and benefit of such Parish, Mission or Diocesan School. It is immaterial whether said acquisition is by conveyance to the Corporation by a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School now holding title, by the Bishop now holding title as a corporate sole, by a declaratory judgment upon division from the Diocese of Dallas, or by subsequent conveyance to the Corporation, so long as such property was initially acquired by a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School by purchase, gift or devise to it, as a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School. Such Parish, Mission or Diocesan School shall be entitled to all income from property held for it in trust by the Corporation and will be responsible for the direct expenses attributable to such property, but not for any administrative expenses of the Corporation. Property held in trust by the Corporation for a particular Parish, Mission or Diocesan School may not be conveyed, leased or encumbered in any way by the Corporation without the written consent of the Rector, Wardens and Vestry of the Parish, of the Standing Committee in the case of a Mission, or of the Board of Trustees of the Diocesan School for which such property is held in trust. Upon dissolution of a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School, such property held in trust for it shall revert to the Corporation for the use and benefit of the Diocese. "Dissolution" of a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School, within the meaning of this Canon and of the Constitution of the Diocese, shall refer to the actual cessation of operation of a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School and not to its merger, reorganization, change of location or attachment to a different Diocese.

**Sec. 18.3 Schools.** Real property held or acquired by a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School 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 or Diocesan School 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.

**Sec. 18.4 Purpose.** Property held by the Corporation for the use of a Parish, Mission or Diocesan School belongs beneficially to such Parish, Mission or Diocesan School only. All other property of the Corporation held for the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth 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 Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth and the appropriate officers elected by it.

**Sec. 18.5 Conveyances.** If it becomes necessary to sell or lease the property or otherwise dispose of it, the Corporation known as "Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth" 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.

Revised November 2009

**CANON 19**  
**DIOCESAN REVOLVING FUND**

**Sec. 19.1 Purpose.** There shall be a Revolving Fund which shall consist of all funds which have been or may be donated to the Diocese for the purpose of purchasing land or improved real estate for the use of Missions of the Diocese already created or to be created at some future date or for loans to Parishes and Missions of the Diocese.

**Sec. 19.2 Administration.** The Trustees of the Corporation of the Diocese of Fort Worth shall administer the Fund.

**Sec. 19.3 Requests.** All requests for use of the Fund will originate in the Executive Council of the Diocese, which shall set rules and/or restrictions for the use of the Fund as well as the process for making such requests, and set the terms of each loan.

**Sec. 19.4 Approval.** Each grant from the Fund for whatever purpose recommended by the Executive Council must be approved by both the Standing Committee and the Bishop.

Revised October 1990

**CANON 20**  
**DIOCESAN INSTITUTIONS**

**Sec. 20.1 Convention Approval.** Diocesan Institutions may be established by resolution and approval of the Annual Convention, which also shall have the authority to direct, control, alter or dissolve any such institution.

**Sec. 20.2 Application.** The application for recognition of a Diocesan Institution, or any action to amend a charter, or direct, control, alter or dissolve an existing Diocesan Institution shall be accomplished in accordance with the procedure used for the amendment of a Canon.

**Sec. 20.3 Documentation.** No less than sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Convention, copies of the application for recognition of a new Diocesan Institution or any change to an existing Institution contemplated by the previous section, along with copies of its Charter and/or other implementing documents shall be submitted to the Chancellor, Standing Committee, and Executive Council for written comments to be appended to the Application for presentment to the Committee on Constitution and Canons.

Revised October 1989

**CANON 21**  
**MISSIONS**

**Sec. 21.1 Establishment.** The power to establish a Mission is hereby vested in the Bishop of the Diocese. A Vicar may at any time be placed or removed by the authority of the Bishop. A mission shall not be established until application shall have been made by fifty (50) or more baptized persons at least eighteen (18) years of age whom a majority shall be confirmed persons, and all of whom shall be charter members. In special cases, the Bishop may, at his or her discretion, reduce the required number of petitioners.

**Sec. 21.2 Declaration.** The following declaration shall be signed by the aforementioned petitioners:

"Reverend Father in God:

We, the undersigned residents of \_\_\_\_\_, Diocese of Fort Worth, being desirous of obtaining the services of The Episcopal Church, and being ready, according to our ability, to sustain the same, do hereby request you inquire into our estate, and provide for us as you may deem proper and expedient. We do hereby declare ourselves individually and collectively ready to do what in us lies to establish and sustain the regular worship of the Church and promote its influence in our neighborhood; and we do promise conformity to its doctrines, discipline, liturgy, rites, and usages. We put ourselves under your charge and will reverently obey your authority. We promise to abide by and to conform to the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and of the Diocese of Fort Worth and the rules and regulations of its Convention. In accordance with these obligations and rules, we now ask the privilege of being organized as a Mission under the name of \_\_\_\_\_."

**Sec. 21.3 Meetings.** Annual and special meetings of a Mission may be called and held in the manner for Parishes by Canon 26.

**Sec. 21.4 Bishop's Committee.** There shall be elected each year at the Annual Meeting in every Mission not fewer than six (6) nor more than nine (9) confirmed communicants in good standing of at least eighteen (18) years of age who, with the Vicar, shall constitute the Bishop's Committee, and whose duty it shall be to promote the temporal and spiritual interest of the Mission. Any Mission may adopt the rotation method of choosing its Bishop's Committee members following the same procedure as provided by the Canons for Parishes inaugurating the rotation system. Members of the Bishop's Committee serve at the Bishop's pleasure.

**Sec. 21.5 Officers.** The Bishop shall appoint from the Bishop's Committee two (2) Wardens, who shall serve for one (1) year, and the Bishop's Committee shall elect a Secretary and a Treasurer, who need not be members of the Bishop's Committee.

**Sec. 21.6 Term.** Every Mission shall be required to remain as such for at least one (1) year before applying to the Convention for Parish status.

**Sec. 21.7 Mission Stations.** Mission Stations may be established by the Bishop in any

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place in the Diocese where there are fewer than the requisite number of persons for the establishment of a Mission. Provisions for the maintenance of Mission Stations shall be made as the Bishop deems advisable. A report shall be made to each Annual meeting of the Convention stating the number of Mission Stations existing, their location, the means provided for their maintenance and their condition. No Mission Station shall be entitled to a Lay Delegate at any meeting of the Convention.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 22**

### **FORMATION OF NEW PARISHES**

**Sec. 22.1 Consent.** For the formation of a new Parish, the written consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese must first be obtained. Should consent be refused, an application for permission to form such Parish may be made to the next Annual Convention.

**Sec. 22.2 Declaration; Number.** For the organization of a Parish, the following Article of Conformity must be signed by not fewer than fifty (50) baptized persons, the majority being confirmed members of this church at least eighteen (18) years of age, who intend to be members and supporters of the proposed Parish.

"Reverend Father in God:

We, the undersigned, do associate ourselves together for the purpose of maintaining the worship of God and the preaching of the Gospel, according to the doctrine, discipline and worship of The Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in the town of \_\_\_\_\_, in the State of Texas, and do promise to abide by and conform to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth."

**Sec. 22.3 Vestry.** After each Article of Conformity has been signed by at least fifty (50) persons, a meeting of the same shall be called on ten (10) days' written notice to all who have signed said Article. At this meeting, members of the Vestry shall be elected, the name of the Parish adopted, and such other steps taken as may be necessary to such organization. The minutes of the meeting shall be recorded in a book to be kept as a record of the proceedings of this meeting and at future meetings of the Vestry of the Parish.

**Sec. 22.4 Documents for Application.** The Article of Conformity and the minutes of the meeting for organizing the Parish shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, together with a notice that the Parish will apply for admission to union with the Convention. At a subsequent Convention, this application shall be made and for this purpose a certified copy of the aforesaid papers shall be presented.

Revised 2009

## **CANON 23**

### **A RECTOR OR VICAR**



**Sec. 23.1 Rectors on Vestry.** The Rector of a Parish is ex-officio President of the Vestry and of the Congregation and has the casting vote, in case of a tie, on all questions brought before it.

**Sec. 23.2 Vicar on Bishop's Committee.** The Vicar of a Mission is ex-officio President of the Bishop's Committee and of the Congregation and has the casting vote, in case of a tie, on all questions brought before it.

**Sec. 23.3 Spiritual Oversight; Property.** The Rector or Vicar has the spiritual oversight of the Parish or Mission, and he or she shall, at all times, be entitled to the use and control of the Church and Parish or Mission buildings with the appurtenances and furniture thereof.

**Sec. 23.4 Parish Organizations.** The Rector or Vicar shall be ex-officio chairman of all commissions, committees, guilds and societies. All parish organizations shall exist at his or her pleasure and their work shall be under his or her direction and advice.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 24 ASSISTANT CLERGY**

**Sec. 24.1 Vestry Approval.** If the Vestry of a Parish gives its approval for the position, a Curate may be called by the Rector.

**Sec. 24.2 Approval of Ecclesiastical Authority.** A Curate shall not be called until the name of the Deacon or Priest whom it is proposed to call has been made known to the Bishop, if there be one, or to the Ecclesiastical Authority, who shall have thirty (30) days to determine whether the Curate proposed be duly qualified. If the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority determines that the proposed Curate is duly qualified, a call may be made.

**Sec. 24.3 Term.** A Curate is directly under the supervision of the Rector and serves at his or her pleasure. Any Curate selected shall serve at the discretion of the Rector but may not serve beyond the period of service of the Rector except that, pending a call of a new Rector, the Curate may continue in the service of the Parish if requested to do so by the Vestry of the Parish and under such conditions as the Bishop and Vestry shall determine.

**Sec. 24.4 Dismissal.** If a Rector wishes to dismiss a Curate, the Rector must present the matter to the Bishop before the dismissal takes place.

**Sec. 24.5 Definition.** A Curate, for purposes of this Canon, includes any Assistant Clergy.

Revised October 1992

**CANON 25**  
**WARDENS AND VESTRY OF PARISHES**

**Sec. 25.1 Number; Qualifications.** Vestries shall consist of not fewer than six (6) and not more than fifteen (15) members who shall be Confirmed Communicants in Good Standing of the parish, who are at the time of election at least eighteen (18) years of age, and who were financial contributors to the Parish in the preceding year as shown on the records of the Treasurer of the parish.

25.1.1 Youth Representatives. A Vestry may include a Youth Representative elected at the Annual Parish Meeting. The Youth Representative shall be a confirmed communicant in good standing of the Parish and not less than sixteen (16) nor more than eighteen (18) years of age at the time of election. Such Youth Representative shall have seat and voice but no vote on the Vestry.

**Sec. 25.2 Election; Term.** The members of the Vestry shall be elected at the annual Parish Meeting by a majority vote of the qualified voters present and voting. Except as herein otherwise provided, their term of office shall be for three (3) years succeeding their election, and one-third (1/3) of the Vestry shall be elected annually.

**Sec. 25.3 Vacancy.** The Vestry shall have the power to fill any vacancy in their number, and members of the Vestry shall continue in office until their successors are elected. The term of office of the replacement so elected shall be the unexpired balance of the vacated three-year term.

**Sec. 25.4 Re-election.** If a person has served two (2) consecutive terms, he or she may not be eligible for election to the Vestry until a full year has elapsed. However, a person elected to fill a vacancy of fewer than two (2) years, shall be eligible for election to two (2) full terms.

**Sec. 25.5 Senior Warden.** The Rector shall appoint one (1) of the Vestry members to serve as Senior Warden. If there is no Rector, the Vestry members by majority vote, shall elect one (1) of the Vestry members to be the Senior Warden. At the first meeting of the newly constituted Vestry following the Parish Meeting the Vestry shall elect one (1) of its members Junior Warden. At the same meeting the Vestry shall elect a Clerk (or Secretary) and a Treasurer, but these officers need not be members of the Vestry. All officers serve for one (1) year or until their successors are selected.

**Sec. 25.6 Regular Meetings.** The Vestry shall meet at least bimonthly, and it shall be the duty of every member of the Vestry to attend meetings regularly. In case of the continued absence of a member from regular meetings of the Vestry for a period of three (3) successive meetings without valid excuse, that member of the Vestry may be removed by majority vote of the Vestry members present and the remaining members shall fill the vacancy.

**Sec. 25.7 Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the Rector, or if there is none, the Senior Warden. At the written request of three (3) members of the Vestry, including one (1) Warden, or a majority of the Vestry, the Rector, or if there is none, the Senior Warden,

shall call a special meeting. Notice of called meetings shall be given in writing to all members of the Vestry not later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time of the meeting; provided, however, that the Vestry may meet at any time without notice with the consent of the Rector and the presence of all members of the Vestry.

**Sec. 25.8 Rector's Presence.** There shall be no meeting of the Vestry without the presence of the Rector, if there be one, and a majority of the members of the Vestry; provided however, that if the Rector be absent, and when duly notified of a meeting shall decline or neglect to be present, the Vestry shall be competent to transact business if a majority of its members, including one (1) Warden, be present.

**Sec. 25.9 Property Duties.** The Vestry shall have charge of the property, endowments and all temporal concerns of the Parish, shall provide and keep in good order a suitable place of worship and the furnishings and appointments appropriate thereto, and shall provide for the payment of all Parish obligations and assessments. The Vestry shall be the legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its clergy.

**Sec. 25.10 Missions.** Missions, to the extent appropriate, and not in conflict with Canon 21, shall also be governed by this Canon.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 26 PARISH OR MISSION MEETINGS**

**Sec. 26.1 Annual Meeting.** The Annual Meeting of each Parish or Mission of this Diocese shall be held in the month of January. Due notice of said meeting, including its time and place, shall be given by the Rector or Vicar, or if there is no Rector or Vicar, by the Wardens.

**Sec. 26.2 Voters.** Qualified voters at Parish Meetings shall be confirmed communicants in good standing of the Parish or Mission, sixteen (16) years of age or older. The presence of at least ten percent (10%) of the qualified voters of the Parish or Mission shall constitute a quorum.

**Sec. 26.3 Special Meetings.** A special meeting of the Parish or Mission may be called by the Rector or Vicar (if there be one) and Wardens by giving notice at least one (1) week in advance of its time and place. Such notice shall set forth the business for which the meeting has been called, and no other business shall be in order except by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present.

**Sec. 26.4 Report.** At the Annual Meeting of the Parish or Mission, the Rector or Vicar and the Senior Warden, or in case of his or her inability to act, the Junior Warden, shall present a full and faithful account of the condition of the Parish or Mission as of December 31 of the preceding year.

26.4.1 The report of the Rector or Vicar for the previous year shall include (1) the number of persons baptized and confirmed, (2) the number of baptized members, confirmed communicants in good standing and households, specifying the number of removals and additions, (3) the number of marriages and burials, (4) the number of services conducted and the total attendance and communions, (5) the number of teachers and students in the Sunday Church School, and (6) the total amount of the Discretionary Fund received with such statement of expenditure as he or she may deem proper.

26.4.2 The report of the Senior Warden (which includes reports of the Junior Warden and Treasurer) shall include, (1) what money, lands or other property have been received during the preceding year, from what source and the value of the same, (2) all offerings, separately stating the purposes for which they have been made, (3) all expenditures and the purposes for which they have been expended, (4) what property has been purchased, exchanged, mortgaged, sold, or otherwise alienated or encumbered, and for what purpose, (5) what debts have been contracted and what debts previously contracted are owing, and (6) what improvements have been made, with the cost thereof.

26.4.3 Following the meeting these statements shall be delivered to the new Vestry, to be examined by them and entered into the permanent records of the Parish or Mission.

Revised October 1992

## **CANON 27**

### **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL REPORTS**

**Sec. 27.1 Parochial Report.** A report from every Parish and Mission shall be prepared annually for the year ending December 31 preceding, upon the form provided by the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church. This report shall be sent in duplicate to the Bishop not later than March 1.

**Sec. 27.2 Copy to Church.** The Bishop or the Secretary of the Diocese shall send copies of the reports to the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church not later than May 1.

**Sec. 27.3 Recordkeeping; Journal.** Copies and tabulations of the reports shall be filed in the Diocesan office for the use of commissions and committees. These reports, or such parts of them as the Bishop may deem proper, shall be published in the Journal of the Convention.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 28**

### **PARISH REGISTERS**

**Sec. 28.1 Duty.** It shall be the duty of every Minister within the Diocese to record in a Parish Register all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and burials and the names of all

Communicants within his or her cure.

**Sec. 28.2 Contents.** The Register shall specify the name and the date of birth of each person baptized, with names of the parents, and the names of the sponsors or witnesses; the names of the persons confirmed and the date of the service, together with the name of the member of Clergy who presents the class and the name of the Bishop confirming the same; the names of the parties married, and two (2) or more special witnesses of the same, and the date and place where the marriage was solemnized; the names of the persons buried, the place of interment, and also the date of the service; and a list of the communicants. This Register shall be kept by the Minister, or, in case of a vacancy, by the Senior or Junior Warden, and shall be a part of the records of the Parish or Mission.

**Sec. 28.3 Non-Parochial Clergy.** It shall be the duty of every member of the Clergy not regularly settled in any Parish to record such occasional services as he may perform in the Register of the Parish or Mission in which such service was held. In case there be no Register in that place, he shall report such services to the Bishop, and these reports, or such parts of them as the Bishop shall think fit, may be entered in the Journal of the Convention.

**Sec. 28.4 Communicant.** The word communicant as used in these Canons, means one who has been confirmed, and has not been suspended from the right of partaking of the Holy Communion; provided that no parish shall be required to continue as a communicant anyone (a) who has been absent from the Parish for two (2) full years, and whose residence, after diligent search, has not been discovered, or (b) one who has abandoned the Communion of this Church by and open-renunciation of its doctrine, discipline and worship, or by a formal admission into a religious body not in communion with this Church.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 29 BUSINESS METHODS**

**Sec. 29.1 Standard Methods.** The Diocese and each Diocesan Institution, and each Parish, Mission, School and other Parish or Mission Institution, shall observe the following standard methods:

29.1.1 Trust and permanent funds and all securities of whatever kind shall be deposited with a federal or state bank or other agency approved in writing by the Finance Committee of the Diocese under either a deed of trust or an agency agreement, excepting such funds and securities as may be refused by such depositories as being too small for acceptance. There shall be at least two (2) authorized signatures on any order of withdrawal of such funds or securities.

29.1.2 Treasurers and custodians, other than banking institutions, shall be adequately bonded.

29.1.3 Such books of accounts shall be kept in such manner as shall make them available for satisfactory accounting, and such books and accounts shall conform to THE

## MANUAL OF BUSINESS METHODS IN CHURCH AFFAIRS of The Episcopal Church .

29.1.4 All accounts of the Diocese shall be audited annually by an independent Certified Public Accountant. All accounts of Parishes, Missions or other Parish or Mission Institutions, including schools, shall be examined annually in an internal audit including schools, shall be examined annually in an internal audit by a Certified Public Accountant or independent Licensed Accountant or such internal audit committee as shall be authorized by the Finance Committee. Copies of such internal audit shall be filed with the Bishop not later than thirty (30) days following date of such report, and in no event, not later than September 1 of each year, covering the financial reports of the previous calendar year. The Finance Committee shall report to the Convention the names of Parishes and Missions which have not filed required audit reports as of thirty (30) days preceding the Convention. Such Parishes and Missions may be seated but shall have neither voice nor vote at such Convention, unless the Convention grants either or both such right(s) by a concurrent majority of both orders.

29.1.5 All parishes, missions, Diocesan schools and institutions shall maintain insurance protection for personnel, property and liability according to the minimum standards currently in effect by the Diocesan Risk Management Committee. All parishes, missions, Diocesan Schools and institutions shall make records of insurance and total insured values available from time to time for inspection and audit by the appointee of the Diocesan Risk Management Committee..

29.1.6 The fiscal year shall begin January 1.

**Sec. 29.2 Reports.** Annual reports of all Diocesan accounts shall be made to Convention, which reports shall be referred to and reported on by the Finance Committee.

Revised November 2012

### **CANON 30 USE OF DEDICATED AND CONSECRATED CHURCHES**

**Sec. 30.1 Episcopal Church Only.** The dedicated and consecrated Churches and Chapels of the several Parishes and Missions of the Diocese may be opened only for the services, rites and ceremonies, or other purposes, either authorized or approved by this Church, and for no other use.

Revised October 1991

### **CANON 31 CORPORATIONS**

**Sec. 31.1 Limits.** Any Parish, Mission or Diocesan Institution which desires to organize a corporation to use in connection with the administration of its affairs may do so upon compliance with the following requirements.

31.1.1 If organized by a Parish or Mission, any such corporation shall be merely an adjunct or instrumentality of such Parish or Mission; the Parish or Mission itself, being the body in union with Convention, shall not be incorporated.

31.1.2 The articles of incorporation must expressly provide that such corporation is subject to, and its powers and rights shall be exercised in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese.

31.1.3 Such corporation shall not hold title to real estate acquired for the use of the Church in the Diocese, which title must be vested and dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 of the Constitution of the Diocese.

31.1.4 The proposed articles of incorporation and bylaws of such corporation, and any amendments thereof, shall, prior to filing or adoption, be submitted to and approved by the Chancellor of the Diocese as being in conformity with these provisions.

**Sec. 31.2 Conformity.** Those in charge of the affairs of any corporation, organized by any Parish, Mission or Diocesan Institution, shall review its articles of incorporation and bylaws and bring them into conformity with provisions of this Canon, if inconsistent therewith.

Revised November 2008

## **CANON 32 CONTROVERSY BETWEEN RECTOR AND VESTRY**

Once settled in a Parish, the Rector shall not be dismissed without consent of the Bishop of the Diocese. In case of controversy between Rector and Vestry which cannot be settled by the parties themselves, settlement shall be made in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, specifically Canon III. 9. 12 - 13, as may be amended.

Revised November 2010

## **CANON 33 VACANT PARISHES**

**Sec. 33.1 Notice of Vacancy.** Upon the organization of a new Parish or in the event of a vacancy in the Rectorship of an existing Parish, the Wardens shall give notice within three (3) days to the Bishop of the Diocese of such vacancy. It shall be the duty of the Bishop or his or her deputy to meet with the Vestry of the vacant Parish before the Vestry takes whatever measures may be necessary to continue regular services. If the Vestry of the Parish shall for thirty (30) days have failed to make provision for the services it shall be the duty of the Bishop to take whatever measures may be necessary to continue regular services.

**Sec. 33.2 Calling Process.** In the case of a vacancy in the Rectorship of a Parish the Bishop or his or her deputy shall meet with the Vestry of a vacant Parish to discuss the calling process. The Bishop shall suggest the names of one (1) or more priests to fill the vacancy. The Vestry shall, in the calling process, inform the Bishop of other priests that it would like to consider for the vacant post.

**Sec. 33.3 Nominees.** Following notice that the Bishop has no objection or if after thirty (30) days the Bishop has made no objection to any Vestry nominee(s), the Vestry may proceed, either from the Bishop's suggestions or from the list submitted to the Bishop.

**Sec. 33.4 Objection.** If the Bishop objects to any priest nominated by the Vestry, he or she must do so in writing within 30 days, giving his or her reasons therefor. Before proceeding to an election, the Vestry shall consider such objection at a meeting called and held for that purpose.

**Sec. 33.5 Election.** A Vestry, having decided upon the person whom they wish to call as Rector of the Parish, sends the name of that person to the Bishop, who is given not more than thirty (30) days in which to communicate with the Vestry in the matter. At the end of thirty (30) days, or as soon as a communication has been received from the Bishop, the Vestry may proceed to an election. Written notice of such election shall then be sent to the Bishop, signed by the Wardens confirming a majority of the entire Vestry. If the Bishop be satisfied that the person so elected is a duly qualified Priest, the Vestry may then, but not until then, proceed to issue a call to such Priest to become Rector of the Parish.

**Sec. 33.6 Recordation.** Once the Priest has accepted the call, the Bishop shall notify the Secretary of the Diocesan Convention and the Registrar of the Diocese both of whom shall record it. Such record shall be sufficient evidence of the relation between the new Rector and his or her Parish.

Revised October 1991

## **CANON 34 CHANGES OF PARISHES, MISSIONS, OR MISSION STATIONS**

**Sec. 34.1 Dissolution or Change in Status.** In circumstances other than non-payment of assessment and the consequences thereof described in Canon 16, whenever it shall appear to the Bishop that the conditions render it advisable to dissolve a Parish, Mission or Mission Station or to change a Parish to a Mission status, he or she shall submit the matter in writing to the next Annual Convention. The matter shall then be referred to the appropriate Committee on the first day of the Convention where it shall lay over until the following day. The Committee shall then report its recommendation in writing to the Convention. In order to declare the Parish, Mission, or Mission Station dissolved or changed, a two-thirds (2/3) vote by orders shall be required.

**Sec. 34.2 Property.** The property rights of every kind and character of a dissolved Parish, Mission, or Mission Station shall vest in the Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth. No disposal thereof may be made without consent of the Standing Committee.

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**Sec. 34.3 Grants.** In the event it becomes necessary for a Parish to apply to the Diocese for a grant to enable it to meet its operating budget and maintain its Rector, such Parish upon application to the Bishop may be changed by him or her to the status of a Mission, subject to provisions for Missions as established by the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.

**Sec. 34.4 Relocation.** No Parish, Mission, or Mission Station shall be relocated within the Diocese of Fort Worth without the approval and consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

Revised October 2012

## **CANON 35 DEANERIES**

**Sec. 35.1 Deaneries.** The Diocese shall be divided into Deaneries for the development and furtherance of ministry and mission of the Church. Parishes and Missions will be assigned to each deanery by the Bishop with the concurrence of the Executive Council. The Bishop may, from time to time, change the number and composition of the Deaneries with the concurrence of the Executive Council. As new congregations and Mission Stations are organized as Missions in the Diocese, they will be incorporated into appropriate Deaneries as determined by the Bishop with the concurrence of the Executive Council.

**Sec. 35.2 Dean and Sub-Dean.** At the Pre-Convention meeting, each Deanery shall elect a Dean and a Sub-Dean from the Deanery Council for a one (1) year term. Each must be either clergy regularly serving in or a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Parish or Mission of the Deanery.

35.2.1 The Dean shall call and arrange meetings as outlined in section 35.3; shall be available to coordinate the Bishop's call for assistance to congregations in the Deanery which are without clergy; shall make an annual report to the Bishop; and shall perform such other duties as are provided by Canon or as may be assigned by the Bishop.

35.2.2 The Sub-Dean shall assist the Dean with agenda, business, clerical, and financial concerns of the Deanery and preside at meetings in the absence of the Dean.

**Sec. 35.3 Deanery Council.** Each Deanery shall have a Council made up of:

- a. All members of the Clergy, active and retired, who shall serve or attend a Church of that Deanery and who are entitled to a vote in the Convention,
- b. All the elected Convention Delegates from the Parishes and Missions of the Deanery, and

- c. The Lay Deanery Representatives from that Deanery to the Executive Council.

Retired and Non-Parochial Clergy shall declare in writing to the Bishop with which Deanery they choose to be affiliated, which declaration shall be forwarded to the Registrar and the Dean of that Deanery.

**Sec. 35.4. Meetings.** Each Deanery Council shall meet in February, August, and Pre-Convention. The Dean shall cause a notice of such meetings or any special meeting to be sent at least five days prior to the meeting by mail or electronically to each member of the Deanery to the address of such member on the books of the Deanery; provided, however, if the Deanery has established a schedule for its meetings, the failure to send such notice will not affect the proceedings of the meeting. A majority of the members attending the meeting will constitute a quorum for the conduct of business at the meeting. The August meeting will include review of the next-year budget proposed by the Finance Committee. The Pre-Convention meeting shall be scheduled so that clergy and delegates may consider and discuss nominations, resolutions, proposed budget, and other pertinent materials sent to them from the Secretary of the Convention. Further, during the Pre-Convention meeting the Deanery Council shall elect its representatives to the Executive Council as provided in Section 35.5 and its representative to the Nominations Committee as provided in Canon 45.2. The Deanery Council may conduct other business as from time to time seems necessary for the furtherance of the Mission of the Church in the Deanery or as the Bishop or Executive Council of the Diocese may require, and additionally, at the discretion of the Dean.

**Sec. 35.5 Representatives to Executive Council.** At the Pre-Convention meeting, each Deanery Council shall elect on a rotating basis for three (3) years one (1) member of the Clergy or one (1) of the two (2) Lay Representatives to the Executive Council by a majority vote of those present. The Deanery Council shall also elect an alternate to each elected Representative, serving a term to equal that of the Representative and having, if the elected Representative is unable to attend an Executive Council meeting, the same voice and vote as the elected Representative. The Clergy Representative and Alternate must be serving on a full or part time basis in or attending a Parish or Mission of the Deanery. Each Lay Representative and Alternate must be a Confirmed adult Communicant in good standing in a Parish or Mission of the Deanery, but not of the same Parish or Mission.

1. Filling Vacancies of Elected Representatives to Executive Council. In the case of an elected Representative (either Clergy or Lay) vacating their position, the Alternate shall become the Elected Representative (either Clergy or Lay).

2. Filling Vacancies of Elected Alternates to Executive Council. In the case of an elected Alternate (either Clergy or Lay) vacating their position, the Deanery shall, at their (sic) next scheduled meeting, hold an election to fill the vacancy.

**Sec. 35.6 Terms of Representatives.** The term of office of Clerical and Lay Representatives to the Executive Council of the Diocese shall be three (3) years on a rotating

basis. No Clerical or Lay Representative who has served two (2) successive terms shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of one (1) year after the expiration of his or her period of service. The three (3) year rotation means one (1) representative is to be elected to a full term each year. Persons elected Lay Representative shall continue in that capacity for their full term regardless of whether or not they are elected to further terms as Convention Delegate from their Parish or Mission, as long as they continue to attend their Deanery meetings.

Revised November 2014

## **CANON 36**

### **THE CHURCH PENSION FUND**

**Sec. 36.1 Designate Pension System.** In conformity with the policies adopted by the General Convention and the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, the Diocese of Fort Worth hereby accepts and acknowledges the Church Pension Fund (“Fund”) as the authorized and approved pension system for the Clergy of The Episcopal Church and for their dependents, and declares its intention of supporting the Fund in accordance with its Rules.

**Sec. 36.2 Diocesan Reporting.** It shall be the duty of the Diocese and of the Parishes, Organized Missions, and other Ecclesiastical Organizations therein, each through its Treasurer and other proper official, to inform the Fund of salaries and other compensation paid to Members of the Clergy by said Diocese, Parishes, Missions, and other Ecclesiastical Organizations for services rendered currently or in the past prior to their becoming beneficiaries of the Fund, and of changes in such salaries and other compensation as they occur, and to pay promptly to the Fund any Pension assessment required thereon under the Canons of the General Convention and in accordance with the Rules of said Fund..

**Sec. 36.3 Clergy Reporting.** It shall be the duty of every Member of the Clergy canonically resident in or serving in the Diocese to inform the Fund promptly of such facts as dates of birth, ordination or reception, marriage, births of children, deaths, and changes in cures or salaries as may be necessary for the Fund’s proper administration and to cooperate with the Fund in such other ways as may be necessary in order that the Fund may discharge its obligations in accordance with the intention of the General Convention in respect thereto.

Revised November 2009

## **CANON 37**

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Revised November 2014

## **CANON 38**

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## **ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE**

**Sec. 38.1 Title IV.** All proceedings of ecclesiastical discipline shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, expressly the Title IV Canons and Constitution Article IX, as either may be amended. To the extent, if any, that any of the provisions of this Canon are in conflict or inconsistent with the provisions of Article IX or Title IV, the provisions of those documents shall govern.

### **Sec. 38.2. Discipline Structure**

38.2.1 Diocesan Disciplinary Board. The Diocese shall establish a court to be known as the Disciplinary Board, hereafter called the 'Board,' to be created in accordance with Episcopal Church Canon IV.5, to assist the Bishop in Ecclesiastical Disciplinary matters. The Board shall consist of not fewer than seven persons, four (4) of whom are members of the Clergy and three (3) of whom are Laity. The Clergy members of the Board must be canonically and geographically resident within the Diocese. The lay members of the Board shall be Confirmed Communicants in good standing, geographically resident in the Diocese and at least eighteen (18) years of age. The Board shall operate through the panels listed below.

a. The Reference Panel shall consist of the Intake Officer, the Bishop, and the President of the Board. It shall be the duty of the Reference Panel, in accordance with Episcopal Church Canon IV.6.6 and IV.6.7, to determine how to refer an intake report.

b. The Conference Panel shall consist of one (1) to three (3) members of the Disciplinary Board selected by the President of the Board and no such member may serve as a member of the Hearing Panel in the same case. It shall be the duty of the panel, in accordance with Episcopal Church Canon IV.12, to conduct informal meeting(s) of the involved parties to reach a determination of the matter.

c. The Hearing Panel shall consist of three (3) members of the Disciplinary Board selected by the President of the Board and no such member may serve as a member of the Conference Panel in the same case. It shall be the duty of the Hearing Panel, in accordance with Episcopal Church Canon IV.13, to act as a trial court to reach a determination of the matter.

38.2.2 Election. The members of the Board shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by ballot by a concurrent majority of each order at Annual Convention. Each Board member shall be elected for a three (3) year term on a rotating basis. A member who has served two (2) consecutive terms may not serve again until at least one (1) year has lapsed. However a member appointed fill a vacancy of less than two (2) years, shall be eligible for election to two (2) full terms.

38.2.3 Education and Training. Education and training in the requirements of Episcopal Church Canon IV should be conducted at the commencement of the term of office of the Board.

38.2.4 President. Within sixty (60) days following the Annual Convention, the Board shall convene to elect a President to serve until the next Annual Convention.

38.2.5 Vacancies. Vacancies on the Board shall be filled as follows:

- a. Upon the determination that a vacancy exists, the President of the Board shall notify the Bishop of the vacancy and request appointment of a replacement member of the same order as the member to be replaced.
- b. The Bishop shall appoint a replacement Board member in consultation with the Standing Committee.
- c. Persons appointed to fill vacancies on the Board shall meet the same eligibility requirements as apply to elected Board members.
- d. With respect to a vacancy created for any reason other than pursuant to a challenge as provided below, the term of any person selected as a replacement Board member shall be until the next Annual Convention. With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement Board member shall serve only for the proceedings for which the elected Board member is not serving as a result of the challenge.

38.2.6 Removal of a Board Member. A Board member may be removed from office by the Bishop, after consultation with the Standing Committee.

38.2.7 Preserving Impartiality. In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or a Hearing Panel of the Board (see Episcopal Church Canon IV.6.7) shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or undue bias, that member shall immediately notify the President of the Board and request a replacement member of the Panel. Respondent's Counsel and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge any member of a Panel for conflict of interest or undue bias by motion to the Panel for disqualification of the challenged member. The members of the Panel not the subjects of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that proceeding. In the event that recusals or challenges reduce the number of qualified members below that number required to act in a particular matter, the Bishop may appoint a number of other persons sufficient to qualify the panel to act in the particular matter.

**Sec. 38 3. Other Officers to Assist in the Disciplinary Process.** In addition to the elected Disciplinary Board, other persons shall be appointed by the Bishop to assist in the disciplinary process.

38.3.1 Intake Officer. The Bishop, after consultation with the Board, shall appoint one or more Intake Officers according to the needs of the Diocese.

38.3.2 Investigator. The Bishop, in consultation with the President of the Board, shall appoint an Investigator. The Investigator may, but need not, be a member of the Church.

38.3.3 Church Attorney. Within sixty (60) days following each Annual Convention, the Bishop, in consultation with the Standing Committee, shall appoint an attorney to serve as

Church Attorney to serve until a successor is appointed. The person so selected must be a member of the Church and a duly licensed attorney, but need not reside within the Diocese. Neither the Diocesan Chancellor nor Assistant Chancellor nor any member of either Chancellor's law firm shall serve as the Church Attorney for disciplinary matters.

38.3.4 Pastoral Response Coordinator. The Bishop may appoint a Pastoral Response Coordinator to serve at the will of the Bishop in coordinating the delivery of appropriate pastoral responses provided for in Episcopal Church Canon IV.8. The Pastoral Response Coordinator may be the Intake Officer, but shall not be a person serving in any other appointed or elected capacity under this Canon.

38.3.5 Advisors. In each proceeding under this Canon, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor for the Complainant and an Advisor for the Respondent. Persons serving as Advisors shall hold no other appointed or elected position provided for under this Canon, and shall not include Chancellors or Vice Chancellors of this Diocese or any person likely to be called as a witness in the proceeding.

38.3.6 Clerk. The Board shall appoint a Board Clerk to assist the Board with records management and administrative support. The Clerk may be a member of the Board.

#### **Sec. 38.4 Reporting Offenses.**

38.4.1 Publication to Diocese. Pursuant to Episcopal Church Canon IV.6, the Bishop shall publish to the congregations, and members of this Diocese information concerning the methods and means of reporting offenses as indicated below in Sec. 38.4.2. The name(s) and contact information of the Diocesan Intake Officer(s) shall likewise be published.

##### 38.4.2 Methods of Reporting Offenses.

a. Any person may report information of any perceived offenses of any Priest or Deacon for conduct subjecting him or her to liability for discipline under the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church. Such information shall be submitted in any manner and in any form, directly or indirectly, to the designated Diocesan Intake Officer.

b. Any person other than the Intake Officer who receives information regarding an offense shall promptly forward the information to the Intake Officer. The Bishop may forward information to the Intake Officer whenever the Bishop believes that the information may indicate conduct constituting one or more offenses.

c. Any Priest or Deacon of the Diocese accused, by public rumor or otherwise, of an offense or offenses for which he or she may be tried may request the Intake Officer to institute an inquiry respecting the truth of rumors against him or her.

**Sec. 38.5 Action of Intake Officer.** Upon receipt of information regarding possible offenses, the Intake Officer may make such preliminary investigation as he or she deems necessary, and shall incorporate the information into a written intake report and provide copies to

the other members of the Reference Panel (Bishop and Chairman of the Board) and to the Church Attorney.

38.5.1 Intention to Dismiss. If the Intake Officer determines that the information, if true, would not constitute an offense, the Intake Officer shall inform the Bishop of an intention to dismiss the matter in accordance with Episcopal Church Canons IV.6.5 and IV.6.6.

38.5.2 Forward to Reference Panel. If the Intake Officer determines that the information, if true, would constitute an offense, the Intake Officer shall promptly forward the intake report to the Reference Panel in accordance with Episcopal Church Canons IV.6 – 9.

**Sec. 38.6 Confidentiality.** All communications and deliberations during the intake and referral stages shall be confidential except as the Bishop deems to be pastorally appropriate or as required by law.

**Sec. 38.7. Costs and Expenses.**

38.7.1 Costs Incurred by the Church. The reasonable costs and expenses of the Board, the Intake Officer, the Investigator, the Church Attorney, the Board Clerk and the Pastoral Response Coordinator shall be the obligation of the Diocese, subject to budgetary constraints as may be established by the Executive Council.

38.7.2 Costs Incurred by the Respondent. In the event of a final order dismissing the complaint, or by provisions of a covenant approved by the Bishop, the reasonable defense fees and costs incurred by the Respondent may be paid or reimbursed by the Diocese, subject to budgetary constraints as may be established by the Executive Council.

**Sec. 38.8 Records.**

38.8.1 Records of Proceedings. Records of active proceedings before the Board, including the period of any pending appeal, shall be preserved and maintained in the custody of the Clerk, if there be one, otherwise by the Diocesan office.

38.8.2 Permanent Records. The Bishop shall make provision for the permanent storage of records of all proceedings under this Canon at the Diocese and the Archives of The Episcopal Church.

Revised November 2010 Effective July 2011

**CANON 39**  
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**CANON 40**  
**ELECTION OF A BISHOP**

**Sec. 40.1 Bishop Nominating Committee.** When the Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese shall call for the election of a Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, or Suffragan Bishop, a Nominating Committee shall be elected as follows:

a. Two (2) Priests or Deacons, two (2) Lay members, and a chairman (1) elected by majority vote of the Standing Committee;

b. Two (2) Priests or Deacons and two (2) Lay members elected by a majority vote of the Executive Council; and

c. One (1) Priest or Deacon and one (1) Lay member elected by each Deanery Council by a concurrent majority of both orders.

These members shall be elected at least twelve (12) months prior to the date set for the Convention at which such election is to be held.

**Sec. 40.2 Vacancies.** The Nominating Committee may at any time fill any vacancies in its membership; provided that clergy shall replace clergy and laity shall replace laity.

**Sec. 40.3 Term.** The Nominating Committee shall continue to act until the close of Convention called for the election. If at such convention no election occurs, a new Nominating Committee shall be elected as provided in Section 40.1 above.

**Sec. 40.4 Secretary; Rules.** The Nominating Committee shall elect a secretary from among its members and shall have power to adopt rules and regulations consistent with this Canon governing its procedures.

**Sec. 40.5 Names; Conflicts.** The Bishop Nominating Committee shall call for, receive, and may itself propose names for consideration for nomination to the Episcopal office. The Bishop Nominating Committee may not accept names for consideration less than ninety (90) days in advance of the Convention. Any member of the Bishop Nominating Committee whose name shall be proposed for consideration for nomination must either withdraw his or her name or resign from the Committee.

**Sec. 40.6 Report.** The Nominating Committee shall educate itself about each proposed nominee whom it deems qualified for the Episcopal office. The names of at least three (3) shall be selected as nominees. Biographical and other information and photographs of those selected shall be reported to the Secretary of the Diocese at least fifteen (15) days before the opening day of the Convention. The Secretary of the Diocese shall send this report to the Clergy and Lay Delegates at least ten (10) days before the opening day of the Convention.

**Sec. 40.7 Nominations.** The report of the Nominating Committee shall constitute a nomination of each of the candidates named therein. Nominations may be made from the floor of convention at any time after the report has been presented until an election shall have taken place. No nominations may be made while a vote is being taken, and counted, and announced. A



nomination from the floor of the Convention shall be accompanied by the same written information and photograph required of Committee nominees in sufficient number for each Delegate to have a copy. This information requirement may be waived by unanimous consent of the Convention.

**Sec. 40.8 Election.** Upon conclusion of all preliminary business and nominations, the Convention shall recess for a celebration of the Holy Eucharist. After the Eucharist the Convention shall reconvene and proceed to an election in accordance with Article 17 of the Constitution. Each ballot shall be preceded by a period of silent prayer.

Revised November 2012

## **CANON 41 CHURCH OFFICES**

A person's accepting election or appointment to any office, including member of any committee, of the Diocese or a Diocesan Institution, or of a Parish or Mission or a Parish or Mission Institution, constitutes an affirmation that while holding that office the person (1) continues to meet the qualifications to hold that office, (2) acknowledges the fiduciary duty imposed under Episcopal Church Canon I.17.8, and (3) pledges faithfully to perform the duties of that office in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of the Diocese.

Adopted November 2010

## **CANON 42 COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS**

**Sec. 42.1. Members.** There shall be a Committee on Constitution and Canons consisting of not fewer than six (6) and not more than eighteen (18) members which shall include Lay Persons and Clergy. In addition, the chancellor of the diocese is an ex officio member of the Committee, with seat and voice. The Bishop shall appoint the chairman.

**Sec. 42.2. Term.** One-third (1/3) of the members shall be appointed to a three (3) year term by the Bishop at each Annual Convention. Should vacancies occur on the committee between Annual Conventions, the Bishop shall appoint a member to serve the balance of the term for which appointed. A member who has served two (2) consecutive terms shall not be eligible for re-appointment until the lapse of one (1) year. However, a member who is appointed to fill an unexpired term of less than two (2) years shall be eligible for nomination to two (2) full consecutive terms.

**Sec. 42.3. Duties.** It shall be the duty of the Committee to:

42.3.1. Receive and review proposed amendments to the Constitution and Canons and Standing Rules of Convention, placing each such proposed amendment in proper constitutional or canonical form including all amendments necessary to effect the proposed change. Except as

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required in 42.3.4, the Committee shall express its views with respect to the substance of any such proposal only to the proponent thereof; provided, however, that no member of the Committee shall, by reason of membership, be deemed to be disabled from expressing, before any diocesan body, personal views with respect to the substance of any such proposed amendment. Any such proposed amendment to the Constitution and Canons or Standing Rules shall be submitted to the Chair of the Committee at least 45 days prior to the first day of the annual meeting of the Convention.

42.3.2. Conduct a continuing comprehensive review of the Constitution and Canons and the Standing Rules of Convention with respect to their internal consistency and clarity, and on the basis of such a review propose to the annual meeting of the Convention such

a. technical amendments to the Constitution and Canons and Standing Rules as in the opinion of the Committee are necessary or desirable in order to achieve such consistency and clarity; and

b. substantive amendments to the Constitution and Canons and Standing Rules as in the opinion of the Committee are technically desirable and involve a substantive alteration of a Constitutional or Canonical provision or to incorporate canonical changes required by action of General Convention.

42.3.3. Correct typographical errors in the Constitution and Canons and report such changes to the Convention.

42.3.4. Report to the annual meeting of Convention on the first day of its meeting, including any minority report, to summarize the work of the Committee, including the various matters studied, the recommendations for action by the Convention, and drafts of Resolutions proposed for adoption to implement the recommendations of the Committee.

42.3.5. Discharge such other duties as shall from time to time be assigned by the Convention.

Added November 2014

**CANON 43**  
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**CANON 44**  
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**CANON 45**  
**NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE FOR CERTAIN DIOCESAN OFFICES**

**Sec. 45.1**      **Scope.** Except as otherwise provided in this Canon, nominations for each

Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth approved 11-15-14

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Diocesan office which is required by the Constitution or Canons to be filled by election of the Convention (“Elected Offices”) shall be made by the Nominations Committee using the procedure designated in this Canon. This Canon does not apply to the nomination for the offices of Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, or Suffragan Bishop, which process is addressed in Canon 40.

**Sec. 45.2 Organization, Composition.** A Nominations Committee shall be established by the Executive Council at least six (6) months prior to the date set for the Convention at which the elections are to be held, and shall be composed as follows:

a. One (1) Priest or Deacon and one (1) Lay Member shall be elected by a majority vote of the Standing Committee, which shall designate one (1) member to be committee chair.

b. One (1) Priest or Deacon or one (1) Lay Member elected by each Deanery Council.

**Sec. 45.3 Vacancies.** The Nominations Committee may at any time fill any vacancies in its membership, provided that representation of the Deaneries is maintained.

**Sec. 45.4 Term.** The Nominations Committee shall continue to act until the close of Convention.

**Sec. 45.5 Secretary.** The Nominations Committee shall elect at its first meeting a secretary from among its members.

**Sec. 45.6 Rules.** The Nominations Committee shall have the authority to adopt rules and regulations governing its procedures that are consistent with this Canon.

**Sec. 45.7 Nominees.** At least four (4) months prior to the Annual convention, the Nominations Committee shall publish a list of all offices to be filled at the Convention and shall call for, receive, review and may itself propose names to consider for nomination for each Elected Office. The deadline for submission of nominees shall be at least two (2) months prior to Convention.

45.7.1 In addition to any qualifications designated for specific offices by the Constitution or Canons, all lay persons nominated for any office filled by election at Convention shall be confirmed communicants in good standing in a Parish or Mission of this Diocese; all clergy nominated for any office filled by election at Convention shall be canonically resident in this Diocese.

45.7.2 The Nominations Committee shall stipulate the information and documents, such as photos or licenses, to be required for consideration in each category or position.

45.7.3 The Nominations Committee shall confirm the qualifications of each proposed nominee for Diocesan office.

45.7.4 All names submitted to the Nominations Committee who are qualified shall be reported to the Convention.

**Sec. 45.8 Report.** The Nominations Committee shall submit its report to the Convention, which shall constitute a nomination of each of the candidates named and shall submit appropriate biographical, photo and other information of the nominees. The Report shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Diocese at least thirty (30) days before the opening day of the Convention. The Secretary of the Diocese shall send this Report to the Clergy and Lay Delegates at least twenty (20) days before the opening day of the Convention.

**Sec. 45.9 Nominations From The Floor.** At the Convention additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Convention after the report has been presented. However, no such nomination from the floor may be made while a vote is being taken, counted, or announced

45.9.1 In addition, persons making nominations from the floor must provide a sufficient number of copies of same written information required for the nomination of the position under section 45.7.2 of this Canon in order for each Delegate, Presiding Officer, and other platform officials to have a copy.

45.9.2 This documentation requirement may be waived only by unanimous consent of the Convention.

**Sec. 45.10 Other Offices.** Upon written request from the Bishop the Nominations Committee shall consider and recommend to the Bishop suggested candidates for the offices which are required to be nominated by the Bishop under the applicable Canons, respectively; and for Diocesan committees, commissions and boards for which the Bishop has authority to nominate or appoint members.

Revised November 2012

**RECORDING DATA  
TRANSFERRING TITLE TO ALL PROPERTY TO  
THE CORPORATION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH**

In the case of the *Episcopal Diocese of Dallas, et al. v. Jim Mattox*, Cause No. 84-8573, the 95th District Court of Dallas County, Texas, entered a judgment in which title of all property standing in the name of the Bishops of the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas and located within the present boundaries of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth were vested in the name of the Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth. Said judgment has been recorded in the County Clerk's office in each County within the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth and the recording data for each county is as follows:

COUNTY	DATE	VOLUME	PAGE
Archer	9-5-84	436	473
Bosque	9-6-84	288	638

Brown	9-6-84	865	787
Clay	9-5-84	356	313
Comanche	9-6-84	8	369
Cooke	9-10-84	706	599
Dallas	9-5-84	84172	3771
Eastland	9-10-84	864	730
Erath	9-19-84	643	346
Hamilton	9-24-84	260	114
Hill	9-18-84	650	101
Hood	9-20-84	1071	711
Jack	9-18-84	484	905
Johnson	9-20-84	1048	526
Mills	9-21-84	176	636
Montague	9-24-84	830	219
Palo Pinto	9-21-84	632	28
Parker	9-25-84	1260	458
Somervell	9-25-84	86	146
Stephens	9-27-84	555	711
Tarrant	9-6-84	7941	2214
Wichita	10-1-84	1389	566
Wise	10-3-84	84	214
Young	10-2-84	649	22