

Report of the Committee on  
**CONSTITUTION AND CANONS**  
to the  
**38TH ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

---

---

The Committee recommends changes to certain Articles and Canons as follows:

- Article 3      To allow for alternate modes of convening a the delegates and clergy of the Diocese for a live convention, should circumstances warrant it.
- Article 12     To amend the procedure for electing representatives to attend extra-diocesan synods.
- Article 16     To clarify the office of Trustee for the Fund for the Episcopate.
- Canon 3        To allow the Bishop to set the agenda for meetings of Convention
- Canon 14 |  
Canon 15 |      To repeal these canons, which are no longer needed in the life of the Diocese.  
Canon 37 |
- Canon 16     To modify the date when assessments are due each month.
- Canon 35     To allow flexibility in the establishment and ordering of Deaneries
- Canon 44     To address more fully the types of ministry recognized in the Church and provide for the encouragement of each baptized member to exercise that ministry

The text of each amendment is attached.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon H. Jay Atwood  
Warren Norred, Esq.  
David Ebert, Esq.  
The Rev. John Cruikshank  
The Rev. Spencer Stubblefield

*September 2020*

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT A

It is proposed to insert the words “or method” as indicated below. This amendment will allow the Diocese to meet, if needed, via any method deemed appropriate, via a telephonic or electronic connection, or a hybrid of these with in-person gatherings. (The amendment is in ***bold face, italic, and highlight*** .)

This is the first reading of this amendment.

## ARTICLE 3 THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF CONVENTION

The Convention of this Diocese shall assemble in the month of November at a place, time, and date set by the Bishop and Executive Council.

All meetings of the Convention of this Diocese shall be held in Fort Worth, Texas; provided, however, that an Annual Convention shall have the authority, if it so chooses, to designate the place of the next meeting of the Convention; and for sufficient cause the Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, may change the date of meeting or appoint some other place ***or method*** for holding the Convention; provided that thirty (30) days’ notice of such change shall be given to each Parish and Mission in union with the Convention.

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT B

It is proposed to change the title of the Article and to simplify the language for the election of these office-holders, while also removing the length of time the representatives hold office, to accommodate the differing terms of office for each extradiocesan convention or synod. The term “deputies or delegates” would be replaced with “representatives” in all instances. The existing Sec. 2 would be removed in its entirety, along with portions of Sec. 1. Those portions are indicated by being ~~bold faced and crossed out~~ in the existing text below. Changes and additions are shown in the proposed text in **bold face, italics, and highlight**.

This is the first reading of this amendment.

*Existing text:*

## ARTICLE 12 DEPUTIES OR DELEGATES TO EXTRA-DIOCESAN CONVENTIONS OR SYNODS

Sec. 1 An equal number of priests and lay persons canonically resident within the Diocese shall be elected to serve as deputies or delegates to such extra-diocesan conventions, synods or meetings to which this Diocese may wish to send deputies or delegates. They shall possess the same qualifications as members of the Standing Committee and shall be elected at the Annual Convention ~~immediately preceding any such extra-diocesan convention, synod or meeting to which this Diocese may wish to send deputies or delegates. The election of deputies or delegates shall be by straight vote ballot, with those receiving the most combined tallied ballots being declared the elected deputies or delegates, and the total number of deputies or delegates so elected shall be equal to the total number of deputies or delegates to which this Diocese may be entitled under the then prevailing rules of the extra-diocesan convention, synod,~~ or meeting to which this diocese may wish to send deputies or delegates. Such duly-elected deputies or delegates shall hold office ~~for a period of three (3) years or~~ until their successors are elected, ~~whichever occurs first.~~

~~Sec. 2 At the same Convention at which deputies or delegates to extra-diocesan conventions, synods or meetings are elected, there shall be the same number of priests and lay persons to serve as alternate deputies or delegates. The election of alternates shall be elected determined from the same straight vote ballot as deputies or delegates, and they shall be those individuals receiving the most combined tallied ballots after determining the appropriate number of deputies or delegates.~~

Sec. 3 The Bishop shall assign the Alternate deputies or delegates to fill any vacancy in the delegation. In case there be no Bishop or he is unable to act, this power shall be exercised by the Standing Committee.

*Proposed text:*

**ARTICLE 12**  
**REPRESENTATIVES**  
TO EXTRA-DIOCESAN CONVENTIONS OR SYNODS

Sec. 1 An equal number of priests and lay persons canonically resident within the Diocese shall be elected to serve as representatives to such extra-diocesan conventions, synods, or meetings to which this Diocese may wish to send **representatives**. They shall possess the same qualifications as members of the Standing Committee and shall be elected at the Annual Diocesan Convention **by a total cumulative vote of both orders**. Such duly elected **representatives** shall hold office until their successors are elected.

Sec. 2 The Bishop shall assign the alternate representatives to fill any vacancy in the delegation, **first choosing from among the non-elected nominees**. In case there be no Bishop, or he is unable to act, this power shall be exercised by the Standing Committee.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENT C

It is proposed to insert the words indicated in paragraph 1 and remove the remainder of that paragraph following the word "Corporation." This amendment recognizes that the Fund's Trustees also serve as the Board of Trustees for the Corporation and simplifies who are the members. (The existing text being removed is ~~bold faced and crossed out~~, whereas the amendment is in ***bold face, italics, and highlight.***)

This is the first reading of this amendment.

### ARTICLE 16 FUND FOR THE ENDOWMENT OF THE EPISCOPATE

There shall be a Fund for the Endowment of the Episcopate ("***Fund***") which shall be managed and controlled by a Board of Trustees ***of the diocesan Corporation.*** ~~consisting of not less than five (5), of whom only two (2) may be Clergy, and not more than nine (9) members of the Church in this Diocese who shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention at the Annual Meeting. The Trustees shall hold office for one (1) year or until their successors are elected.~~

They shall be entrusted with the investment and management of the Fund. They shall make an annual report of the Fund to the Annual Convention.

After paying the necessary expenses incident to the management of this Fund, ten percent (10%) of the net annual income remaining shall be returned to and become a part of the Fund. The remainder of the said net income shall be applied, so far as may be necessary, toward the support of the Bishop of this Diocese, and of the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, and of any Suffragan or Assistant Bishop if there be any.

## PROPOSED AMENDMENT D

It is proposed to remove the words “and adopted by the Convention,” changing the Order of Business (Agenda) from an adoption of the Convention to a decision of the President. The words to be removed are ~~bold faced and crossed out~~.

### CANON 3 ORDER OF BUSINESS

Sec. 3.1 At the opening of any Convention, the President shall take the chair and shall declare as the first order of business the election of a Secretary of the Convention. A report shall follow 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 determined by the President ~~and adopted by the Convention~~. If there is no quorum the Convention is adjourned until there is a quorum.

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT E

It is recommended that this Canon be repealed as this Commission has not functioned for many years, and because any parish, mission or institution of the Diocese must contact and receive approval from various other committees and boards prior to modifying, changing, or building upon diocesan property. (The proposed change is shown ~~crossed out~~.)

## ~~CANON 14~~

### ~~COMMISSION ON CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AND ALLIED ARTS~~

~~Sec. 14.1 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. At least three (3) members shall be skilled in church architecture and ecclesiastical art.~~

~~Sec. 14.2 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 Plans for the erection of church structures or major alterations to existing structures shall be submitted to the Commission for approval.~~

~~Sec. 14.4 All Parishes, Missions and Diocesan Institutions receiving financial aid from the Diocese, including Assessment adjustments, or seeking approval to encumber Diocesan Corporation Property must comply with this Canon.~~

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT F

It is recommended that this canon be repealed as this Commission has not functioned for many years, primarily because we do not have schools. (The proposed change is shown ~~crossed-out~~.)

## ~~CANON 15 COMMISSION ON EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS~~

~~Sec. 15.1 There shall be a Commission on Episcopal Schools in the Diocese which shall consist of one representative from each certified school in the Diocese. Each representative shall be nominated by the Bishop and elected by the Convention. The representative shall be the Head of the certified school unless otherwise designated by the Bishop.~~

~~Sec. 15.2 The duty of the Commission of Episcopal Schools is to establish guidelines and standards for the establishment, recognition and certification of any and all Episcopal Schools now, or in the future, operating within the Diocese.~~

~~Sec. 15.3 The Commission shall report annually in writing to the Convention.~~

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT G

It is recommended that this canon be repealed as this Diocese does not have any existing schools. (The proposed change is shown ~~crossed out.~~)

## **CANON 37** **DIOCESAN SCHOOLS**

~~Sec. 37.1 Diocesan Schools may be established as Diocesan Institutions as set forth in Canon 20.~~

~~Sec. 37.2 A separate Board of Trustees ("Board") shall manage each 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. At all times, at least three fourths (3/4) of the trustees shall be adult confirmed communicants in good standing in the Diocese, certified annually.~~

~~Sec. 37.3 The Bishop shall have the right of visitation and be an ex-officio member of the Board~~

~~Sec. 37.4 A report from the Board of each school shall be prepared annually for the year ending June 30 preceding. This report shall be sent in duplicate not later than September 1 to the Secretary of the Convention. The report shall include the events of the year involving the operation of the school, and all financial accounting. The annual report shall be presented to the next Convention.~~

~~Sec. 37.5 The books and records shall be open at all times to inspection by the Bishop or his designee. All accounts shall be audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant or by such an accounting agency as shall be approved by the Department of Finance of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth.~~

~~Sec. 37.6 Diocesan Schools shall follow the educational and operational guidelines set forth by the Commission on Episcopal Schools, the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools, and the State of Texas.~~

~~Sec. 37.7 Upon dissolution of the school, all property, real or personal, remaining after payment of all debts, shall vest in the Corporation of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth.~~

## PROPOSED AMENDMENT H

It is proposed that Sec. 3 of Canon 16 be amended as shown to reflect a monthly due date of the 15th of the month rather than the 20th of the month, as proposed by the Finance Department. (The proposed change is shown ~~bold faced and crossed out~~, with the substitution *bold faced, italicized, and high-lighted*.) The **entire text** of the Canon is available on the diocesan Web site.

### CANON 16 ASSESSMENT OF PARISHES AND MISSIONS

Sec. 16.3 Annual assessments of Parishes and Missions are to be paid in twelve (12) equal payments on or before the *fifteenth (15th)* ~~twentieth (20)~~ day of each month.

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT I

It is proposed that Sec. 3 of Canon 16 be amended as shown to allow the Bishop to change the number of Deaneries and their boundaries as needed for the flourishing of ministry. (The existing text being removed is ~~bold faced and crossed out~~, whereas the amendment is in *bold face, italics, and highlight*.) The **entire text** of the Canon is available on the diocesan Web site.

## CANON 35 DEANERIES

~~Sec. 35.1 The Diocese shall be divided into six (6) Deaneries. The Bishop may, from time to time, change Deanery areas with the concurrence of the Convention.~~

*Sec. 35.1 The Diocese shall be divided into Deaneries, as defined by the Bishop with the concurrence of the Convention.*

# PROPOSED AMENDMENT J

It is proposed to replace the existing text of this canon, which currently only addresses the ordination of deacons and priests, to addressing the ministry of all baptized and confirmed Christians. This new Canon identifies various ministries including specific lay ministries in parishes, persons interested in religious orders, the new ministry of Deaconess for women (not an ordained female deacon), and the ministry of men called to holy orders. The Canon refers to several documents which will be available from the diocesan office when completed. (The existing text being removed is ~~crossed out~~; the proposed replacement text is on the next page.

*Existing text:*

## ~~CANON 44 OF THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS AND PRIESTS~~

~~Sec. 1 The selection process and requirements for ordination to the vocational diaconate in the Diocese of Fort Worth are defined by the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry for the Diaconate in the document known as Towards Ordination to the Diaconate.~~

~~Sec. 2 The Bishop shall appoint members in good standing of the Diocese of Fort Worth to serve on the Commission on Ministry for the Diaconate. This commission will be an advisory body to assist the Bishop in regulating and implementing the procedures for becoming a deacon.~~

~~Sec. 3 The selection process and requirements for ordination to the priesthood in the Diocese of Fort Worth are defined by the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry for the Priesthood in the document known as The Ordination Process to the Priesthood.~~

~~Sec. 4 The Bishop shall appoint members in good standing of the Diocese of Fort Worth to serve on the Commission on Ministry for the Priesthood. This commission will be an advisory body to assist the Bishop in regulating and implementing the procedures for becoming a priest.~~

*Proposed text:*

**CANON 44**  
OF THE MINISTRY OF BAPTIZED & CONFIRMED PERSONS

**Section 1** – *Concerning the ministry of all baptized persons*

The Diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including:

1. Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places.
2. Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to lifelong Christian formation.

**Section 2** – *Concerning the ministry of confirmed adult communicants*

The Diocese shall make provision for the training and selection of confirmed communicants in good standing in the parishes or missions of the Diocese to serve as Lector, Worship Leader, Lay Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, or Catechist.

Guidelines for the training and selection of the persons called to these ministries are contained in the Handbook on Lay Ministry available from the Diocese.

**Section 3** – *Concerning the ministry of Religious Orders*

The Diocese shall make provision for the identification, encouragement, and discernment of those interested in exploring religious orders.

**Section 4** – *Concerning the ministry of Deaconess*

The Diocese shall make provision for the discernment, training, and selection of confirmed, communicant women in good standing within the Diocese to serve the Church in one or more of the following functions: to care for the sick, the afflicted, or the poor; to give instruction in the Christian faith, and if directed to prepare candidates for Baptism and for Confirmation, to carry out the Church's work among women and children; or any other ministry with the approval of the Bishop.

Those considering this ministry shall follow the guidelines and process for the calling, training, examination and selection of a Deaconess as contained in the *Customary for the Ordering of Deaconesses* available from the Diocese.

**Section 5** – *Concerning the ministry of Holy Orders*

The Diocese affirms what Anglicanism has always held, namely, the normality of the threefold ministry of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon. Therefore, the Diocese shall make provision for the discernment, training, and selection of confirmed, communicant men in good standing within the Diocese seeking to serve the Church in this manner.

Those considering these ministries shall follow the guidelines and process for the calling, training, examination and selection of a Deacon or Priest as contained in the *Customary for Holy Orders* which is available from the Diocese.

**Section 6 – Commission on Ministry**

The Bishop shall appoint confirmed communicants in good standing within the Diocese to serve on the Commission on Ministry. The commission shall be an advisory body to assist the Bishop in establishing and implementing the guidelines and procedures contained in the *Customary for Orders* .