

Rules of Procedure

for the Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth
Effective November 2, 2013

1. **President:** The Bishop shall be the presiding officer of the Convention. The Bishop may call to the chair any qualified person to relieve him temporarily. The Bishop shall have full power and authority to take such action (consistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese) as deemed necessary to expedite the orderly disposition of the business of the convention.
2. **Prayer:** After the Convention is called to order by the presiding officer, an opening prayer shall be offered by the Bishop or someone designated by the Bishop.
3. **Secretary:** The first order of procedure shall be the nomination of a Secretary by the Bishop and election by the Convention. Assistant Secretaries may be appointed by the Bishop.
4. **Quorum:** The Chairman of the Credentials Committee shall report the number of Clergy and Lay members in attendance and whether or not there is a quorum present. If there is a quorum, the presiding officer shall recommend an Order of Business to be adopted by the Convention. Then the Convention shall proceed to such business. In the absence of a quorum, the Convention shall transact no other business other than to recess or stand adjourned from time to time until a quorum is present.
5. **Order of Business:** If there is a quorum, the Convention shall proceed to the business of the Convention pursuant to the Order of Business recommended by the presiding officer and adopted by the Convention. The Bishop shall have the authority, within the Bishop's discretion, to deviate from such Order of Business adopted as the exigencies of the occasion may require.
6. **Parliamentarian:** The Convention shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. The Bishop shall appoint a Parliamentarian to advise on parliamentary questions arising during the convention.
7. **Debate:** A member having received recognition of the chair shall give his/her name and church represented.
8. **Titles:** Any person addressing the chair while the Convention is in session shall address the chair as "Right Reverend Sir" if the Bishop is in the chair. If some other person is in the chair, the address shall be, "Mr./Madam President."
9. **Microphones:** A member making a motion or brief statement shall use the nearest microphone. A member making a report or speaking at length on any subject shall use the microphone at the lectern at the front of the meeting place.
10. **Dispatch of Business:** The Bishop, within a reasonable length of time before convening the Annual Convention, shall appoint, from among the members of the Convention, a Committee on the Dispatch of Business, consisting of a Chairperson and not more than four (4) other members. It shall be one of the duties of this Committee to prepare an Order of Business

agreeable to the Bishop and to perform such other acts and duties as may be deemed necessary or advisable to dispatch the business of the Convention. Such Committee shall always be entitled to the floor in business pertaining to that Committee. The committee shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.

11. Resolutions: All resolutions shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Convention at least sixty (60) days before the Convention and processed prior to the meeting in adequate time to place written copies of the resolutions in the hands of the members not later than twenty (20) days before the opening day of Convention. Any resolution, which shows on its face that it deals with matters arising after the deadline date, shall be exempt from this requirement. All other resolutions delivered to the Secretary after the deadline shall be governed by Rule 27.
12. Special Order: Any item of business of the Convention may be set as a special order of business taken up out of its regular order at any time by the concurring majority vote of the members of both orders.
13. Nominating Ballot:
 - a. When the number of qualified persons reported by the Nominations Committee plus those, if any, nominated from the floor of the Convention exceeds more than two persons for any position to be filled by election, a Nominating Ballot will be used as the final step in the nomination process to form a dual slate of candidates for the election to that office.
 - b. Nominations from the floor for all offices must be completed immediately after the report of the Nominations Committee and before the Convention proceeds to consider the Nominating Ballot and Election Ballot.
 - c. The Nominating Ballot shall include the names of all the qualified persons who have been nominated for that position and shall be submitted to all the voting clergy and delegates who shall vote as one body and without designation by Orders. From this Nominating Ballot, only the two persons receiving the highest number of votes for each position will be included as candidates on the Election Ballot for that position.
 - d. Nomination of Deputies and Alternate Deputies to General Convention:
 1. The original slate reported by the Nominations Committee shall include the names of at least twelve (12) clergy and twelve (12) lay persons plus those, if any, nominated from the floor of the Convention for the positions of Deputies and Alternate Deputies to General Convention. A Nominating Ballot will be used as the final step in the nomination process to form a slate of eight (8) clergy and eight (8) lay persons for the office of Deputies to General Convention. The Election Ballot should result in four (4) clergy and four (4) lay persons being elected as Deputies.
 2. All remaining names, from the original slate of clergy and lay persons shall be used on the Nominating Ballot as the final step in the nomination process to form a slate of eight (8) clergy and eight (8) lay persons for the Election Ballot for the office of Alternate Deputies to General Convention. The Election Ballot results in four (4) clergy and four (4) lay persons being elected as Alternate Deputies.

3. For the Nominating Ballot only, the clergy and delegates shall vote as one body without designation by Orders. Pursuant to Article 12 of the Constitution of the Diocese, the Election Ballot requires that persons shall be elected by a concurrent majority of both orders.
 4. If more persons receive a concurrent majority in both orders than positions to be filled, the positions will be filled by the four getting the highest number of votes, which will be ordered by the combined total of both orders.
14. Elections: All members of the Convention entitled to vote, both clergy and lay, shall cast their ballots at one voting for all elective offices in accordance with the Diocesan Constitution and Canons. Voting shall proceed by successive ballot(s) until the requisite number of offices have been filled.
 15. Appointments: The Bishop shall have the authority to appoint all board members, trustees, committee members, and fill other positions which are not required to be elected or otherwise selected by the Constitutions or Canons of The Episcopal Church, The Constitution or Canons of the Diocese of Fort Worth, or other lawful authority.
 16. Limitations on Debate: To expedite the business of the Convention, debates on any pending resolution or motion shall be limited to five (5) minutes per speaker, alternating sides, and one (1) person shall not speak more than once on the pending matter until all other persons who so desire have had an opportunity to be heard. The time for discussion shall be divided as equally as practicable between the proponents and opponents of the pending subject.
 17. Reports: All reports which have been printed and distributed in advance to all members of the Convention shall be presented by title only and not read; provided however, that any person presenting such a report may give a summary of it, requiring no more than five (5) minutes to deliver.
 18. Reconsideration: A question have been decided shall not be reconsidered at the same annual convention without the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present or without a motion for that purpose being made by one of the majority on the prior decision. No question shall be reconsidered more than twice.
 19. Tellers: The Presiding Officer shall appoint a sufficient number of tellers of elections to count ballots promptly and with reasonable dispatch. Additional tellers who are not members of the Convention may be appointed in order that the official tellers may not be obligated to absent themselves from the Convention while ballots are being counted.
 20. Motions: No motion shall be considered as before the Convention unless seconded and, when required by the Presiding Officer, reduced to writing.
 21. Table: A motion to lay on the table shall be decided without debate, but cannot be used to halt debate. "Call the question" is the appropriate motion to halt debate and requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

22. Amendments:

- a. No more than two (2) amendments may be considered at one time.
- b. Amendments of more than one sentence or twenty (20) words must be submitted as a substitute motion.
- c. When any proposed change to the Constitution or Canons is pending before the Convention, amendments thereto may be sent up from the floor, if within the judgment of the Presiding Officer, such amendments are germane to the pending changes and do not alter the purpose of such pending change.

23. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn shall always be in order when no member is speaking and shall be decided without debate. A motion to fix the hour or day to which the Convention shall adjourn takes precedence of a motion to adjourn and shall be decided without debate.

24. Division: If a question under debate contains distinct propositions, the same may be divided, at the request of any member, and a vote taken separately.

25. Appeal: All questions of order shall be determined by the Presiding Officer. Any member may appeal from any decision of the Chair and on such appeal no member shall speak more than once without leave of the Convention.

26. Record: The proceedings of the Convention shall be recorded and permanently filed.

27. Suspension of the Rules: Any of these rules may be suspended by the unanimous consent of the Convention or by two-thirds (2/3) concurring majority vote of the members of both orders; provided that, such amendments are not in violation of the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese.