

**CONSTITUTION AND CANONS  
OF THE  
MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF CENTRAL STATES  
OF THE  
REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**CONSTITUTION**

PREAMBLE

We acknowledge our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ as the Head of His Body, the Church. Christ Himself, acting by the Holy Spirit, is the Sovereign King, “the Apostle and High Priest”, “the Shepherd and Bishop” of our souls; and over the whole of the One, Holy, Catholick and Apostolic Church of which this Diocese is hereby established as a part: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

ARTICLE I—*Name*

The name of this Diocese of the Reformed Episcopal Church is and shall be:

“The Missionary Diocese of the Central States  
of the  
Reformed Episcopal Church”

And, hereinafter shall be referred to as ‘this Diocese’ or ‘the Diocese’; and, in the records and documents of the Diocese the aforementioned terms or the abbreviation “MDCS” shall be understood to mean “The Missionary Diocese of the Central States of the Reformed Episcopal Church.”

ARTICLE II—*Mission*

The mission of this Diocese is to: Proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, to establish and encourage Parishes, Mission Parishes and other works of the church, and provide endorsement, licensure, and well ordered ecclesiastical oversight and generally aid the ministry of clergymen and those in lay orders in the Diocese.

ARTICLE III—*The Diocese*

Section 1. The government and ordering of this diocese shall be in accordance with the constitution and canons of this diocese and none other; however, nothing in these constitutions and canons shall be construed to take precedence over the Constitutions and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or of the laws of the United States and the several States, Commonwealths, or portions thereof of which this Diocese shall from time to time consist. And, if any portion of these Constitutions and Canons shall be found to be at variance with the laws of any state or political subdivision thereof, that portion

and that portion only, and only for that jurisdiction, shall be suspended and all other portions shall remain in force and effect.

If a portion of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or the Constitutions of this Diocese or any subordinate part thereof be found to be at variance with the laws of the civil authority having jurisdiction, the subordinate portion, work, or ministry of this church shall have authority in duly convened council, convocation, or meeting to adopt local measures, by canon or by-laws, to enable that portion of this church to be well and safely ordered in conformity to the law and precedent of the civil authority in jurisdiction; provided, that report of such measures be made to the Bishop and Standing Committee in writing with an adequate explanation of the same.

Section 2. This Diocese shall initially consist of:

- a. all extant Parishes and Mission Parishes, Deaneries, Convocations and subordinate works thereof, all cemeteries, churchyards and lands or portions thereof which are not the property of a Parish or Mission Parish or a work of a subordinate jurisdiction of this Diocese, in which the Reformed Episcopal Church has interest within the bounds of the Diocese; and,
- b. all the Presbyters of the Reformed Episcopal Church in good standing and licensed by their prior jurisdictions within boundaries of the diocese; and,
- c. all Deacons, Postulants for Holy Orders, and Deaconesses resident in the Diocese in good standing with the prior jurisdiction and not under disciplinary action; and,
- d. all Military Chaplains who have entered the service from the geographic area of this Diocese; or who maintain a home in the geographic area of this Diocese, or who are stationed in the geographic area of this Diocese and are members in good standing of a previous jurisdiction of the Reformed Episcopal Church which is now part of this Diocese; and, who are not canonically members of some other jurisdiction of the Reformed Episcopal Church. However, Military Chaplains resident in or stationed in the Diocese that are canonically members of some other jurisdiction of the Reformed Episcopal Church shall be seated as corresponding members of the council without election.
- e. all Retired or inactive Clergy and Deaconesses resident within the bounds of this Diocese who do not, within one year of the adoption of these constitutions and canons, petition their Bishop to remain on the roles of the jurisdiction from which they proceed.

Section 3. The area of jurisdiction of this Diocese is defined by the General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church, subject to such amendment as may be later voted by a Council of this Diocese, with the consent of the General Council or General Committee of the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Standing Committees or equivalent bodies of such jurisdictions as are involved.

By action of the General Committee of The Reformed Episcopal Church, this Diocese initially consists of the Commonwealths of Virginia and Kentucky; and the states of West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee, Alabama, and North Carolina.

ARTICLE IV—*Government of the Diocese*

Section 1. The legislation of the Diocese and the direction of all matters which belong to and affect the Diocese that are not assigned herein to the Ecclesiastical Authority or other authorities within the Diocese shall be vested in the Council of the Diocese, duly called, convened and constituted in accordance with these Constitutions and Canons.

Section 2. The Bishop of The Missionary Diocese shall be the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese. If there is no Bishop, the Presiding Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church shall be the ecclesiastical authority. However, if the General Committee of the Reformed Episcopal Church or General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church should act to amend the Missionary status of this Diocese then the Bishop of the Diocese and the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.

Section 3. All boards and committees of the Diocese shall be under the ecclesiastical oversight of the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese, which shall, within the limits of these constitutions and canons, have authority to rescind or reverse any actions of committees of this Diocese.

Section 4. The Bishop shall be a member *ex-officio* of all committees whether elective or appointed.

ARTICLE V—*Membership of the Council of the Diocese*

Section 1. The Bishop, Assistant Bishops and all Presbyters in good standing of the Diocese, and any Deacon who is Minister-in-Charge of a Parish within the Diocese shall be seated as a voting member of the Council of the Diocese.

Section 2. The Secretary, the Vice-President, the members of the Standing Committee, the Trustees, deputies from authorized Agencies of the Diocese or their alternates; the Rector's Warden of each Parish, with the People's Warden of the Parish as his alternate; or such deputies as a Parish may elect shall be seated as voting members.

Section 3. All lay delegates elected in accordance with these canons and the by-laws of the Parish or Agency of the Diocese shall be seated as voting members upon presentment of a letter of credentials stating: The name of the Parish or Agency; The place and date of the election; If a Parish or Mission Parish, the number of communicants and the date the roll was examined; A statement that the work has met its financial obligation of tithing of non-designated gifts to the Diocese; And bearing the dated signatures of the Rector, Vicar, or Minister-in-Charge (if any), And the Wardens (if any).

Or, upon presentment of such certificate of delegates as the Ecclesiastical authority shall from time to time promulgate. And note, the Bishop, having direct knowledge of the circumstances, or adequate testimony of the same, may, by his signature, remedy any deficiencies in lay deputy credentials.

Lay deputies shall be elected from the communicant membership of each Parish and Mission Parish as follows at a regular or special Parish meeting annually. However, if no election is held, the previously elected lay deputies being qualified may be seated at the council. Lay deputies continue in office until their successors be chosen.

Each Extension Work may elect one corresponding member.

Each Mission Parish shall elect one lay deputy.

Each Parish shall elect two lay deputies; and an additional lay deputy for each 100 communicants over the first 100 when the number of active communicant members is rounded to the nearest whole 100.

A majority of the delegates elected in each parish shall be male.

For every delegate elected, an alternate may be elected. Alternates shall serve in place of the delegate whenever a delegate of necessity can not be in attendance while the council is seated. Whenever the roll is called and a delegate fails to answer, the Secretary shall call the name of an alternate.

Lay Readers licensed as extraordinary communion visitors shall be seated as lay delegates. Lay Readers licensed to compose sermons shall be seated as corresponding members. Lay Readers are invited to attend the meetings of council.

Section 4. All parochial clergy are seated as full members of Council. Non-parochial Presbyters who are engaged in recognized ministries by the Diocese (headmasters of schools, chaplains, faculty at seminaries or theological houses, colleges or universities, full time members of missionary works, poor houses and relief agencies and those who report to the Bishop at least 700 hours per year of Christian service) shall be seated as full members of Council.

Non parochial clergy shall be seated as corresponding members of council.

Retired Presbyters who have been elected to the office 'Rector (or Curate) Emeritus' with tenancy at some Rectory, Parsonage, or some housing allowance shall be seated as full members of council. Other retired clergy shall be seated as corresponding members of council.

Retired Bishops shall be seated as full members of council.

Section 5. No one shall be a member of the Council who is not a communicant member of the Reformed Episcopal Church in good and regular standing.

Section 6. By a two-thirds vote, visitors and friends of our Church may be seated as Corresponding Members of the Council for the duration of the meeting of the Council. Corresponding members shall have the right to speak upon the floor of the house, but shall have no vote, nor have any other privilege of membership.

Section 7. While this Diocese is a Missionary Diocese such officers as the Constitutions and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church may require shall be seated as members of the Council and such persons as the Ecclesiastical Authority of the General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church shall direct shall be seated as members of the Council.

#### ARTICLE VI—*Meetings of the Council*

Section 1. All Clergy and Laity of this Diocese shall observe a season of Holy Obligation beginning the Wednesday before the Thursday next before the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels and extending through the Sunday following during which the Diocese shall ordinarily convene in solemn assembly that Thursday, to do the work of the Church.

Section 2. The council by 2/3 majority or the Bishop and standing committee by 2/3 majority may establish some other date for the regular meeting of the council, acting not less than 90 days before the regular meeting giving at least 30 days notice to all members of the council.

Section 3. The Bishop of the Diocese may also call special meetings of the Council of the Diocese, by and with written consent of two-thirds of the members of the Standing Committee, and any such meetings shall be held at the time and place designated in the call to the meeting. Thirty days' notice thereof shall be given by the Bishop to every Parish and Mission Parish specifying the object or objects of such meeting; and those items specified shall be the only items of business at such special meeting.

By unanimous consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee and the Secretary, and by 2/3 of the membership of the council polled by correspondence, A special meeting may be held by correspondence, provided that a complete record of correspondence with return receipts thereof be maintained by the Secretary, that all votes be by roll call and by orders, and that the entire record be spread upon the minutes of the proceedings.

By unanimous consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee and the Secretary, and by 2/3 of the membership of the council polled by correspondence, A special meeting may be held by telephone or video conference, provided that a complete and adequate voice recording of the meeting be made and maintained by the Secretary, that all votes be by roll call and by orders, and that a transcript of the entire record be spread upon the minutes of the proceedings.

Section 4. The Delegates elected to the next preceding Council of the Diocese shall be delegates to any special meeting unless in the interim any Parish shall have elected other delegates.

ARTICLE VII—*Officers of the Council*

Section 1. The officers of the Council of the Diocese shall be President, Vice-President, and Secretary, and such other officers as the Council may decide upon from time to time. The officers not appointed shall be elected by ballot at each regular meeting, upon the organization of the Council of the Diocese, and shall hold their respective offices until their successors have been elected. While this Diocese is a Missionary Diocese the Ecclesiastical Authority of the General Council may make appointment of the officers of this Diocese from time to time.

Section 2. The Bishop of the Diocese shall be *ex-officio* President of the Council. The Bishop may nominate any member of the Reformed Episcopal Church for election as President of the council by simple majority vote by orders. Note: A President so nominated and elected serves as President of the Council merely as an officer of the Council and only presides when Council is in session, and serves a term only until the next regular meeting of Council.

Section 3. The Bishop co-adjutor (if there be one) shall be *ex-officio* Vice-President of the Council. If there be no co-adjutor, the Arch-Deacon (if there be one) shall be *ex-officio* Vice-President of the Council. However, the Bishop Ordinary or any *ex-officio* Vice-President may nominate any member of Council, whom Council may elect by simple majority, to serve as Vice-President until the next regular meeting of Council. Note: A Vice-President so nominated and elected serves as Vice-President of the Council merely as an officer of the Council and only presides only when Council is in session, and serves a term only until the next regular meeting of Council.

Section 4. The Secretary may be a Presbyter, Deacon, or a lay person in the Reformed Episcopal Church. The Secretary may appoint one or more clerks to assist with the work of the secretary with term of service to be no longer than that of the secretary, such appointment subject to the review of the Bishop or the Council.

Section 5. In the event of the resignation, removal, or death of the President, the Vice-President shall discharge the duties of the office of the President until or unless the Ecclesiastical Authority having jurisdiction shall appoint a President.

Section 6. In the case of the death or disability or resignation of the Vice-President, the Bishop with the consent of a majority of the Standing Committee, may appoint a Vice-President to serve until the next regular meeting of Council.

Section 7. In the case of the death or disability or resignation of the Secretary, or any Treasurer, the President, in concurrence with a majority of the Standing Committee, may appoint a replacement to serve until the next regular meeting of Council.

Section 8. The Treasurer of the Council of the Diocese may be appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Standing Committee; else the treasurer shall be elected by the council.

ARTICLE VIII—*Proceedings of the Council of the Diocese*

Section 1. The proceedings at the meetings of the Council of the Diocese shall be regulated by such parliamentary rules as the Council may from time to time adopt; provided, that whenever ten or more members of the Council call for a vote by orders, it shall be allowed. In such case the Bishop shall vote as a Presbyter, and the concurrence of both orders shall be necessary to the passage of the measure so voted on.

A. If the council takes no action to adopt rules of order the business of the council shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order* edition of 1876.

B. The President may appoint a parliamentarian who shall serve until replaced, to whom questions of order may be addressed to give advice and counsel to the Chair. Any ruling of the Chair may be appealed to the Bishop. The Bishop may put any question of order to the house for a non-binding vote; but in every case the ruling of the Bishop shall stand pending appeal to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the General Council.

Section 2. In all business of the Council, freedom of debate shall be allowed, subject to the Council to fix and limit the length of time for debate.

Section 3. A majority of the Presbyters and Deacons serving Parishes and Missions and a majority of the delegates from the Parishes and Missions of the Diocese shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but any number may adjourn from time to time to await the arrival of a quorum. With the unanimous consent of delegates assembled for any meeting of the council, clergy and lay members of council may be counted as present by means of teleconference or video conference.

Section 4. A call for prayer is always in order in the deliberations of the Council.

ARTICLE IX—*Boards and Committees*

Section 1. The following Committee and Boards shall be appointed by the Bishop at the Council of the Diocese at its regular meetings:

(1). The Standing Committee shall consist of a minimum of two Presbyters and two laymen appointed annually by the Bishop from this Diocese. While this Diocese is a Missionary Diocese such persons as the Ecclesiastical Authority of the General Council shall so direct shall be members of the Standing Committee.

(2). While this Diocese is a Missionary Diocese the trustees shall be those whom the Ecclesiastical Authority of the General Council shall direct; provided, that such trustees

may be so named in accordance with the laws of the civil jurisdiction wherein the Diocese is situate. Else, the trustees may be nominated by the Bishop of the Diocese and elected by simple majority of the council in session. Any vacancy of Trustees of the Diocese may be remedied by appointment by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee.

Section 2. Such Committees as are determined necessary to the orderly operation of the Diocese shall be appointed by the Bishop.

#### *ARTICLE X—Amendments*

This Constitution may be amended by a unanimous vote of any stated meeting of the Council, or of any special meeting thereof called for the purpose; otherwise, by a two-thirds vote at one stated meeting of the Council, ratified by a two-thirds vote at the next succeeding stated meeting thereof. A motion to adopt for first reading, even though passed unanimously when made, shall not constitute final passage but shall require ratification at the next stated meeting of the Council. If it is intended to have an amendment passed without a second reading, it shall be stated so when it is offered or proposed.

#### *ARTICLE XI—Adoption*

Upon a two thirds majority vote for adoption these Constitutions and Canons shall be the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese with immediate effect upon adjournment of the Council in session wherein the vote is taken.



## CANONS

### TITLE I—THE MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF CENTRAL STATES

#### CANON I—*The Clergy*

Section 1. Annually before the meeting of the Council of the Diocese, the Bishop, or if there be none, the Standing Committee, shall prepare or cause to be prepared, a Roll of the Clergy of the Diocese, with names of their respective charges, together with their places of residence; and also, with particulars of time and place, the names of all ministers who have been ordained or received from other churches or have resigned, or died, or have been dropped from the Clergy Roll, or may have been subject to discipline. Such Clergy Roll shall be laid before the Council immediately after it shall have been called to order and the names of the clerical members called therefrom. This Clergy Roll shall be published in the minutes of the proceedings, and the Secretary of the Diocese shall send a copy of the same to the Secretary of the General Council.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of every minister in the Diocese, except he be retired because of age or disability, who is not in charge of a Parish or otherwise engaged in the service of the Diocese, to report, in writing, within thirty days immediately preceding the convening of the annual Council of the Diocese his address and occupations. The notation of the receipt of such reports shall be appended to the Clergy Roll.

Any Clergyman failing so to report for two or more successive meetings of the Council of the Diocese may be dropped from the active Clergy Roll, in which event he may be restored by reporting for two successive years to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese; and, such reporting must include an explanation satisfactory to the Bishop for his previous failure to report. The Bishop, at his discretion, may remedy the status of an inactive Clergyman so that he may be considered for a call to active ministry. And, upon motion of the Bishop and consent of the Standing Committee or Council (when in session) the inactive status of a clergyman may be remedied.

Section 3.

(A). A Presbyter in charge of a Parish shall be designated the Rector, or Pastor, thereof.

(B). A Deacon in charge of a Parish shall be designated the Minister-in-Charge thereof.

(C). A Presbyter or Deacon in charge of a Mission Parish by appointment of the Bishop and Standing Committee shall be designated the Vicar thereof.

(D). A Lay Reader may be licensed by the Bishop to conduct Divine Worship in a Parish or Mission without pastoral care, but such licensing may only be provided to those who are Communicants of this church and meet the requirements for a Deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

**CANON II—*The Vice-President***

In the event of the inability of the President to act during a session of the Council, or between sessions, the Vice-President shall discharge his duties while such inability continues.

**CANON III—*The Secretary***

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to take the minutes and record all proceedings of the Council of the Diocese, and together with the Bishop, to attest its official acts. The Secretary shall direct the publication and distribution of the Journal of the Council of the Diocese of the Central States (or such name as the jurisdiction shall adopt) and shall preserve in at least two separate secure locations a complete record of the acts, minutes and proceeding of the Diocese with stable ink applied to acid free paper on one side only.

Before publication, the copy of the Journal shall be examined by and have the approval of the Bishop or, in his absence, the Arch Deacon, or in his absence someone designated by the Standing Committee.

**CANON IV—*The Treasurers***

It shall be the duty of all Treasurers either appointed or elected by the Council, or acting under its supervision, to receive the monies belonging to their respective funds and to distribute the same under the direction of the Council or the boards or committees under which they serve. Their accounts shall be reported to the Council and audited by a committee appointed by the Bishop. A certificate of audit by a certified professional accountant may be accepted in lieu of examination by such Auditing Committee.

**CANON V —*The Standing Committee***

Section 1. The Standing Committee shall be the Advisory Board to the Bishop of the Diocese and have such powers and perform such duties as are provided by the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, these Constitutions and Canons and such duties as may be assigned by the Council of the Diocese.

Section 2. The Bishop of the Diocese shall be Chairman of the Standing Committee, *ex-officio*. The Bishop shall appoint from among its members a Secretary who shall keep the Minutes of its meetings, and perform such other duties as the Committee may direct.

Section 3. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. The Committee shall make a report of its proceedings to each annual Council of the Diocese and to each General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

**CANON VI—*The Board of Trustees***

The Treasurer of the Diocese shall be *ex officio* a member of the Trustees of the Diocese and shall be Treasurer of the same. The Bishop, or the Bishop and the Standing Committee, shall nominate and the Council shall elect a slate of nominees to serve as Trustees to the Diocese. The election shall be by secret ballot and the slate of Trustees shall be elected by simple majority. If the slate of Trustees is not elected, then the floor will be opened to nominations. Election of trustees shall always be a separate item of business from all other elections. No less than Four trustees shall be elected. No more than a minority of the elected Board of Trustees shall be Presbyters

The trustees shall hold title to any real or personal property to which the Diocese has right or claim of title. The Trustees hold a position of fiduciary trust to the Diocese. The Trustees shall hold deeds of trust or any other instruments of investment of any Diocesan funds loaned to any agency of this Diocese or not of this Diocese. The Trustees shall only act as directed by the Diocese or as directed by the Standing Committee or other committee when by Canon or by action of the Council such committees are enabled to give direction to the Trustees.

It shall be the duty of the Trustees to receive for and on behalf of the Diocese all contributions which may be made to the Diocese or to the Trustees, or resources that are placed in their control by lawful means; and, to carry into effect the purposes for which all gifts are specifically given as far as they lawfully may.

The Board of Trustees has authority accept resignation of its members and with the advice and consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee to elect persons to fill vacancies. The Trustees shall ordinarily serve until the next regular meeting of the Council, but shall continue in office until their successors be elected.

If in any civil jurisdiction of this Diocese there is a requirement that Trustees be resident in that jurisdiction to effect transactions of any portion of the church, or when it is expedient to be so, or whenever any Parish or agency of this Diocese can not lawfully function under the by-laws or charter or articles of incorporation of the same, the Trustees may elect or the Bishop may appoint or direct a Presbyter in the jurisdiction to appoint Trustees to effect the business of the church. Such Trustees shall stand in a position of fiduciary trust to the church and when the business at hand is effected all receipts, deeds, instruments of investment, accounts and funds shall be delivered entire to the Trustees of the Diocese.

#### **CANON VII - *Committees***

##### **Section 1 - Committee on Constitutions and Canons**

This committee may be appointed by the Bishop.

No amendment to the Constitutions and Canons shall be brought to the floor of the Council for a first or first and final reading except such amendment first shall be referred to the Committee on Constitutions and Canons; and, that Committee shall bring any

recommended amendments to the floor by way of report with recommendations. However, the Council may vote to move a Council referred item out of committee if there has been no report with recommendation from the committee for more than 180 days.

It shall be the duty of the Committee on Constitutions and Canons to review Parish By-Laws and other Articles or Instruments of Government of any work or agency not wholly a subordinate ministry of a Parish when such items are referred to the committee. Such review shall be made within 90 days of submission; and, if no report be forthcoming from the committee the submitted document (being properly adopted by the agency) shall be the governing document of that Parish or agency until any deficiencies be corrected by the Council in session or the Bishop and Standing Committee acting on a report of the Committee on Constitutions and Canons.

It is recommended that Parish and other agency by-laws and amendments to by-laws be submitted to the Committee on Constitutions and Canons prior to any vote to adopt the same. A written report of review by the Committee on Constitutions and Canons approving submission before a vote to adopt shall be deemed approval of the Committee upon passage of the By-Laws or amendments. The work of this Committee in reviewing Parish and other agency By-Laws and other articles shall be limited to reviewing the same to insure conformity to the Constitutions and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, The Constitutions and Canons of this Diocese, and the regular and established practice of tradition in this church.

The Committee on Constitutions and Canons is a subcommittee of the Council of the Diocese and the Standing Committee.

#### Section 2 - The Committee on Church planting and growth

This committee may be appointed by the Bishop.

The purpose of this committee is to provide a resource to which the Bishop and Standing Committee to may direct those persons and congregations who express interest in joining with the Reformed Episcopal Church in this Diocese.

This committee shall also, at the direction of the Bishop and Standing Committee, research, explore, and propose communities within the Diocese where it would be expedient to focus the missionary endeavor of this Diocese and to assist the Diocese by proposing means and methods the effect the same.

#### Section 3 - The Diocesan Board of Parochial Education, a committee of the Council

This committee may be appointed by the Bishop.

The Diocesan Board of Parochial Education should be comprised of Clergy and Lay persons who have expertise and experience in the starting and maintaining of parochial schools. The purpose of this Board is:

To provide an identified pool of expertise in the Diocese for this expanding area of ministry to serve as a Council of Advice for those Parishes and other agencies who wish to expand in this specific area of ministry.

To provide a mechanism in the Diocese for the comparison of curriculum and instructional methods for schools that choose to participate. And, to provide a structure for accreditation when it is in the interest of the ministry of the Diocese and served schools who wish to participate in such accreditation.

To provide a resource to served schools for the acculturation of the oecumenical community of the Protestant Parochial School into fellowship with this church through worship of Almighty God, Christian service, and Personal Devotion at the Board, Faculty, Parent, and Student levels through publication, conferences, retreats, speakers or other such means as resources permit.

#### Section 4 - The committee on Christian Vocations

This committee may be appointed by the Bishop.

The purpose of this committee is to, at the direction of the Bishop and Standing Committee, to devise, propose assist in the effecting of means and methods of recruiting and training men to serve as the clergy of this Diocese.

#### Section 5 - The Committee on Nominations

Whensoever the Bishop desires some means other than direct appointment of any members of any committees of this Diocese, or any portion thereof; he may appoint a committee on nominations; or, may ask for nominations on the floor of the Council for members of a committee on nominations. This committee shall, at the instruction of the Bishop, produce a list of persons willing to serve at the Bishop's appointment, or at the pleasure of the Bishop, to stand for election at the next Council of the Diocese.

### **CANON VIII** —*Authorized Agencies of the Diocese*

Section 1. The following organizations are recognized as authorized agencies of the Diocese and are entitled to representation in the Council.

- (1). The Reapers: two lay deputies.
- (2). The Women of the Church: two lay deputies.
- (3). The Men of the Church: one clergy and one lay deputy; or, two lay deputies.

Section 2. Each organization authorized under this Canon or by charter of the Bishop or

Ecclesiastical Authority must operate under a constitution, by-laws, or other such articles approved by the Bishop and the Standing Committee and must report their actions and finances to the annual Council of the Diocese. Failure to meet these conditions shall be grounds for action of the Bishop and the Standing Committee to suspend the recognition afforded by these Canons, to appropriate their funds for purposes of the Diocese and to suspend their activity among Parishes and mission Parishes of the Diocese until such time as the Bishop and Standing Committee shall deem the deficiency rectified.

**CANON IX - *Of lay deputies to the General Council***

While this Diocese is designated a Mission Diocese of the Reformed Episcopal Church the lay deputies and their alternates from this Diocese may be elected at the Diocesan Council closest to the meeting of the General Council. However, if any elected or alternate lay deputies are unable to attend for any reason whatsoever, or if there be no election, the Ordinary, or in his absence the Coadjutor or most senior Suffragan or in the absence of any Bishop any three Presbyters named by the standing committee may appoint any lay communicant members of the Reformed Episcopal Church to serve as lay deputies and certify the same to the Secretary of the General Council (cf. GC C&C Canon 42 sec 8(b))

**TITLE II—OF PARISHES**

**CANON X —*Of Membership***

Section 1. The consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee is a prerequisite to the formation of a new Parish in this Diocese.

Section 2. In the organization of a new Parish, the following Article of Association and Conformity shall be signed by at least twelve (12) persons of legal voting age, who have been duly examined by the Bishop of the Diocese, or some clergyman of his appointment, as to their personal faith, and as indicated by prior membership in an evangelical church, or by Confirmation by the Bishop; who intend to be supporters of the Parish, to wit:

“We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves for the purpose of maintaining the worship of God and the preaching of the Gospel according to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church, under the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Church, in the city (or town, or County &c.) of \_\_\_\_\_ State (or Commonwealth) of \_\_\_\_\_, and we promise conformity to the Constitution and Canons of The Reformed Episcopal Church, and to the Diocese in which this parish is situate.

We do hereby authorize the Chairman and Secretary of this meeting to certify this action, in writing, to both the Bishop and to the Standing

Committee of the Diocese.”

Section 3. A Parish, Mission, or other work already in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church may be admitted to this Diocese by the Bishop and Standing Committee; provided:

There is a properly executed petition for admission with attestation by duly authorized persons that the petition is made in due order with all Canons, by-laws, or articles of incorporation pertaining thereto; and,

That the Bishop and Standing Committee be in receipt of true and faithful copies of any Charter, Articles of Incorporation, Constitutions, By-laws or other documents pertaining to the establishment of the work; and,

That the Ecclesiastical Authority of the former jurisdiction has granted letter dimissory or other such instrument of transfer of jurisdiction.

Section 4. A Congregation, or Parish, not in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church may be received by the Bishop and Standing Committee upon presentation of acceptance of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and acceptance of these Constitutions and Canons, and acceptance of the doctrine, discipline, and worship of this Church; which acceptance shall be duly certified as the act of the congregational or Parish Meeting by the appropriate officer or officers thereof.

Section 5. Where the adult membership, of legal voting age, of a Parish is between twelve (12) and twenty-nine (29) members, such Parish shall be designated a Mission Parish. A Mission Parish shall be under the sole government of the Bishop or a Presbyter appointed by him, whom shall appoint and remove Wardens, Vestrymen and other officers and admit and dismiss members.

Section 6. Every group meeting for worship by authority of the Standing Committee, but not admitted as a Parish or Mission Parish shall be known as an Extension Work.

Section 7. (a). In the event that the communicant membership of a Parish falls below the number of thirty (30) for two consecutive years, that Parish shall be given the status of a Mission Parish with all the limitations to which Mission Parishes are subject under the Canons of the this Diocese. Should the Mission Parish again attain the membership of 30 or more, it shall be necessary for the Vestry of such a congregation to re-apply for the designation of Parish.

(b). In the event that the communicant membership of a Parish or Mission Parish falls below the number of twelve for two consecutive years, that group may be disbanded by the Bishop with the approval of the Standing Committee and the members assigned to the pastoral care of the next closest Reformed Episcopal Parish or Mission Parish.

Section 8. The consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee shall be a prerequisite to the merger of two or more congregations. In matters of representation, rights, and limitations enumerated in these Canons, the status of such Parishes with several congregations shall be determined by their total combined communicant membership.

Section 9. All Parishes and Missions or any other work of the Reformed Episcopal Church affiliating with this Diocese must have the name of the work approved by the Standing Committee.

#### **CANON XI** —*Of Parish By-Laws*

Section 1. By-Laws of any Parish must not conflict with the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or this Diocese, and must be submitted to the Committee on Constitution and Canons for correction, if need be, and for certification. Likewise all proposed revisions of By-Laws of Parishes shall be so submitted.

Section 2. The Wardens, and any person in a position of fiduciary trust in any Parish must be communicant members of this Church, in good and regular standing, and of legal voting age.

#### **CANON XII** —*Of Vacant Parishes*

Section 1. Whenever a Parish becomes vacant, it shall be the duty of the Wardens or the Secretary of the Vestry to notify the Bishop in writing within 14 days.

Section 2. The Bishop of the Diocese is *ex-officio* Rector of every vacant Parish until a Rector is elected and installed. The Bishop or his representative shall be *ex-officio* chairman of the Vestry at any Parish Meeting. The Senior Warden shall preside if neither the Bishop or his representative are able to attend. However, no Vestry meeting or Parish Meeting shall be deemed to be lawfully convened unless the Ecclesiastical Authority shall give consent to the same or shall have been notified 15 days in advance of the meeting.

Section 3. During the vacancy it shall be the duty of the Rector's Warden, under the direction of the Bishop, to make provision for maintaining Divine Worship in the Church, and for the pastoral care of the Parish.

#### **CANON XIII** —*Of Parish Registers*

Section 1. In every Parish or Mission Parish, the Vestry shall provide a suitable book for a Parish Register. It shall be in the custody of the Minister, whose duty it shall be to keep accurate and full records therein of all baptisms, confirmations, receptions by letter from other Churches, marriages, and burials, together with a complete list of the communicants and a list, so far as practicable, of families within his charge, which Register shall be the property of the Parish, and be preserved for the use of his successor.



No names, once entered shall ever be erased; changes of status being entered as notes or remarks.

Section 2. Communicants of a Parish are all persons who have been confirmed therein, or who have been received by letters of dismissory from evangelical churches, or have presented satisfactory evidence of previous communicant membership and present purpose to serve the Lord, provided that in every case they have received the Holy Communion.

Section 3. The Communicant list shall be corrected annually by the Parish Council by removing from active membership, through notation, the names of all persons who have died or have been: ordained to the Presbyterate, or dismissed to another church, or ex-communicated; together with those who for a period of one year have not partaken of the Lord's Supper, or have disappeared, or have ceased to attend Divine Services, or have ceased to contribute to the support of the Parish; provided that, all reasonable efforts to reclaim such members have been made.

Exceptions may be made of non-residents who continue to contribute and wish to retain their active standing, and of aged persons, invalids and persons who are financially unable to contribute, and in the military service or educational institutions which requires a change of residence. All who are placed upon the inactive list shall be notified if their addresses are known. In preparing statistical reports of Communicant Members, only those on the active list shall be enumerated.

Section 4. Upon request, a communicant moving from one Parish to any other shall be granted a letter dismissory, which shall give his status as shown by the Parish Register. A communicant who has resumed regular attendance at Divine Services, renewed his support, and partaken of the Lord's Supper, shall be restored at any time to the active roll from the inactive roll.

Section 5. Upon the death or removal of the Minister, the Parish Register shall pass to the Senior Warden, who shall keep the records, entering every change without delay while the Parish is vacant.

Section 6. All Parish records shall be open to the Bishop, and it shall be his duty to examine them regularly, or to appoint a person or persons to act in his stead.

Section 7. Upon the dissolution of a Parish, the Parish Register shall become the property of the Diocese, to be preserved in the archives.

#### **CANON XIV** —*Of the Annual Parish Meeting*

Section 1. In each Parish annually during Easter Week or on some other convenient occasion, an election shall be held for Wardens, Vestrymen, Parish Council, and Delegates to the Council of the Diocese. Wardens, Vestrymen, Parish Council, and Delegates shall be chosen from among the communicants of legal voting age.

Section 2. Only communicants of legal voting age who have been in regular communion with the Parish for 12 months shall be entitled to vote at the Parish Meeting. In any case of dispute as to the qualification of the electors, the decision shall rest with the Rector and the Wardens.

Section 3. At the annual Parish Meeting the following reports shall be made:

A. The Rector's Report: shall be presented to the congregation and a copy shall be filed in the parish records. The Rector's report should contain a summary of the Rector's ministerial endeavors in the Parish and on the Mission Field. If the Parish is vacant, the Rector's Warden shall report to the Parish the state of the Parish register and the means by which services of worship shall be maintained.

B. The People's Warden's report: (which may be presented by the Treasurer or Financial Secretary if there be any). The People's Warden report shall summarize the Parish accounts and the accounts of all subsidiary bodies and organizations of the Parish. The accuracy of the financial reports shall be verified by an audit committee of two persons, one of whom shall not have served on the vestry for the past year.

C. The Vestry's Report: Which shall summarize the work of the Vestry in the past year and shall contain a report of the budget for the coming year as adopted by the Vestry.

D. Unless provided otherwise in Parish by-laws, Articles, or Charter; the following order of business shall then be followed.

1. The Rector shall nominate one person from the communicants of the Parish to serve as Rector's Warden. The Parish shall vote on the nominee, who shall be elected by a simple majority. Failing election, the Rector may nominate another person to serve as Rector's Warden. This process shall continue until a Rector's Warden be elected or the Rector have no nominees to offer. If no Rector's Warden be elected the Warden in office shall continue in office. If the office is vacant and the Parish fails to elect a Warden the Bishop may appoint as Warden any qualified communicant in the Diocese.

2. The People's Warden shall be nominated. If more than one person is nominated the nominees shall be considered *ad seriatim*. If no People's Warden be elected then the Warden in office shall continue in office. If the office is vacant and the Parish fails to elect a Warden the Bishop may appoint as Warden any qualified communicant in the Diocese.

Election or appointment of a People's Warden in accordance with this Canon shall constitute, upon presentment of the same, any and all corporate resolutions, declarations or acts necessary for the People's Warden to be named signatory to any accounts, certificates of deposit, safe deposit boxes, certificates of stock, bonds, or any other instruments of investment held by the Parish, Mission, or other entity in which the Warden holds office.

3. Election to fill any vacancies on the Vestry. And note: Wardens serve on the Vestry *ex officio*. However, if a Vestryman is elected as Warden, he does not vacate an unexpired term. If a Communicant not serving on Vestry is elected as Warden, he does not fill a position on the Vestry unless elected to the Vestry.

Section 4. Every Parish Meeting, whether stated or special, must be announced at each church service on two Sundays preceding its date. The purpose for each special meeting shall be announced in its call, and this business and none other, shall be considered in such a special meeting. An Emergency Parish meeting may be called with the consent of the Bishop, wherein a simple majority of communicants of legal voting age listed in the Parish Register shall constitute a quorum for the business announced.

### **TITLE III—OF PASTORAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **CANON XV —*The Call of a Minister to a Parish***

Section 1. Unless otherwise provided by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish, or ordered by the Parish at a stated meeting, the Vestry shall take initial and final action in the calling of a Rector or Minister-in-Charge (Deacon).

Section 2. The advice of the Bishop and Standing Committee, or the Standing Committee alone if there be no Bishop, shall be required before a Call is issued by any Parish to a Presbyter of this Diocese. No Deacon, and no Presbyter not a present member of this Diocese in good standing, may be considered as a Candidate for a Call without the prior consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee. No Presbyter or Deacon in this Diocese who does not possess a license to minister in this Diocese shall serve as the regular or interim minister of any congregation in this Diocese (Reformed Episcopal or otherwise).

Section 3. The Call of a minister shall be in the following form or such other form as may be promulgated by the Bishop and Standing committee:

To all whom these presents shall come:

Be it known that:  
(Name of the church or work)  
(Legal Address of the church or work)

Being a (Parish, Mission, or other work) of the Reformed Episcopal Church, being fully satisfied that we have been led to this action by the Holy Spirit, solemnly extends to:

The Rev'd Mr. *N. M.*

this call to serve the Kingdom of God and of his Christ as (office for which the call is extended); being fully persuaded that he possesses all such gifts and talents needful to discharge all such duties and responsibilities of that office;

And, we hereby, with and for that portion of Christ's Church we represent, do publically profess and promise all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord as is meet and right before God and man in that office to which he is called.

To which we confidently and without any reservation do set our hands this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. \_\_\_\_\_.

(Rector's) Warden \_\_\_\_\_

(People's) Warden \_\_\_\_\_

(And note, other such signatories as may be needful or desired may be added)

Acceptance of the call:

I, the Rev'd Mr. *N. M.* do hereby accept the call as issued above in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and,

Do certify by setting my hand hereto that I am fully informed of the responsibilities and obligations of the office I am about to enter; and,

I do testify that I meet all the canonical requirements necessary for entering that office; and,

I have received such sureties as I and the Canons of the Church have required and that we have mutually agreed upon as necessary for accepting this call to this Ecclesiastical Office.

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ signed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_.

Note: ordinarily the call and acceptance shall appear together on one document.

Section 4. It is the responsibility of the clergyman in receipt of a call to minister in this Diocese to notify and consult with the Bishop prior to accepting a call to any ministry in this Diocese; and, to forward copies of the signed document to the office of the Bishop, the secretary of the Council, the work to which he is called, and to retain one copy for his own records.

Section 5. A contract between any self employed professional or employee of the Diocese, or of Parishes, Missions, Churches, or other subordinate works of this Diocese may specify among other things:

- A. Annual Salary
- B. Housing Allowance
- C. other allowances

- D. The requirement of the Parish or Mission to pay into any mandated pension program of the General Council
- E. Provision of any medical or other benefits.
- F. Annual review of the level of compensation.

Section 6. Any contract of compensation between any minister and any Parish, Mission, work or other agency in this Diocese shall be a contract between that minister and the agency that enters therein, and the Diocese shall not be a party thereto unless the Council or the Standing Committee votes to authorize the same and the contract is signed by an officer of the Diocese.

Section 7. No contract between any minister and a Parish, Mission, Church or other agency of this Diocese, nor the absence of such contract, the enforcement of the provisions of such contract, or the failure of either party to meet the conditions of such contract shall be understood *de jure* or *de facto* to alter the standing of any clergyman in Ecclesiastical Office or any Presbyterian that has been Instituted as Minister of a Parish or Church. Further, no recommendations of this Diocese to subordinate ministries of the same shall inure any liability of negligent hiring to the Diocese. Nor shall any present or future requirements for contracts between self employed Professional Ministers or employees of subordinate ministries in this Diocese be understood to be any supervision of the same by the Diocese for purposes of employment or labor law.

Section 8. No contract for professional services or contract of employment of any minister shall constitute the settling of any minister in any Parish, Mission or other Church. A minister shall be considered to be settled in a church only after the Bishop has Instituted the minister according to the liturgy of this Church; or, when the Ecclesiastical Authority has appointed a Vicar or Minister-in-Charge.

Section 9. The Bishop with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee shall appoint the Vicar of a Mission Parish or of an extension work. A Presbyterian may respectfully decline such an appointment without prejudice. A Deacon who does not accept the appointment of the Bishop may be suspended from any present work in the Diocese until he be reconciled to his Bishop.

And note, nothing in this Canon shall limit the prerogative of the Bishop with the advice and consent of the standing committee to allow a Mission or extension work to participate in the selection of a clergyman and issue a call. However, a clergyman so selected is subject to Episcopal appointment; and, exercise of Episcopal prerogative does not set a precedent in these matters.

Section 10. Unless otherwise provided in the By-Laws of a Parish, a Call shall be for an indefinite period of time but in no case for less than a period of two years. Notwithstanding local parochial by-laws, a Rector who is settled in a Parish by the office of Institution shall continue as Rector until:

- A. He resigns or retires or dies in office.

B. He is removed for cause in accordance with the Canons of the Church.

**CANON XVI** —*Termination of a Pastoral Connection*

Section 1 - Of Clergy generally

A. A pastoral connection in this church may at any time be terminated by the consent of both parties.

B. Neither the Bishop nor the standing committee shall act to terminate a pastoral connection when the congregation and the clergyman is desirous to maintain a pastoral connection; unless, the Bishop be willing to bring charges against a clergyman and remove him for cause.

Section 2. - Of Rectors

A. A Rector settled by the office of Institution may resign by giving not less than 30 days notice; and must notify the Bishop of his intent 15 days before tendering his resignation to the Vestry.

B. When a Vestry desires that a Rector resign the Vestry may ask a Rector to resign. If the Rector does not resign the Vestry may petition the Bishop and standing committee to ask the Rector to resign.

C. Whensoever the Bishop and standing committee receive reports of a failed pastoral relationship, a Rector may be requested to resign by the Bishop. A Rector who does not resign within 90 days of the request may be charged with failure to reverently obey the Bishop according to his vows of ordination, in which case the reports aforementioned shall be read into the record.

Section 3. - Of Vicars and Ministers-in-Charge

A. A Vicar or Minister-in-Charge may resign by giving not less than 30 days notice; and, must notify the Bishop of his intent 15 days before tendering his resignation to the Vestry.

B. Whensoever the Bishop and standing committee receive reports of a failed pastoral relationship, a Vicar or Minister-in-Charge may be requested to resign by the Bishop. A Vicar or Minister-in-Charge who does not resign within 30 days of the request may be charged with failure to reverently obey the Bishop according to his vows of ordination, in which case the reports aforementioned shall be read into the record.

C. A Vicar or Minister-in-Charge subject to para. B. above may be suspended from Ministerial activity by the Bishop upon written notification to that clergyman and the Standing Committee. Such suspended Clergy may offer their resignation anytime after suspension.

Section 4. - Of causes for suspension of ministerial activity.

A. Any clergyman charged with sexual misconduct may be suspended from ministerial activity pending investigation of the charges.

B. Any clergyman indicted by civil authority for a notorious crime may be suspended pending trial. And note, an acquittal, a finding of ‘not guilty’ or dismissal of charges in a civil court may or may not result in restoration of ministerial duties.

C. Any clergyman adjudicated mentally incompetent, or committed against his will to a mental health facility, or physically or mentally incapacitated to the point that he can not of his own volition resign and where there is little hope of recovery may have his post filled with another clergyman and after 1 year the prior pastoral connection shall be deemed to be terminated.

D. Any clergyman who does not arrive to conduct services of worship at the place of his ministry for three consecutive Sundays without prior arrangement; or, who fails to arrive to conduct services five times in a year without prior arrangement shall be deemed to have quit his post and to have resigned effective the last day he failed to arrive without notice.

E. Any clergyman who teaches any doctrine contrary to: Scripture, the three Creeds of this Church, the 39 articles of Religion, the Declaration of Principles of this Church; and, who does not cease and desist from such teaching after receiving written notice signed by the Bishop and two other Presbyters may be suspended from ministerial activity pending Ecclesiastical Trial according to the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

F. Any clergyman who fails to use an authorized Liturgy of this church at the primary service of worship at a Parish, Mission, or Extension Work of this Diocese; or, who introduces practices at variance to the doctrine of this Church and does not correct the deficiency upon written notification from the Bishop may be suspended from ministerial activity by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the standing committee pending Ecclesiastical Trial according to the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

G. Any clergyman who persists in egregious breach of good discipline and order after written notification to cease and desist, and does repent and amend his behavior after being advised by the Bishop or his representative in person, and persists after being advised and counseled by at least two other clergy of his order or higher may be suspended from ministerial activity by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the standing committee pending Ecclesiastical Trial according to the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

**TITLE IV —OF WORK AND WORSHIP**

**CANON XVII —*Of Ministers and Their Duties***

Section 1. It shall be the duty of every Minister in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish of this Diocese to preach the Gospel and declare the whole counsel of God according to the Holy Scriptures, to appoint and conduct services for Divine Worship; to visit the members of his congregation, particularly such as are sick, infirm or aged; to prepare candidates for Baptism, Confirmation; and conduct the funeral services of deceased communicant members; and in every way to seek to strengthen the spiritual life of the members of the Parish or Mission Parish, the cause of this Diocese and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom through the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of every Minister in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish to give due notice to his congregation of an Episcopal visitation, and to present such persons as are ready and desirous to be confirmed, with a list of their names, after having ascertained the fact of their baptism, to the Bishop making such visitation.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of every Clergyman in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish, with such assistance as he may see fit, to obtain from persons skilled in music, to give order concerning the tunes to be sung at any time in his church; and especially it shall be his duty to suppress all light and unseemly music, and all indecency and irreverence in the performance, by which vain and ungodly persons profane the service of the Sanctuary.

Section 4. The conduct of services of worship in Church is the responsibility of the Rector. While the Rector may appoint others to assist, participate, and even suggest how the Liturgy of this church shall be conducted, it is the Rector that shall make all decisions concerning the conduct of worship in the Parish.

Section 5. The Presbyters who are members of the Diocese have an obligation of fiduciary trust to the Diocese. Any Presbyter who alienates funds, uses his high office and position of trust to enrich himself or any other agency or body not in communion with this Diocese or Church; and whensoever such Presbyter despises the discipline of this church by resignation or attempt to flee to some other jurisdiction without letter dimissory, or by demitting from the ministry, or by schismatic act; he may be held liable at a court of law for breach of fiduciary trust.

#### **CANON XVIII** —*Of the Wardens and Vestry*

Section 1. The governing body of a local Parish or Mission Parish is the Vestry.

Section 2. A Vestry shall consist of: a Rector's Warden (or Senior Warden) and a People's Warden (or Accounting Warden or Junior Warden) and some number of Vestrymen.

The Warden's shall serve a term of office for one year; but shall continue in office until their successor is chosen. The Wardens are *ex officio* members of the Vestry.



The number of Vestrymen and the term of office of Vestrymen shall be determined by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish or by the Parish at a stated meeting.

Section 3. The Rector is *ex officio* chairman of the Vestry. If the Rector is not present the Rector's Warden is chairman of the Vestry. If the Rector and the Rector's Warden are not present the People's Warden is Chairman. A Deacon who is Minister-in-Charge of a Parish may act as Chairman upon the vote of the Vestry, but he shall have no vote. The Vicar of a Mission Parish may preside by the appointment of the Bishop, but he shall have no vote unless he be elected as Chairman of the Vestry, in which case he shall serve as Chairman throughout his tenure unless he resign the office of Chairman.

Section 4. The Rector's Warden: He shall be elected at an Annual Parish Meeting. He shall be nominated by the Rector. He should be a person of outstanding Christian character. In consultation with the Bishop, he shall provide a supply for the pulpit in the case of illness, absence or resignation of the minister. He is the custodian of the Parish Register if there be no Rector or Minister-in-Charge.

Section 5. The People's Warden, (Accounting or Junior Warden) shall be elected at the Annual Parish Meeting. He shall be responsible for the funds of the Parish. If any Parish, Mission or other work chooses to elect a Treasurer the Treasurer discharges his responsibility for and on behalf of the People's Warden. He should be a person of especial Christian character and be qualified in business ability.

Note: For purposes at law and for churches and other agencies that find it necessary to incorporate, the Senior Warden holds the office consistent with President of a corporation. The Junior Warden holds the office consistent with Secretary/Treasurer of a corporation. The office of Treasurer in this church is consistent with that of a comptroller or burser, and is not an officer of the Board of Directors, nor shall a Treasurer have a vote on the Vestry unless a Vestryman be elected as Treasurer.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the Vestry to hold in trust all real and personal property of the Parish for the People of the Parish, to administer all investments and holdings, to regulate all its temporal concerns, to act in calling a Rector or Minister-in-Charge unless otherwise provided by the Charter and By-Laws of the Parish, to employ all other persons serving the Parish, and to set the amount of salary and wages paid. Vestrymen are in a position of fiduciary trust to the local church.

Section 7. Unless authorized by charter or by-laws, the Vestry shall not purchase or sell real property, or encumber real property without prior authorization of a duly convened Parish Meeting.

Section 8. In jurisdictions where churches and church agencies are required by the civil authorities to have trustees the Wardens and the Vestry shall be the trustees. If there be insufficient number of Vestry to satisfy the legal requirements, then the Wardens, or Warden if there be only one, shall appoint persons of good character to act as Trustees who shall only transact any business as the Vestry shall direct.

**CANON XIX** —*Of Lay Readers*

Section 1. No one shall officiate as Lay Reader in this Diocese without a license from the Bishop. A licensed lay reader serves under the direction of the Presbyter or Minister-in-Charge of the local work where the lay reader is on the roll of the Parish Register.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the Lay Reader to assist the Minister in the church services and prayer meetings as the Minister desires and directs or as the Bishop so directs when a Church has no minister.

Section 3. Those lay persons who read portions of the Liturgy in any service of the church under the direct supervision of a Presbyter need not be licensed lay readers. Licensed Lay Readers, Lay Readers licensed to compose sermons, and Lay Communion Visitors are licensed to do their work when no Presbyter is present in the Parish or other Church.

**CANON XX** —*Of Order in Worship*

In the conduct of the worship of the Church, where there is no Rubric or Canon, or where the Rubric or Canon is susceptible to various interpretations, even when examined in the light of ancient tradition, the direction of the Bishop shall be sought in every case of doubt or dispute; and, his decision shall be definitive for the Parish or Church posing the question; and, such direction as the Bishop shall give in these matters to the Diocese shall so order this Diocese until and unless the Bishop shall seek the will of the Diocese in Council; or until the Ecclesiastical Authority of the General Council shall address the matter.

**TITLE V—AMENDMENTS**

**CANON XXI** —*Of Standing Resolutions*

Standing Resolutions, being of doubtful authority and enforcement, shall not be adopted in lieu of Amendments of the Constitution and Canons. When adopted, they shall stand only for the duration of the Council of the Diocese in which they were adopted and until the convening of the next regular or special meeting of the Council of the Diocese.

These Canons may be amended by a unanimous vote of any stated meeting of the Council of the Diocese, or of any special meeting thereof called for the purpose; otherwise, by a majority vote at one stated meeting of the Council of the Diocese, ratified by a majority vote at the next succeeding stated meeting thereof.