

1 **CONSTITUTION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

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3 **Article I. Territory and accession**

4 Section A. That part of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church known as The Episcopal
5 Church, situated in the northwestern portion of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, does
6 hereby establish itself as the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and does ordain and
7 adopt this constitution for its governance.

8 Section B. The diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania consists of all members of the Episcopal
9 Church within the Pennsylvania counties of Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield (except Morris
10 Township), Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Venango,
11 and Warren.

12 Section C. The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania is a constituent part of The Episcopal
13 Church and does accede to, recognize and adopt the Constitution and Canons of The
14 Episcopal Church as they now exist or may hereafter be amended and acknowledges their
15 authority over the diocese.

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17 **Article II. Ecclesiastical Authority**

18 Section A. The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall be the Bishop Diocesan.

19 Section B. If there be no Bishop Diocesan, or if the Bishop Diocesan be unable to act or is
20 absent from the diocese for an extended period, then the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one,
21 shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority

22 Section C. If there be neither a Bishop Diocesan nor a Bishop Coadjutor able to act under the
23 provisions of Sections A and B, then the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical
24 Authority.

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26 **Article III. Convention**

27 **Section A. Meetings**

28 **1. Annual Convention**

29 a) There shall be a regular convention of the church in this diocese to be held annually
30 at a time and place to be fixed by the preceding annual convention. The action of
31 fixing the time and place of the regular annual convention shall constitute adequate
32 notice of such meeting.

33 b) For good and sufficient cause the time or place of meeting of the annual convention
34 may be changed by the ecclesiastical authority. Notice of such a change must be
35 given by regular mail to all canonically resident clergy and to all congregations in
36 union with the convention at least thirty days prior to the convention.

37 **2. Special conventions**

38 a) Special conventions may be held upon the call of the ecclesiastical authority.

39 b) Special conventions shall be called by the ecclesiastical authority upon written
40 petition stating the reason for such convention signed by at least five clergy
41 canonically resident in the diocese and ten adult communicants in good standing of
42 any two or more congregations in the diocese.

43 c) The special convention shall be held at a time and place fixed by the ecclesiastical
44 authority.

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- 45 d) Notice of such special convention shall be given by regular mail to all the clergy
46 canonically resident in the diocese and to all the congregations in union with the
47 convention at least thirty days prior to the date of such special convention.
48 e) The notice shall include the reason for calling such special convention and the
49 business to be done by such special convention.
50 f) No business, other than that stated in the notice, shall be transacted at such special
51 convention except by three fourths majority vote of the members of the convention.
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Section B. Membership in convention

- 53 1. The Convention shall be composed of the following members with voice and vote: The
54 the officers of the Convention, at least one lay delegate from each of the congregations
55 in union with the Convention, and all other clergy who have been canonically resident in
56 the diocese for at least six months preceding the convention.
57 2. The mode of determining the number of lay delegates, of electing lay delegates, and of
58 admitting congregations into union with the Convention shall be prescribed
59 by Canon.
60 3. The mode of identifying and determining those other clergy (deacons, presbyters, and
61 other bishops) entitled to voice and vote in convention shall be prescribed by Canon.
62 4. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at
63 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to submit the
64 Annual Parochial Report.
65 5. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at
66 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to provide
67 evidence, adequate to the ecclesiastical authority, of the annual audit required by canon.
68 6. Provision may be made in the Canons for the denial of vote, but not voice, at
69 Convention to the lay delegates from congregations which have failed to pay
70 assessments levied upon such congregation by the authority of convention.
71 7. No person under ecclesiastical discipline, whether clergy or lay, shall be entitled to
72 membership.
73 8. The Convention shall be the sole judge of the election and qualification of its members.
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Section C. Officers of convention

1. President of Convention

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76 a) The Bishop Diocesan shall be president and presiding officer at all conventions. In
77 the absence of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one present,
78 shall preside at convention.
79 b) If there be no Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor to preside as called for in
80 Article III. Section C.1.a, then the senior presbyter present (in order of length of
81 canonical residence in the diocese) shall call the convention to order and preside
82 until the convention shall nominate and elect a president pro-tempore.
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2. Secretary of Convention

- 84 a) The annual convention shall elect a Secretary of Convention.
85 b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be
86 prescribed by canon.
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3. Treasurer of Convention

- 88 a) The annual convention shall elect a Treasurer of Convention.
89 b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be
90 prescribed by canon.

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4. Chancellor of Convention

- a) The annual convention shall elect a Chancellor of Convention.
- b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be prescribed by canon.

Section D. Conduct of Convention

- 1. **Quorum:** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of one third of the clergy entitled to vote and at least one lay delegate from each of one third of the congregations in union with convention. In the absence of a quorum a majority of those present may adjourn the convention from time to time.
- 2. **Voting.** The members shall deliberate in one body and each member with voting privileges shall have one vote. A majority of votes cast shall be required to adopt any measure, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.
- 3. **Voting by orders:** On the call of any five members, not all of whom may represent the same congregation, or when called for in the Constitution or Canons, a vote by orders shall be taken. In a vote by orders the clergy delegates and lay delegates vote separately and a concurrent majority of votes cast in both orders shall be required to adopt any measure, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.
- 4. **Elections:**
 - a) All elections to any office under this Constitution or the Canons of this diocese shall be by written ballot.
 - b) All delegates must vote for the number of persons to be elected to the various offices.
 - c) In order to be elected a person must receive a majority of votes cast unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons. When the Constitution or Canons call for an election by the clergy and lay delegates voting separately then, in order to be elected, a person must receive a concurrent majority of votes cast in each order, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or in the Canons.
 - d) If in any election only one person should be nominated for that office, then the election may be had by acclamation and no written balloting is required.
 - e) If any office remains unfilled after three ballots the Convention may decide to elect persons to the remaining offices by a plurality of votes cast rather than by requiring a majority of votes cast or may decide to drop from the ballot the person with the lowest number of votes. Any motion to make such alteration in the election process shall require a majority of three fourths.
 - f) Any person elected to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania shall assume office at the close of the convention at which they are elected.
 - g) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania or in any of its congregations shall continue in office until their successor is chosen and shall at all times well and faithfully discharge the duties of their office to the best of their ability.
 - h) Any person elected or appointed to any office in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania, or in any of its congregations or other organizations, when they leave office shall deliver to their successor all records and documents appertaining to that office in whatever form they may exist.

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5. Other matters

- a) All actions of convention shall take effect upon the adjournment of that convention unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and Canons or in the act itself.
- b) The convention may make provision in the Canons of the diocese for the adoption and amendment of rules of order to govern and organize the convention for the conduct of its business.

Article IV. The Standing Committee

- Section A. The annual convention shall elect persons to serve upon the Standing Committee of the diocese.
- Section B. The Standing Committee shall consist of an equal number of clergy and lay members.
- Section C. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.
- Section D. The Standing Committee shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all vacancies that may occur in its own body.

Article V. Diocesan Council

- Section A. The Diocesan Council shall consist of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor, if any, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, the Chancellor of Convention and such other persons, elected by the annual convention, as may be prescribed by canon.
- Section B. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.
- Section C. The Diocesan Council shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all vacancies that may occur in its own body or among the officers of council, other than the bishop, that were elected by the convention.
- Section D. The Diocesan Council shall be the board of directors of the Pennsylvania non-profit corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and shall have all the legal powers incident thereto and shall have the power to authorize any person to act on its behalf.
- Section E. The Bishop Diocesan will be the chair and president of council and the corporation. A vice president for the council and corporation may be elected by council from among its members. The Secretary of Convention shall serve as secretary of the council and corporation. The Treasurer of Convention shall serve as treasurer of the council and corporation. The Chancellor of Convention shall serve as chancellor of the council and corporation.
- Section F. It shall be the duty of the Diocesan Council to develop, prosecute, and oversee the mission and ministry of the church in the diocese, to develop a budget or budgets for the work of the diocese, to fulfill all other duties laid upon the Council by the corporate charter, by the Constitution and Canons, or by resolution of Convention, and to make full reports of its work to the Annual Convention.

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Article VI. Deputies to General Convention and Provincial Synod

Section A. Deputies to General Convention

1. The Annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the clerical and lay members voting separately, deputies and alternate deputies to the General Convention.
2. The number of deputies, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed by canon provided that a sufficient number shall be elected so as to assure that the diocese have the full number of deputies permitted by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

Section B. Deputies to the Provincial Synod

1. The Annual Convention shall elect, by the clerical and lay members voting separately, deputies and alternate deputies to the Provincial Synod
2. The number of deputies, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed by canon provided that a sufficient number shall be elected so as to assure that the diocese have the full number of deputies permitted by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the ordinances of the Province.

Article VII. Canons

Section A. Canons, not in conflict with this Constitution, may be adopted by the Convention to implement the provisions of this Constitution and to prescribe the operation of this Diocese. Such proposed Canons or amendments thereto may be adopted, which shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present and eligible to vote at such Convention.

Section B. A Committee on Constitution and Canons is hereby established whose membership, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed in the canons. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all vacancies that may occur in its own body.

Article VIII. Election of bishops

Section A. Call for election and nomination process

1. The requirements needed for the call to elect a bishop diocesan, a bishop coadjutor, or a bishop suffragan together with the method and process for nominating persons to the office of bishop shall be prescribed by canon.

Section B. Qualification of voters

1. In order to vote in the election of any bishop the members of convention shall meet the requirements of Article III, Section B, but with the following changes:
 - a) It is required that all bishops, deacons and presbyters shall have been canonically resident in the diocese for at least one year preceding the convention.
 - b) No member who is otherwise qualified shall be denied a vote in the election because of the provisions of Article III, Section B. subsections 4, 5, or 6.

Section C. Voting

1. Voting shall be by written ballot with the clergy and lay members voting separately.
2. If at least two thirds of the clergy eligible to vote are present and at least two thirds of the full number of lay delegates are present then a concurrent majority of votes cast in each order shall be necessary to elect.

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225 3. If a lesser number of clerical or lay delegates are present than are called for in Article
226 VIII, Section C subsection 2 but a quorum as specified in Article III, Section D
227 subsection 1 exists then a concurrent majority consisting of three fourths of votes cast
228 in each order shall be necessary to elect.
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230 **Article IX. The Cathedral:**

231 Section A. The Cathedral of St. Paul in the city of Erie, established as such through the
232 amendments of the Charter of St Paul's Church, Erie, and thus established upon a Cathedral
233 Foundation, according to the tradition of the Anglican Communion and in conformity with
234 the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is a constituent part of the church and
235 convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The Cathedral and the Cathedral
236 Congregation shall be governed by the Chapter in accordance with the Cathedral Charter,
237 the statutes and by-laws of the Cathedral, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of
238 Northwestern Pennsylvania and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.
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240 **Article X. Ecclesiastical Discipline**

241 Section A. An Ecclesiastical Court is hereby established in accordance with the Constitution
242 and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The court's membership, mode of nomination,
243 qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall be prescribed in the canons.

244 Section B. The Ecclesiastical Court shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all
245 vacancies that may occur in its own body.
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247 **Article XI. Amendments of the Constitution**

248 Section A. A proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the
249 Secretary of Convention not later than 60 days prior to the meeting of an Annual
250 Convention.

251 Section B. The proposed amendment shall be referred to the Committee on Constitution and
252 Canons which shall report on the proposed amendment at that Annual Convention.

253 Section C. Voting on a proposed amendment shall be done by a vote by orders.

254 Section D. If the proposed amendment is approved by a concurrent majority of both orders, the
255 proposed amendment shall lay over to the next Annual Convention where its consideration
256 shall be one of the first orders of business. If again approved by a concurrent majority in
257 both orders voting separately, then the Constitution shall be amended and the amendment
258 shall take effect at the end of that Convention.

259 Section E. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall review this Constitution during
260 the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and
261 propose amendments to this Constitution as they deem necessary or advisable.
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CANONS OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Title I. General Provisions

Canon 1. Definition of terms

The following terms shall for the purposes of these Canons be construed to mean as follows:

Section A) "Church" means The Episcopal Church.

Section B) "National Constitution" means the Constitution for the government of The Episcopal Church and amendments thereof.

Section C) "National Canons" mean the Canons for the government of The Episcopal Church.

Section D) "Constitution" means the Constitution of the Church in this Diocese.

Section E) "Canons" means the Canons of the Church in this Diocese.

Section F) "Cleric" means any one Bishop, Priest, Or Deacon. "Clergy" is the plural of Cleric.

Section G) "Canonically Resident" means that a Cleric has been duly received into this Diocese by the Ecclesiastical Authority by acceptance of Letters Dimissory duly recorded, by Ordination, or by some other mode.

Section H) "In Good Standing" when applied to any Canonically Resident Cleric means that the Cleric is not under Temporary Inhibition, Inhibition, or Suspension, nor has he been Deposed from the Ministry.

Section I) "Ecclesiastical Authority" is as defined in the Constitution.

Section J) "Communicant In Good Standing" means a person whose Baptism has been recorded in this Church, who has received Holy Communion in this Church at least three times during the preceding year and who for the previous year has been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and has been faithful in working, praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Section K) "Lay Person in Good Standing" means any Communicant In Good Standing of some Congregation in union with the convention of this Diocese who is not prevented from receiving Holy Communion under the Disciplinary Rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Section L) "Member" means any Lay or Clergy Member of Convention.

Section M) "Adult" means members sixteen years of age and over except in circumstances where the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires a vote by persons over the age of eighteen years.

Section N) "Vicar" means the Priest-in-Charge of a Mission.

Canon 2. Words in the singular number include the plural and in the plural number include the singular.

Canon 3. A masculine pronoun or title, whenever used in these canons shall be deemed to include the feminine pronoun or title. A feminine pronoun or title, whenever used in these canons shall be deemed to include the masculine pronoun or title.

Canon 4. Removal of persons from officeⁱ

Section A) Any person elected or appointed to any office under these Canons may, for cause, be removed from that office in the following manner only:

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- 310 i. If serving on The Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council,
311 Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry by a two-thirds majority
312 vote of all members (including the person proposed to be removed) of such
313 Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan Council, Standing
314 Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry at a regular or duly called special
315 meeting of such The Disciplinary Board, Commission On Ministry, Diocesan
316 Council, Standing Committee, Committee of Convention, or Vestry
317 ii. If serving in an appointed office, by a two-thirds majority vote of the Standing
318 Committee.

319 Section B) Any person so removed must be given written notice that a vote was taken to
320 remove them from office and that they have a right under this canon to appeal the
321 removal. This notice must be sent within 10 days of the vote.

322 Section C) Any person so removed may appeal such removal to the Standing Committee
323 within fifteen (15) days of the date of the notice. The Standing Committee, after hearing
324 from all interested parties, shall vote on the appeal. A two-thirds vote of those members
325 of the Standing Committee present shall be required to sustain the removal.

326 Section D) Any person being removed from the Standing Committee may appeal such
327 removal to the Diocesan Council within fifteen (15) days of the date of the notice. The
328 Diocesan Council, after hearing from all interested parties, shall vote on the appeal. A
329 two-thirds vote of those members of the Diocesan Council present shall be required to
330 sustain the removal.

331 Section E) This canon does not apply to the removal of Priests or Deacons from
332 Congregations, nor the removal of Bishops from the Diocese.

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334 **Canon 5.** ⁱⁱIf no other provisions are made in the Constitution or Canons, the Standing
335 Committee shall have the power by majority vote to fill for the unexpired term any vacancy
336 that may occur in any office in this Diocese.

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338 **Title II. Of Congregations In The Diocese**

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340 **Canon 1. Of Congregations**

341 Section A) A Congregation is a group of persons united for the purpose of carrying out the
342 mission of the Church, which includes acknowledging the holiness of God, hearing
343 God's word, offering prayer and worship, celebrating the sacraments and working,
344 praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

345 Section B) An Unorganized Congregation is a Congregation which has not been admitted
346 into union with the Convention of the Diocese, but where, with the approval of the
347 Bishop, there are members of this Church who meet for regular services at least four
348 times a year.

349 Section C) A Mission is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the
350 Convention of the Diocese and does not meet the requirements of a Parish. Two or more
351 Congregations may form a single Mission with the approval of the Bishop and the
352 Diocesan Convention.

353 Section D) A Parish is a Congregation which is totally financially self-supporting and has at
354 least 50 adult Communicants In Good Standing and has been granted Parish status by
355 the Diocesan Convention. A Parish also maintains a place of worship, provides an

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356 adequate living for a full time priest equivalent to or exceeding the minimum salary and
357 benefits currently required by the Diocese, remains current in payment of its assessment,
358 and pays all its own operating expenses. Two or more Congregations may form a single
359 Parish with the approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Convention.
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361 **Canon 2. Of The Organizing Of Missions**

362 Section A) A Congregation which seeks to become a Mission shall make written application
363 to the Bishop, over the signatures of at least ten adult persons who propose to be
364 members thereof. This application must be on the form provided by the Bishop and must
365 include a statement that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and
366 recognizes the authority over them of the National and Diocesan Constitutions and
367 Canons.

368 Section B) If the Bishop consents to the organizing of the Mission as thus applied for, he
369 shall name the congregation. In consultation with the Standing Committee he shall
370 appoint for the first year fit persons to serve as Officers of the Mission.

371 Section C) When a Congregation shall have given notice to the Bishop of its intention to
372 apply for admission into union with the convention as a Mission, has presented to the
373 Diocesan Convention a certificate from the Bishop approving such application, and also
374 a certificate from the Bishop showing that it has ten or more adult Communicants In
375 Good Standing, it may be admitted into union with the Convention by a majority vote of
376 the Diocesan Convention. When thus admitted, it shall be entitled to representation in
377 the Diocesan Convention.

378 Section D) The title to real estate given to or purchased for a Mission shall be vested in The
379 Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and all trust funds, endowments, or
380 undesignated bequests secured for the benefit of the Mission shall be deposited with the
381 Treasurer Of The Convention.
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383 **Canon 3. Of The Organizing Of Parishes**

384 Section A) A Mission which seeks to become a Parish shall make written application to the
385 Annual Convention. This application shall include proof that:

- 386 **i.** the Congregation has at least fifty adult Communicants in Good Standing;
387 **ii.** the Congregation has supported itself financially, including a full time priest, for
388 three consecutive years;
389 **iii.** that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and recognizes the authority
390 over them of the National and Diocesan Constitution and Canons;
391 **iv.** evidence that the Congregation will be able to continue to be self-supporting and to
392 pay the diocesan assessment and the minimum salary and benefits of a full time
393 Rector
394 **v.** a certificate from the Ecclesiastical Authority approving the application of the
395 Congregation.

396 Section B) The application required above shall be reviewed by the Resolutions Committee
397 of Convention and a proper resolution changing the status of the Mission to that of a
398 Parish shall be prepared.

399 Section C) A majority vote of the Convention shall change the status of the Congregation to
400 Parish.
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402 **Canon 4. Of the Governance of Missions**

403 Section A) The government of a Mission is in the Ecclesiastical Authority, which may
404 appoint as its representative a priest to be Vicar of the Mission who shall conform to the
405 instruction of the Ecclesiastical Authority and be responsible to it. The Bishop shall be
406 the Rector of all Missions, and the Vicar of each Mission shall make such reports as
407 required by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

408 **Section B) Annual Meetings**

- 409 **i.** In every Mission an Annual Meeting shall be held in January or at such other time as
410 the Ecclesiastical Authority may designate. Public notice of the same shall be given
411 at all the services on the two preceding weekends.
- 412 **ii.** The Annual Meeting shall be presided over by the Vicar, or if the office be vacant, or
413 if the Vicar be absent, by the Bishop's Warden. When the Annual Meeting is called
414 to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 415 **iii.** Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Mission who are physically present, who are at
416 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,
417 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the
418 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as
419 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of the
420 Mission.
- 421 **iv.** No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Congregation at the same
422 time.
- 423 **v.** The Mission may nominate to the Ecclesiastical Authority not less than five nor
424 more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be appointed as the
425 Bishop's Committee. The length of one term of office for members of the Bishop's
426 Committee shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,
427 nominated each year at the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

428 **Section C) Of Special Mission Meetings**

- 429 **i.** A Special Mission Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the
430 Ecclesiastical Authority. Such order shall specify the time and place of such meeting
431 and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall be considered
432 other than that specified in the call.
- 433 **ii.** Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two
434 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the
435 meeting and the business to be considered.
- 436 **iii.** The Bishop shall preside over such meeting. At the request of the Ecclesiastical
437 Authority, the Vicar may preside. At the request of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the
438 Bishop's Warden may preside.

439 **Section D) Of The Bishop's Committee**

- 440 **i.** A Bishop's Committee may be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to assist the
441 Ecclesiastical Authority in governing the Mission. The Bishop's Committee shall
442 manage and be responsible for the property and material affairs of the Mission in
443 accordance with directions from the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 444 **ii.** In accordance with the canon "Of Membership in Convention" the Bishop's
445 Committee shall annually select delegates to represent the Mission at meetings of the
446 Diocesan Convention.

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- 447 iii. The Vicar, if there is one, shall preside at all meetings of the Bishop's Committee. In
448 the absence of a Vicar, the Bishop's Warden shall preside.
- 449 iv. The Lay Officers of a Mission shall consist of the Bishop's Warden, Property
450 Warden, Clerk, and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing
451 of the Mission and at least 18 years of age.
- 452 v. The Bishop's Warden and Property Warden shall be appointed annually by the
453 Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.
- 454 vi. The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Mission are met and that
455 the buildings belonging to the Mission are kept in good repair and are adequately
456 insured. Under the Vicar, they shall see that all things needed for the orderly worship
457 of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments are provided. They shall
458 prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the absence of a Vicar, they
459 shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the
460 continuance of the services.
- 461 vii. A Clerk shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members
462 of the Bishop's Committee to serve until a successor is appointed. The Clerk shall be
463 responsible to see that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special Mission Meetings
464 and of all meetings of the Bishop's Committee and shall attest to the same in the
465 book of Minutes of the Bishop's Committee, shall maintain in the said book the
466 annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Mission, shall keep all original
467 documents, and the list of voters provided for by these Canons. The Clerk shall turn
468 over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that belong to the
469 Mission.
- 470 viii. A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be appointed annually by
471 the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.
472 Under the authority of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Bishop's Committee, the
473 Treasurer shall be responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds
474 of the Mission and to present a report on the same to each meeting of the Bishop's
475 Committee. Previous to the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the
476 Ecclesiastical Authority and to the Bishop's Committee a full and accurate statement
477 of the financial condition of the Mission. This statement shall also be read at the
478 Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Ecclesiastical
479 Authority shall require, but the cost of such bond shall be borne by the Mission. The
480 Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all books, documents, and funds in her
481 possession that belong to the Mission.
- 482 ix. Regular meetings of the Bishop's Committee shall be held at least quarterly.
- 483 x. Special meetings of the Bishop's Committee may be called at any time at the request
484 of the Ecclesiastical Authority.
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Canon 5. Of the Governance of Parishes

487 Section A) This Canon supersedes and takes the place of the By-laws of all Parishes in the
488 Diocese.

Section B) Of The Annual Parish Meeting

- 490 i. In every Parish, the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held in January at a time and
491 place designated by the Vestry. Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given at

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- 492 all the services on the two preceding weekends. With the consent of the
493 Ecclesiastical Authority, the Annual Meeting may be held during a different month.
- 494 **ii.** The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive
495 reports from the Vestry, parish officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the
496 new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.
- 497 **iii.** Any subordinate entity wholly owned by the Parish which has any paid staff shall
498 have its own bylaws. All such bylaws and any amendments thereto shall first be
499 submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee for approval prior
500 to being approved by the Vestry.ⁱⁱⁱ
- 501 **iv.** The Annual Parish Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge,
502 or if the office be vacant, or if the Rector or Priest-in-Charge be absent, by the
503 Senior Warden. When the Annual Parish Meeting is called to order, the
504 qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 505 **v.** Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Parish who are physically present, who are at
506 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,
507 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the
508 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as
509 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all Parish Meetings.
- 510 **vi.** A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Parish Meeting shall consist
511 of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons entitled to
512 vote, whichever is less.
- 513 **vii.** No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Congregation at the same
514 time.
- 515 **viii.** ^{iv}Each Parish shall have a Vestry consisting of not less than five nor more than
516 twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing elected by the annual Parish Meeting.
517 The number of persons to serve on the Vestry of the Parish shall be set by resolution
518 of two successive Annual Parish Meetings. Upon affirmative vote of the second
519 Annual Parish Meeting the change in number shall take immediate effect.
- 520 **ix.** The qualifications of persons to serve on the Vestry shall be the same as the
521 qualifications to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting as set out above except that the
522 person to be elected need not be present at the Meeting.
- 523 **x.** No cleric shall be eligible for election as a member of the Vestry.
- 524 **xi.** In each Parish the Vestry may by resolution designate the nominating Committee,
525 otherwise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge together with the Senior Warden and the
526 Junior Warden shall be the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee
527 shall publish to the parish two weeks prior to the Annual Parish Meeting a ballot
528 with sufficient qualified nominees to fill the vacancies on the Vestry for the
529 upcoming year.
- 530 **xii.** Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Parish Meeting.
531 The nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee. Any question of the
532 nominee's qualification to serve shall be resolved by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge
533 prior to the election of Vestry members. In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-
534 Charge, the Senior Warden shall have the responsibility for determining the
535 qualifications of any person nominated from the floor.
- 536 **xiii.** Each Annual Parish Meeting shall elect persons to serve on the Vestry replacing
537 those members whose term in office has ended.

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538 xiv. The length of one term of office for members of the Vestry shall be three years with
539 one third of the members, or as near as may be, elected each year at the Annual
540 Parish Meeting.

541 **Section C) Of Special Parish Meetings**

- 542 i. A Special Parish Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the
543 Ecclesiastical Authority or of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or by resolution of the
544 Vestry, or on a petition to the Ecclesiastical Authority if such petition be signed by
545 not less than one-third of the number entitled to vote at the last Annual Parish
546 Meeting. All such orders, resolutions, or petitions shall specify the time and place of
547 such meeting and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall
548 be considered other than that specified in the call.
- 549 ii. Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two
550 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the
551 meeting, the business to be considered, and by whose order the meeting is called.
- 552 iii. Such meeting may be presided over by the Bishop. If the Bishop does not preside,
553 the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall preside. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge,
554 the Ecclesiastical Authority may request the Senior Warden to preside.

555 **Section D) Of Vestries**

- 556 i. In accordance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of
557 this Diocese the Vestry shall govern the Parish and shall manage and be responsible
558 for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare
559 of the Parish; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is provided with all
560 things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and
561 provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Parish
562 Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next
563 year.
- 564 ii. As to civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector
565 or Priest-in-Charge shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the
566 President of the corporation. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge then the Senior
567 Warden shall be the President of the Corporation.^v
- 568 iii. The Vestry, in accordance with the Canon "Of Membership In Convention" shall
569 elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan
570 Convention.
- 571 iv. The Lay Officers of a Parish shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden,
572 Clerk and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the
573 Parish and at least 18 years of age. No cleric or spouse of a cleric may serve as an
574 Officer of the Parish.
- 575 v. The Senior Warden shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the
576 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, from among the members of the Vestry. If there be no
577 Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall nominate
578 a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
- 579 vi. It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector or Priest-in-
580 Charge, to advise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge on all matters pertaining to the
581 parish upon which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge may wish to consult the Senior
582 Warden, and to inform the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of all matters which the Senior
583 Warden feels the Rector needs to know.

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- vii.** If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to assume all the temporal duties of the Rector including, but not limited to, presiding at Vestry meetings, signing documents, filing reports, and maintaining the Parish Register. In addition, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to provide for the continuation of Divine Worship.
 - viii.** The Junior Warden shall be elected annually from among their number by the Vestry. It shall be the duty of the Junior Warden to see to the care of the Parish's physical property making sure that it is being kept clean and in good order and repair. In the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden is to assume the duties of the Senior Warden.
 - ix.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Parish are met and that the buildings belonging to the Parish are kept in good repair and are adequately insured. Under the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall see that all things needed for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
 - x.** A Clerk shall be elected annually by the Vestry from among their number to serve until a successor has been chosen. The Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special Parish Meetings and of all meetings of the Vestry and shall attest to the same in the Book of Minutes of the Vestry, shall maintain in the said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Parish, shall keep all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these canons. The Clerk shall turn over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that belong to the Parish.
 - xi.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be elected annually by the Vestry from among their number. Under the authority of the Vestry, the Treasurer is responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds of the Parish. Previous to the Annual Parish Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the Vestry a full and accurate statement of the financial condition of the Parish. This statement shall also be read at the Annual Parish Meeting before the election of officers. At every meeting of the Vestry the Treasurer shall report the total assets and liabilities of the Parish and the income and expenses of the general operating funds. As directed the Treasurer shall report the income and expenses of any other funds. The Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Vestry shall require, but the cost of such bond shall be borne by the Parish. The Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all books, documents, and funds in her possession that belong to the Parish.
 - xii.** The Vestry shall fill any mid-term vacancies in their number or among the officers of the Parish by majority vote.
 - xiii.** Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held at least quarterly.
 - xiv.** Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called at any time at the request of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or of any two of the members. Notice of such meeting shall be given to the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the members of the Vestry. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the business to be considered. No other business shall come before such meeting except

629 with the unanimous consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the
630 members of the Vestry.

631 xv. At no meeting shall it be competent for the Vestry to transact any business except
632 there be present the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, or, in the event of the
633 absence of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or if the office be vacant, one of the
634 Wardens; and except there be present a quorum consisting of a majority of the
635 elected members of the Vestry. No action affecting the rights of the Rector or Priest-
636 in-Charge shall be taken at any meeting at which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge has
637 not had the opportunity to be present.

638 **xvi. Indemnification**

- 639 a. No member of the Vestry shall be personally liable for monetary damages for
640 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
- 641 • said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office
642 prescribed by these canons, and
 - 643 • the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct
644 or recklessness
 - 645 • The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability
646 of said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes
647 pursuant to local, state, or federal law.
- 648 b. The Parish shall indemnify any Vestry member and may indemnify any other
649 employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party
650 to or who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or
651 completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or
652 investigative, including any action by or on behalf of the Parish by reason of the
653 fact that he is or was a member of Vestry, employee, or agent of the parish,
654 against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in
655 settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such
656 action, suit, or proceeding unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim
657 for indemnification is determined by the Court to have constituted willful
658 misconduct or recklessness. With respect to any such action, the Parish may
659 participate therein at its own expense; and the Parish shall be entitled to assume
660 the defense thereof, with Counsel selected by the Parish to the reasonable
661 satisfaction of the party being indemnified. After notice from the Parish to such
662 person of its election to assume the defense thereof, the Parish shall not be liable
663 to such person for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such
664 person in connection with the defense thereof. Such person shall have the right
665 to employ separate Counsel in such action, but the fees and expenses of such
666 Counsel incurred after a notice from the Parish of its assumption of the defense
667 thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.

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669 **Canon 6. Official Books, Records, And Reports**

670 **Section A) Books and Records**

671 **i. Members**

- 672 a. It shall be the duty of the priest in charge to keep, so far as is practicable, a list of
673 the families and individuals within the Congregation to be retained for the use of
674 a successor.

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- b. In every Congregation, there shall be provided a proper book or books, to be called The Parish Register, in which the priest in charge of the Congregation, or, if the Congregation be vacant, one of the Wardens, shall record the names of all persons baptized, confirmed, married, and deceased within the Congregation, with such other facts as to dates, places, and persons as are important matters of record, all of which shall be certified by the signature of the person making the records together with the names of all persons who are Communicants of the Church, with memoranda as to their reception, removal, or death.
 - c. Provision shall be made for the due recording of such other items and statistics as are required in the Annual Parochial Report prescribed by the National Canons.

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ii. Minutes

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- a. Every Congregation shall maintain a permanent Minute Book in which the Clerk shall record the Minutes of all Annual and Special Parish or Mission Meetings and the Minutes of all meetings of the Vestry or Bishop's Committee.

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iii. Financial

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- a. Every Congregation shall maintain paper or computer records, with adequate backups, of all the financial affairs of the Congregation. Such records shall include records of all assets and liabilities, income and expenses, and the location of the evidence showing ownership of all assets.
 - b. Statements of all investment, banking, and other accounts must be sent to the official mailing address of the Congregation and not to private homes.

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Section B) Preservation

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- i. The Parish Register, Minute Book, and financial records of the Congregation shall be kept in the church, chapel, or other property belonging to the Congregation or Diocese or at such other secure location determined by the Vestry or Bishop's Committee.
 - ii. Consideration is to be given to the preservation of all items in case of natural or man made disaster when determining a secure location. Adequate backups and copies should be made and held in a different location.
 - iii. Prior to taking any books or records away from the location specified in section 1, the person taking them must notify the priest in charge or Warden of the Congregation. No one may give notice to themselves.
 - iv. Books or records may be away from the location specified in Section A for only short periods of time.
 - v. Items of historical interest should be collected and preserved in similar secure locations.

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Section C) Reports

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- i. At every visitation of the Bishop, the priest in charge of the Congregation, or the Warden if there be no priest in charge, shall submit the Parish Register to the Bishop for inspection.
 - ii. The priest in charge of every Congregation, or if there be no priest in charge, the Warden and the Treasurer shall present the Annual Parochial Report to the Ecclesiastical Authority by the date specified.

719 **iii.** It shall be the duty of the Vestry to see that a report, acceptable to the Ecclesiastical
720 Authority, of the Annual Audit required by the National Canons is sent to the
721 Ecclesiastical Authority on or before September first of each year.
722

Canon 7. Of The Reduction And Dissolution Of Congregations

723 Section A) A Congregation may petition the Diocesan Convention for a change in status of
724 that Congregation. With the assent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan
725 Convention, by majority vote, may grant the petition and change the status of the
726 Congregation.
727

728 Section B) Any one of the following items shall constitute cause for which the Diocesan
729 Convention may change the status of a Congregation, or suspend or dissolve entirely the
730 union of a Congregation with the Diocesan Convention:

- 731 **i.** A Congregation without a Rector, Vicar or Priest-in-Charge for three consecutive
732 years
733 **ii.** A Congregation without Officers of the Congregation for three consecutive years
734 **iii.** A Congregation without divine service for one year.
735 **iv.** A Congregation whose church or chapel has become disused and closed.
736 **v.** A Congregation with less than ten adult Communicants for three consecutive years.
737 **vi.** A Congregation failing for two years to pay its assessment in full.
738 **vii.** A Congregation failing for two years to file its Annual Parochial Report required by
739 the National Canons.
740 **viii.** A Congregation failing for two years to file the report of their Annual Audit as
741 required by the National and Diocesan Canons.

742 Section C) For any of the causes listed in Section B of this Canon the Bishop, after
743 consulting the Standing Committee, may request Diocesan Convention to change the
744 status of a Congregation to that of a Mission or to that of an Unorganized Congregation.

745 Section D) With the consent of the Standing Committee the Bishop may dissolve an
746 Unorganized Congregation.

747 Section E) When any Congregation shall have been dissolved, its name shall be stricken
748 from the roll of Congregations, all of its records shall be forwarded to the diocesan
749 office, and the title to all its property, real and personal, including money, shall forthwith
750 vest in, and be transferred to, the corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern
751 Pennsylvania.
752

Canon 8. Of Property

753 Section A) Any Congregation or other institution holding or intending to hold title to real
754 property shall be incorporated. Its form of incorporation shall be in accordance with the
755 laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in harmony with the Constitution and
756 Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and the directions of Diocesan
757 Convention.
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759 Section B) All property, real and personal, held by or for the benefit of any Congregation of
760 this Diocese is held in trust for the Diocese and The Episcopal Church. The existence of
761 this trust, however, shall in no way limit the power and authority of the Congregation
762 otherwise existing over such property so long as the congregation remains a part of, and
763 subject to, this Church and its Constitution and Canons.

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- 764 Section C) No mortgage, judgment lien, or indebtedness shall be incurred by any
765 Congregation of this Diocese without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan,
766 if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. No consent and
767 approval shall be granted unless there is a reasonable plan for the repayment of all such
768 obligations.
- 769 Section D) No real property titled to any Congregation or other institution of this Diocese
770 shall be sold, given away, deliberately destroyed,^{vi} or otherwise alienated or encumbered
771 without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, and the
772 Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council.
- 773 Section E) All Congregations, institutions, and other entities belonging to this Diocese or
774 any of the Congregations of this Diocese shall be adequately insured with property and
775 liability insurance that shall conform to a minimum standard for insurance established
776 by the Diocesan Council and shall provide to the Diocese a certificate of insurance
777 showing the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania to be an “additional insured” on said
778 property.

Canon 9. Of The Priest In Charge Of A Congregation

- 781 Section A) The priest in charge of a Congregation shall have, subject only to the rubrics of
782 the Book of Common Prayer, the National and Diocesan Constitutions and Canons, and
783 the godly counsel of the Bishop, the exclusive charge of all things pertaining to the
784 spiritual interests of the Congregation. The priest shall order and direct the services of
785 worship and music of the church and all that pertains thereto and shall have the spiritual
786 direction and general oversight of the church school, the altar guild, and of all
787 organizations connected with the Congregation. The priest may appoint persons to
788 perform, under Clergy supervision, such duties pertaining to the services and to the care
789 and decoration of the church as are properly performed by lay members.
- 790 Section B) The priest shall at all times have free access to the church or chapel and to the
791 church hall, to open and use the same as shall be required for religious services and
792 offices and for such parochial occasions and objects as the priest shall deem necessary.
793 The priest may arrange, modify, or improve the furnishings, ornaments, appointments,
794 and conveniences of the church or chapel as the priest shall deem necessary. The priest
795 shall have control of the use of the church hall. In the exercise of these rights and duties,
796 however, the priest shall not disturb the fabric of the building or involve the
797 Congregation or the Diocese in any expenditure of funds not authorized by the
798 Ecclesiastical Authority or by the Officers of the Parish.
- 799 Section C) All employees of any Congregation, and all other Clergy in any Congregation,
800 are selected by, work under the supervision of, and may be terminated by the priest in
801 charge of that Congregation.
- 802 Section D) The priest shall preside, with the right to vote, at all meetings of the Vestry or
803 Bishop's Committee, and no such meeting shall be held unless the priest has been duly
804 notified of the same at least twenty-four hours previous thereto.
- 805 Section E) The priest shall at all times have and exercise such other rights and shall perform
806 such duties as pertain to this office under the laws and usages of The Episcopal Church.
- 807 Section F) The priest shall keep such records and make such reports as may be directed by
808 National or Diocesan Canons or by order of the Diocesan Convention.

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- 809 Section G) The priest in charge of a Congregation shall give to the proper Officers thereof
810 and to the Ecclesiastical Authority at least one month's notice, in writing, of her intent to
811 resign such charge.
- 812 Section H) No Cleric shall officiate within the bounds of this Diocese, either by preaching,
813 reading prayers, administering sacraments, or any other sacred functions, within the
814 parochial, missionary, or other cure of a priest, unless the Cleric have received express
815 permission for that purpose from the priest in charge of the cure, or, in the absence of
816 the priest in charge, from the church Wardens or a majority of the Vestry. In the case of a
817 vacant Mission, permission shall be obtained from the Ecclesiastical Authority. Nor
818 shall any Cleric, not Canonically Resident, officiate within the bounds of the Diocese in
819 a vacant Congregation without the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 820 Section I) A Cleric serving a Congregation may enter into a contractual agreement with
821 another Congregation for pastoral services. Said contract shall cover all services to be
822 provided by the Cleric to the contracting Congregation and all financial arrangements
823 between the contracting Congregation and the Cleric. Said contract must be approved by
824 both Vestries and the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 825 Section J) The priest in charge of a Mission is known as a Vicar.
826

Canon 10. Of The Election And Call Of A Priest For A Parish

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828 Section A) When the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of a Parish retires, resigns, becomes
829 incapacitated or dies, the Wardens shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority and,
830 with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, make due provision for services, the cost
831 thereof to be paid by the Parish.
- 832 Section B) In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens shall take care that
833 the church building be kept from all secular and other uses not authorized by the
834 Church. They shall make and certify all entries in the Parish Register required by these
835 Canons and shall make out and present to the Ecclesiastical Authority the Annual
836 Parochial Report.
- 837 Section C) The Vestry shall elect a priest to be Rector of the Parish. The said election shall
838 be subject to the following provisions:
- 839 **i.** It shall be the prerogative of the Ecclesiastical Authority to submit to the Vestry the
840 name or names of priests to be considered by them.
 - 841 **ii.** No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established
842 by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.
 - 843 **iii.** No election shall be had until the name of the priest whom it is proposed to elect has
844 been made known to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall
845 have sixty days in which to communicate with the Vestry. No election may be had
846 until the Vestry meets in special session to consider the comments of the
847 Ecclesiastical Authority.
 - 848 **iv.** The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens of
849 the Parish, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the
850 Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 851 Section D) The call of the Rector shall be in writing, signed by the Wardens and Clerk of the
852 Vestry for the Parish. It must express distinctly any special conditions, together with the
853 stipulation of salary or support and provision for residence, which shall conform, at a
854 minimum, with any resolutions regarding minimum salary and benefits. The salary may

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855 be increased or decreased as the parties may from time to time agree, due notice of
856 which shall be given to the Ecclesiastical Authority by the Clerk of the Vestry.
857 Section E) Any priest appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to minister to a Parish as the
858 Priest-in-Charge, but not elected by the Vestry thereof, is sent by the Ecclesiastical
859 Authority upon such terms as to financial support, and for such a period of time, as may
860 have been agreed upon by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the priest, and the Vestry of the
861 Parish. This appointment and agreement shall be in writing.

862 **Section F) Assistants**

- 863 **i.** Prior to the calling of an Assistant, the Rector of the calling Parish shall submit the
864 name of the priest he proposes to call to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The
865 Ecclesiastical Authority shall have 60 days to communicate with the Rector and
866 Vestry about the Cleric they propose to call.
867 **ii.** The Ecclesiastical Authority may accept Letters Dimissory for the Assistant or may
868 grant the Assistant annual license to function within this Diocese.
869 **iii.** The provisions of Section D of this canon as to a written agreement on salary and
870 conditions of call apply to the calling of an Assistant.
871

872 **Canon 11. Of The Parish Alms Fund**

- 873 Section A) Every congregation shall have a special monetary fund called the Alms Fund.
874 Section B) The purpose of the Alms fund is to care for the poor and needy and to provide
875 scholarships to church related camps, conferences, and events.
876 Section C) The Alms Fund shall be funded by:
877 **i.** Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and
878 **ii.** Regular contributions:
879 a. by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the
880 congregation or
881 b. by the loose offering taken at all services on one weekend a month.
882 Section D) Every congregation shall have an Almoner who shall oversee and distribute
883 these funds for appropriate purposes. .
884 **i.** If there are clergy attached to the congregation, all of the clergy shall be Almoners.
885 **ii.** If there are no clergy attached to the congregation then the Vestry or Bishop's
886 Committee shall elect annually a suitable Lay Person in Good Standing to be the
887 Almoner.
888 Section E) The Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or personal
889 expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.
890 Section F) Records of the income and expenses of the Alms Fund are confidential but not
891 secret.
892 Section G) Reports on the usage of the Alms Fund shall be made to the Vestry or Bishop's
893 Committee at least quarterly and annually to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.
894 These reports shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current
895 balance of the Alms Fund.
896 Section H) Like all congregational funds, the Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included
897 in the Annual Audit required by these canons.

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Canon 12. Of Deaneries

Section A) The diocese shall be divided into four Deaneries as follows:

- i. The Northwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Erie County and the city of Meadville in Crawford County;^{vii}
- ii. The Northeast Deanery comprising the Congregations in Warren County, Forest County and McKean County;
- iii. The Southwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Crawford County except for the city of Meaville, Mercer County, Lawrence County, Venango County and Foxburg Borough of Clarion County;
- iv. The Southeast Deanery comprising the congregations in Jefferson County; Elk County; Cameron County; Clarion County, except for Foxburg Borough; and Clearfield County, except for Morris Township.

Section B) At each annual Convention the Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Priest in Good Standing from each Deanery to be the Dean thereof.

Section C) The purpose of Deaneries is to engage in mutual education, foster fellowship and communication among the Clergy and Laity within the Deanery, and to work and pray for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Section D) The Bishop shall have the power to confer upon the Deans and upon any member of the Diocese such ecclesiastical title and assign duties appropriate thereto as the Bishop shall deem proper. The Bishop may designate the regalia to be worn by the recipient of the title.

Title III. Of Diocesan Convention

Canon 1. Of Membership In Convention

Section A) Clergy Members

- i. The Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Co-Adjutor, if any, and Bishop Suffragan, if any, shall have seat, voice and vote in the Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.
- ii. All Priests in Good Standing in the Diocese shall have seat, voice and vote in the Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.
- iii. All Deacons in Good Standing in the diocese shall have seat, voice and vote in the Clergy order at any Diocesan Convention.

Section B) Lay Members

- i. All Lay Members of Diocesan Convention must be Lay Persons In Good Standing of some Congregation in union with the Diocesan Convention.
- ii. Every Congregation admitted into union with the Convention of the Diocese is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention two lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof unless otherwise limited by canon.
- iii. Any Congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual Parochial Report of 75 to 149 is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention three lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.
- iv. Any congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual Parochial Report of 150 or greater is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention four lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.
- v. In order that they may be fully represented in Convention, all Congregations may select Alternate Delegates in the same manner and with the same qualifications as

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- 944 Delegates. Substitution of an Alternate Delegate for a Lay Member of Convention
945 must be certified to the Credentials Committee by the priest in charge of that
946 Congregation. If there is no priest in charge, then a previously certified Lay Member
947 from that Congregation shall certify the substitution.
- 948 **vi.** All Delegates to Convention shall be certified to the Credentials Committee on the
949 form provided by the Committee and no later than March first.
- 950 **vii.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to submit the Annual
951 Parochial Report due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Diocesan
952 Convention shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention.
- 953 **viii.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to provide evidence,
954 adequate to the Ecclesiastical Authority, of the Annual Audit required by National
955 Canon due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Convention shall not be
956 entitled to vote at that Convention.
- 957 **ix.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to pay the assessment levied
958 upon that Congregation shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention unless that
959 Congregation has been granted relief by the Diocesan Council and is current on that
960 agreement. A Congregation shall be considered to have failed if their assessment is
961 not paid current through the end of the month that occurs no less than 15 days prior
962 to the start of any Convention.

963
964 **Canon 2. Of Officers Of The Convention**

965 Section A) The Officers of Convention shall consist of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and
966 Chancellor.

967 **i. President**

- 968 a. The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, will be President of and preside at meetings
969 of the Diocesan Convention.
- 970 b. If there is no Bishop Diocesan then the person to preside at the Convention is
971 chosen in accordance with the provisions in the Diocesan Constitution.

972 **ii. Secretary**

- 973 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall
974 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing to be
975 Secretary of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming
976 office, the Secretary is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 977 b. The Secretary shall be responsible to take minutes and to produce a journal of
978 the proceedings of every Diocesan Convention. This journal shall be available to
979 the Congregations of the Diocese not more than 120 days after the adjournment
980 of the Convention.
- 981 c. The Secretary shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Secretary of
982 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan
983 Constitution and these Canons.
- 984 d. The Secretary shall deliver to his successor all papers and materials in his
985 possession which belong to the Diocese.

986 **iii. Treasurer**

- 987 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall
988 elect either a Lay Person in Good Standing or a Cleric in Good Standing to be

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989 Treasurer of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming
990 office, the Treasurer is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.

- 991 b. The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the direction of the Diocesan Council,
992 for the collection, investment, and distribution of all money and securities due to,
993 held by, or payable by the Diocese and for the proper accounting thereof. The
994 Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and
995 income and expense reports of all funds under the control of the Diocese or its
996 officers to the Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all
997 assets and liabilities of the Diocese and the income and expenses of the general
998 operating funds to every meeting of the Diocesan Council and, as directed by
999 Diocesan Council, the income and expenses of all other funds under the control
1000 of the Diocese or its officers.
- 1001 c. The Treasurer shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Treasurer of
1002 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan
1003 Constitution and these Canons. The Treasurer and any assistants to the Treasurer
1004 may be bonded with the expense being paid by the Diocese.
- 1005 d. The Treasurer shall deliver to her successor all papers and materials in the her
1006 possession which belong to the Diocese.

1007 **iv. Chancellor**

- 1008 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall
1009 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing who is
1010 licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be Chancellor
1011 of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office,
1012 the Chancellor is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 1013 b. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan Council may
1014 elect one or more Vice Chancellors, qualified as above, as may from time to time
1015 appear necessary.
- 1016 c. The Chancellors shall function as the solicitor for and the legal advisor to, in the
1017 following order: the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Diocesan
1018 Council, and the Convention of the Diocese.
- 1019 d. The Chancellors shall be responsible to see that the Diocese follows and obeys
1020 the National Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and these
1021 Canons. The Chancellor shall interpret the meaning and application of these
1022 Constitutions and Canons. His rulings may be appealed to the Diocesan
1023 Convention or to the National Church as appropriate.
- 1024 e. The Chancellors shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Chancellor
1025 of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan
1026 Constitution and these Canons.
- 1027 f. The Chancellors shall deliver to their successors all papers and materials in their
1028 possession which belong to the Diocese.

1030 **Canon 3. Of Committees of Convention**

1031 **Section A) Credentials**

- 1032 i. A Credentials Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and
1033 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

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- 1034 **ii.** The Credentials Committee shall consist of one Clergy Member and one Lay
1035 Member of Convention.^{viii}
1036 **iii.** The Credentials Committee shall determine the right of persons to seat, voice, and
1037 vote at Convention and shall recommend to Convention persons to whom the
1038 Convention should grant seat and voice.
1039 **iv.** Any person denied a seat, voice or vote by the Credentials Committee may appeal
1040 such denial to the Convention which shall make the final determination by a
1041 majority vote.

1042 **Section B) Dispatch of Business**

- 1043 **i.** A Dispatch of Business Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical
1044 Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
1045 **ii.** The Dispatch of Business Committee shall consist of one or more Members of
1046 Convention.
1047 **iii.** The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of Convention in
1048 seeing that all the business of Convention is done in an efficient and expeditious
1049 manner. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of
1050 Convention in developing an agenda and rules of order for the Convention.

1051 **Section C) Resolutions**

- 1052 **i.** A Resolution Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and
1053 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
1054 **ii.** The Resolutions Committee shall consist of two Clergy and two Lay Members.^{ix}
1055 **iii.** The Resolutions Committee shall give due consideration to all resolutions submitted
1056 to it and shall present all such resolutions to the Diocesan Convention.
1057 **iv.** The Resolutions Committee shall develop any resolutions of courtesy to be
1058 considered by the Convention.
1059 **v.** The Resolutions Committee shall recommend to Convention a place and date to hold
1060 the next Annual Diocesan Convention.^x

1061 **Section D) Nominations**

- 1062 **i.** A Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and
1063 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
1064 **ii.** The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.
1065 **iii.** The Nominations Committee shall be responsible to present a ballot with sufficient
1066 nominees for each office to be filled by Convention.^{xi}

1067 **Section E) Judges of Election**

- 1068 **i.** Judges of Election shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by
1069 each annual Diocesan Convention.
1070 **ii.** Three Members of Convention shall be elected to be the Judges of Election.
1071 **iii.** The Judges of Election shall oversee the distribution and counting of ballots for each
1072 election as instructed by the President of the Convention.

1073
1074 **Canon 4. Of Nominations**

1075 Section A) Any Cleric or Lay Person may, and all are encouraged to, nominate qualified
1076 persons to fill the various offices to be chosen at each annual Convention.

1077 Section B) The Nominations Committee of Convention shall give notice of the need for
1078 such nominations and shall set a final date for receiving of the same which shall be not
1079 less than thirty days prior to Convention.^{xii}

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- 1080 Section C) Any person submitting a nomination shall do so on such form provided and give
1081 such information as the Nominations Committee shall determine. Such information shall
1082 include at least the name and contact information for each nominee; their consent to
1083 serve if elected; a current digital photograph; and other relevant information.
1084 Section D) A list of all nominees shall be published and distributed to all Delegates at least
1085 two weeks prior to the meeting of Convention.
1086 Section E) Additional nominations may be made from the floor of Convention. The
1087 nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee and may present a short
1088 statement.
1089

Canon 5. Of Resolutions

- 1091 Section A) Resolutions properly considered by the Convention are those:
1092 **i.** Submitted by a Cleric in Good Standing.
1093 **ii.** Submitted by a Lay Person in Good Standing.
1094 **iii.** Submitted by some Congregation of this Diocese.
1095 **iv.** Submitted by the Diocesan Council.
1096 **v.** Submitted by some other committee mentioned in these Canons.
1097 Section B) All resolutions must bear the name of the individual or organization submitting
1098 the resolution.
1099 Section C) All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary of Convention at least forty-
1100 five days prior to any Convention. Resolutions submitted less than forty-five days in
1101 advance may be considered on a two-thirds vote of the Convention.^{xiii}
1102 Section D) All resolutions submitted which would amend the Constitution or Canons of this
1103 Diocese are to be considered by the Constitution and Canons Committee. The
1104 Constitution and Canons Committee will review the resolution and
1105 **i.** Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
1106 **ii.** Report the resolution to Convention with:
1107 a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
1108 b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
1109 c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the
1110 resolution
1111 Section E) Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by persons
1112 named in Section A i,ii, or iii of this Canon shall be considered by the Resolutions
1113 Committee of Convention. The Resolutions Committee will review the resolution and
1114 **i.** Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
1115 **ii.** Report the resolution to Convention with:
1116 a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
1117 b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
1118 c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the
1119 resolution
1120 Section F) Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by Diocesan
1121 Council or other committees will be reported to Convention by the Diocesan Council or
1122 the committee and are assumed to have a recommendation that Convention adopt the
1123 resolution.

1124 Title IV. Of Constitutional Committees

1125

1126 **Canon 1. Of the Standing Committee**

1127 Section A) Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one Lay
1128 Person in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Standing Committee. The
1129 election shall be done on a vote by orders.

1130 Section B) The Standing Committee shall fulfill all duties prescribed for Standing
1131 Committees in the National Constitution and Canons and in the Constitution of this
1132 Diocese and in these Canons.

1133 Section C) The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a President of the
1134 Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a
1135 Secretary.^{xiv}

1136 Section D) The Standing Committee shall meet upon the call of the Bishop and from time to
1137 time in conformity with their own rules. They shall keep a record of their proceedings.

1138 Section E) When a duty is to be performed, or a power exercised, by the Standing
1139 Committee a majority of the members shall be a quorum and a majority of the quorum
1140 so convened shall be competent to act, unless the contrary is expressly required by the
1141 National Constitution or Canons or the Constitution of this Diocese or these Canons.

1142 Section F) ^{xv} Members of the Standing Committee may be elected to and serve on the
1143 Disciplinary Board.^{xvi}

1144

1145 **Canon 2. Of the Diocesan Council**

1146 **Section A) Members**

1147 **i.** The Bishop Diocesan, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, and
1148 the Chancellor of Convention shall have seat, voice, and vote on the Diocesan
1149 Council.

1150 **ii.** The Lay Members of each annual Convention shall elect one Lay Person in Good
1151 Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat, voice, and
1152 vote.

1153 **iii.** The Priests in Good Standing at each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in
1154 Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat,
1155 voice, and vote.

1156 **iv.** The Deacons in Good Standing at every fourth annual Convention shall elect a
1157 Deacon in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with
1158 seat and voice but no vote.

1159 **Section B) Officers**

1160 **i.** The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, shall preside at, and be the President of, the
1161 Diocesan Council. The Secretary of Convention shall be the Secretary of the
1162 Diocesan Council. The Treasurer of Convention shall be the Treasurer of the
1163 Diocesan Council. The Chancellor of the Convention shall be the Chancellor of the
1164 Diocesan Council.

1165 **ii.** If there is no Bishop Diocesan, the Diocesan Council shall elect annually one of the
1166 members of Council to be the President of the Diocesan Council.

1167 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall elect each year one of the members of the Council to
1168 serve a one year term as Vice President of the Council.

1169 **Section C) Work of the Diocesan Council**

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- 1170 i. The Diocesan Council shall oversee the program and priorities of the Diocese and
1171 make a report thereon to the annual Convention of the Diocese.
- 1172 ii. The Diocesan Council shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation known
1173 as The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.
- 1174 iii. The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention a budget
1175 and schedule of assessments for the ensuing year.
- 1176 iv. The Diocesan Council may provide a means of relief to Congregations that are
1177 having difficulty paying their assessment.
- 1178 v. The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention
1179 minimum stipends and allowances for Clergy serving in the Diocese.

Section D) Committees

- 1181 i. Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary to carry out
1182 its work.
- 1183 ii. All committees shall have a definite term of existence and a stated purpose
1184 determined by the council.
- 1185 iii. Committees shall consist of at least one member of Diocesan Council and such other
1186 persons as Council may decide. These additional persons shall have seat, voice and
1187 vote only as to the business of the committee. The member of Council on each
1188 committee shall serve as liaison between the committee and Council.
- 1189 iv. The member of Council shall call the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter
1190 each committee may effect its own organization provided that a quorum for the
1191 transaction of business shall consist of a majority of all members of the committee.

Section E) Meetings

- 1193 i. The Diocesan Council shall meet on a regular basis and at least once per calendar
1194 quarter.
- 1195 ii. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or Vice President of
1196 the Council.
- 1197 iii. A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for the
1198 transaction of business.

Section F) Indemnification

- 1200 i. No member of Diocesan Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages for
1201 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
 - 1202 a. said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed
1203 by these canons, and
 - 1204 b. the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, wilful misconduct or
1205 recklessness.
 - 1206 c. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of
1207 said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes pursuant
1208 to local, state, or federal law.
- 1209 ii. The Diocese shall indemnify any Council member and may indemnify any other
1210 employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or
1211 who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed
1212 action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative,
1213 including any action by or on behalf of the Diocese by reason of the fact that she is
1214 or was a member of Council, employee, or agent of the Diocese, against expenses,
1215 including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually

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1216 and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding
1217 unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is
1218 determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With
1219 respect to any such action, the Diocese may participate therein at its own expense;
1220 and the Diocese shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel
1221 selected by the Diocese to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being
1222 indemnified. After notice from the Diocese to such person of its election to assume
1223 the defense thereof, the Diocese shall not be liable to such person for any legal or
1224 other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense
1225 thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action,
1226 but the fees and expenses of such Counsel incurred after a notice from the Diocese
1227 of its assumption of the defense thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.
1228

Canon 3. Of the Constitution and Canons Committee

1230 Section A) Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one Lay
1231 Person in good standing to serve terms of three years on the Constitution and Canons
1232 Committee.

1233 Section B) The Bishop Diocesan and a Chancellor of the Diocese shall be members ex-
1234 officio of the Constitution and Canons Committee but shall not be counted in the
1235 determination of a quorum.

1236 Section C) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall effect its own organization.

1237 Section D) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review and report to Convention
1238 on all proposals to amend the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese.

1239 Section E) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review these Canons during the
1240 year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and
1241 propose such amendments to these Canons as they deem necessary or advisable.
1242

Canon 4. Of the Commission On Ministry

1243 Section A) Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each annual Convention shall
1244 elect nine persons to serve one year terms on the Commission On Ministry. These
1245 persons may be any Cleric in Good Standing or Lay Person in Good Standing.

1247 Section B) The chair of the Commission shall be appointed from among its members by the
1248 Ecclesiastical Authority.

1249 Section C) The Commission shall effect its own organization.

1250 Section D) The Commission shall faithfully fulfill all duties laid upon such Commissions by
1251 the Nation Constitution and Canons and by the Constitution of this Diocese and by
1252 these Canons.

1253 Section E) Additional persons may be co-opted by the Commission from time to time
1254 because of their expertise or special knowledge. Any such co-opted members are given
1255 seat and voice at meetings of the Commission but do not have a vote on Commission
1256 business. Co-opted members will not be counted towards a quorum.
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Canon 5. Of the Examining Chaplains

Section A) Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each Annual Convention shall elect three Clergy in Good Standing to be Examining Chaplains. The Examining Chaplains shall assist the Bishop in determining whether persons seeking ordination have knowledge, in accordance with the National Canons, sufficient for the Order they seek.

Canon 6. Of the Ecclesiastical Court^{xvii}

Section A) General

- i. By virtue of Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and accountability to one another. The Church in this Diocese shall support its members in their life in Christ and work to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected. This Canon applies to the clergy who have by their vows at ordination accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine, discipline, worship and obedience.
 - a. In accordance with the National Canons the Ecclesiastical Court in this diocese shall be known as the Disciplinary Board.
 - b. All proceedings under this canon shall be conducted in accordance with Title IV of the National Canons.

Section B) **Membership**

- i. The Disciplinary Board shall consist of five Clergy in Good Standing and four Adult Confirmed Lay Persons in Good Standing.^{xviii}
- ii. By May first of each year the Ecclesiastical authority shall nominate and the Standing Committee shall elect three persons to serve on the Disciplinary Board for a term of three years. Persons elected shall be from each order as required to maintain the required make up of the Disciplinary Board.
- iii. The term of office of each member of the Disciplinary Board shall commence on July first of the year they are elected.

Section C) Vacancies

- i. Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Disciplinary Board shall be filled by majority vote of the Standing Committee upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- ii. Persons elected to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they replace and meet the same requirements.
- iii. Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy unless sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.
- iv. Persons elected to fill vacancies, other than pursuant to a challenge as provided below, shall serve out the unexpired term of the person they replace.
- v. With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement member of the Board shall serve only for the proceedings for which the elected Board member is not serving as a result of the challenge.

Section D) Preserving Impartiality

- i. In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or Hearing Panel of the Board shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or

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1303 undue bias, that member shall immediately notify the President of the Board and
1304 request a replacement member of the Panel.

1305 **ii.** Respondent's Counsel and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge any
1306 member of a Panel for conflict of interest or undue bias by motion to the Panel for
1307 disqualification of the challenged member. The members of the Panel not the
1308 subjects of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether
1309 the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that
1310 proceeding.

1311 **Section E) President:** By June 30 of each year the Standing Committee shall nominate and
1312 the Disciplinary Board for the ensuing year shall elect a President of the Board to serve
1313 for the year.

1314 **Section F) Intake Officer(s):** An Intake Officer shall be appointed by the Bishop.
1315 Additional Intake Officers, as needed, may be appointed from time to time in the same
1316 manner. The Bishop shall publish the name(s) and contact information of the Intake
1317 Officer(s) throughout the diocese.

1318 **Section G) Investigator:** The Bishop may appoint an Investigator in consultation with the
1319 Reference Panel and the Church Attorney.. The Investigator need not be a member of the
1320 Episcopal Church.

1321 **Section H) Church Attorney:** The Bishop, with the consent of ^{xix} the Standing Committee,
1322 shall appoint each year an attorney to serve as Church Attorney. The person so appointed
1323 must be a duly licensed attorney but need not reside within the diocese.

1324 **Section I) Advisors:**

1325 **i.** In each proceeding under this Canon, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor for the
1326 Complainant and an Advisor for the Respondent. The Complainant and the
1327 Respondent have the right to reject these Advisors and to name other persons as
1328 Advisors. Persons serving as Advisors shall hold no other appointed or elected
1329 position provided for under this Canon, and shall not include Chancellors or vice
1330 chancellors of this or any other diocese or any person likely to be called as a witness
1331 in the proceeding.

1332 **ii.** **WARNING TO RESPONDENTS:** no Advisor, Panel, or other officer named in this
1333 canon has yet been granted confidentiality by the civil authorities. Anything told to
1334 such a person or panel may be used against you in a civil court. Only your licensed
1335 attorney and your confessor have such immunity.

1336 **Section J) Clerk:** The Board shall appoint a Clerk to assist the Board with records
1337 management and administrative support. The Clerk may, but need not, be a member of
1338 the Board.

1339 **Section K) Removal:** The Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee, may
1340 remove from office for cause any person appointed or serving under this canon.

1341 **i. Costs:** The reasonable costs and expenses of the Board, Intake Officer(s),
1342 Investigator, Church Attorney, Advisors appointed by the Bishop, Clerk and those
1343 providing pastoral care as directed by the Bishop shall be the obligation of the
1344 Diocese.

1345 **Section L) Records of Proceedings**

1346 **i.** Records of active proceedings before the Board, including the period of any pending
1347 appeal, shall be preserved and maintained in the custody of the Diocesan Office.

- 1348 ii. Records of all proceedings under this Canon shall be permanently preserved in the
1349 archives of the diocese and in the Archives of the Episcopal Church as prescribed in
1350 Title IV of the National Canons.
1351

1352 **Title V. Miscellaneous**

1353
1354 **Canon 1. Of Special Offerings**

1355 **Section A) Bishops' Alms Fund**

- 1356 i. The Diocese shall have a special monetary fund called the Bishops' Alms Fund.
1357 ii. The purpose of the Bishops' Alms Fund is to care for the poor and needy and to
1358 provide scholarships to seminaries, church related camps, conferences, and events.
1359 iii. The Bishops' Alms Fund shall be funded by:
1360 a. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and
1361 b. Regular contributions:
1362 • by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the
1363 diocese or
1364 • by the loose offering taken at all services when a Bishop visits a
1365 Congregation.
1366 iv. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall be the Almoner who shall oversee and distribute
1367 these funds for appropriate purposes.
1368 v. The Bishops' Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or
1369 personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.
1370 vi. Records of the income and expenses of the Bishops' Alms Fund are confidential but
1371 not secret.
1372 vii. Reports on the usage of the Bishops' Alms Fund shall be made to the Diocesan
1373 Council at least quarterly and annually to the Diocesan Convention. These reports
1374 shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current balance of the
1375 Bishops' Alms Fund.
1376 viii. Like all funds, the Bishops' Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included in the
1377 Annual Audit required by these canons.
1378

1379 **Canon 2. Of the Historiographer**

- 1380 Section A) The Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Historiographer at each annual
1381 Convention who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.
1382 Section B) The Historiographer shall have charge of all documents belonging to the Diocese
1383 which relate to its history or that of any Congregation of the Diocese, of the Journals of
1384 all Conventions of this Diocese, and of all books and papers committed to him by the
1385 Convention or Ecclesiastical Authority.
1386 Section C) In the event of the dissolution of a Congregation of this Diocese, the books,
1387 records, and historical information of that Congregation shall be delivered into the
1388 custody of the Historiographer.
1389 Section D) All books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, held by the
1390 Historiographer shall be kept in good condition and in such place as designated by the
1391 Diocesan Council.
1392 Section E) The Historiographer shall issue proper certificates based upon the records in his
1393 charge

1394 Section F) Subject to the exclusions provided in the Canons, all books, papers and
1395 documents, in whatever form they may exist, shall be open to the inspection of the
1396 Bishop Diocesan, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and
1397 any committee of the Convention.
1398

1399 **Canon 3. Of the Cathedral**

1400 Section A) The Parish church of St. Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania is hereby designated as the
1401 Cathedral of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

1402 Section B) Governance of the Cathedral^{xx}

- 1403 i. The Cathedral shall be governed by a Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws not in
1404 conflict with the National Constitution and Canons, the Constitution of this Diocese
1405 or these Canons.
- 1406 ii. Amendments may be made to the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws in the
1407 following manner:
- 1408 a. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and the
1409 Standing Committee for their advice and consent.
- 1410 b. Consent of both the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Standing Committee having
1411 been received, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to a meeting of the
1412 Cathedral Congregation. A majority of two thirds of those present shall be
1413 required to adopt the amendment.

1414 Section C) The Cathedral Congregation shall be entitled to representation in the Convention
1415 of this Diocese in accordance with the Canon on Membership in Convention.
1416

1417 **Canon 4. Of The Election Of A Bishop**

1418 Section A) On the call by the Bishop Diocesan for the election of a successor, or of a Bishop
1419 Co-Adjutor or of a Bishop Suffragan or upon the death, resignation, or permanent
1420 disability of the Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee shall appoint nine persons to
1421 serve as a Search Committee and the Diocesan Council shall appoint nine persons to
1422 serve as a Transition Committee. The persons appointed to these committees may be any
1423 Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing.

1424 Section B) The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate
1425 to the electing Convention three to five persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.

- 1426 i. There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.
- 1427 ii. Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three
1428 Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written
1429 petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.
- 1430 iii. All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the
1431 National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese and by these
1432 Canons.

1433 Section C) The Transition Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary for the consecration,
1434 welcome, and transition to a new Bishop.
1435

1436 **Canon 5. Of The Election Of Deputies To The General Convention**

1437 Section A) The annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated
1438 meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay

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1439 Members voting separately, four Priests in Good Standing and four Confirmed Adult
1440 Lay Persons in Good Standing to be Deputies to the General Convention.

1441 Section B) After the election of Deputies as prescribed in Section A, additional ballots shall
1442 be taken, with the Clergy and Lay members voting separately, to elect four Priests and
1443 four Lay Persons, qualified as above, from among the remaining nominees to be
1444 Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.
1445

Canon 6. Of The Election Of Deputies To The Provincial Synod

1446 Section A) The Annual Convention following each triennial meeting of The General
1447 Convention of The Episcopal Church shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay Members voting
1448 separately, one Priest in Good Standing and two Confirmed Adult Lay Persons in Good
1449 Standing to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod.
1450

1451 Section B) After the election of Deputies as prescribed in section a, an additional ballot shall
1452 be taken, with the Clergy and Lay Members voting together, to elect and rank those
1453 remaining nominees to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod.
1454

- i Convention 2013 adopted Canon 4 and Canon 5 in order to establish a procedure to remove persons who move, die, resign, or fail to fulfill their obligations under Article III,D,iv,g. Prior to this, there were no such provisions in these Constitution and Canons.
- ii Convention 2013 adopted Canon 4 and Canon 5 in order to establish a procedure to remove persons who move, die, resign, or fail to fulfill their obligations under Article III,D,iv,g. Prior to this, there were no such provisions in these Constitution and Canons.
- iii Convention 2013 added this section to deal with congregations that have quasi independent entities such as schools or day care
- iv Convention 2010 adopted Section vii and following in order to clarify the previous version of the canon and to provide for a nominating process.
- v Convention 2009 added “Priest-in-Charge” to make clear that a Priest-in-Charge is the president of the Corporation and presiding officer.
- vi “Deliberately destroyed” was added by Convention 2010
- vii Meadville changed from SW Deanery to NW by Convention 2012
- viii Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Credentials Committee from three clergy and three lay members to one from each order.
- ix Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Resolutions Committee from three from three clergy and three lay members to two from each order.
- x Convention 2010 did away with a separate Site of the Next Convention Committee and gave this responsibility to the Resolutions Committee.
- xi Convention 2009 changed “slate of” to “ballot with sufficient” to clarify that the committee's task is to present sufficient nominees for each office and not to recommend particular persons.
- xii Convention 2009 changed the deadline for nominations from no less than 60 days before convention to not less than 30 before the meeting of convention
- xiii Convention 2009 changed the deadline for resolutions from 60 days to 45 before the meeting of convention.
- xiv Convention 2014 deleted Section D which had provided for the Standing Committee to elect a Church Attorney. This was in conflict with the Canon concerning the Disciplinary Board which provided a different procedure.
- xv Convention 2013 removed Section G which prohibited members of the Standing Committee from serving simultaneously on Diocesan Council, The Disciplinary Board and the Commission on Ministry. Since the Standing Committee is no longer part of the disciplinary process there is no longer a conflict in people serving on both bodies. As for all three bodies the voters can decide if people should serve on more than one at a time.
- xvi Convention 2013 added this new section G permitting members of the Standing Committee to serve on the Disciplinary Board. Canons of the Episcopal Church require explicit permission for members of the Standing Committee to so serve.
- xvii Convention 2010 adopted an entirely new Canon 6 “Of The Ecclesiastical Court” to bring us into compliance with the National Church disciplinary canons which take effect July 1, 2011. The old Canon 6 remains in effect through June 30, 2011 and follows here:

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Canon 6. Of The Ecclesiastical Court

Section A) The Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall consist of five Clergy in Good Standing and four Lay Persons in Good Standing.

Section B) Each annual Convention shall elect three persons to serve on the Ecclesiastical Trial Court for a term of three years. Persons elected shall be from each order as required to maintain the required make up of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court.

- 8 Section C) Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court
9 shall be filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the Court. Persons elected
10 to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they replace. Vacancies
11 must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy unless sooner required
12 by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.
- 13 Section D) Within two months following each annual Diocesan Convention the members of
14 the Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall elect from among themselves by majority vote one
15 person to serve as Presiding Judge for a one year term.
- 16 Section E) Charges for which a Cleric may be made to stand trial are contained in the
17 National Canons.
- 18 Section F) The mode and manner of making charges, securing presentments, and of
19 conducting trials shall be as established in the national Canons.
- 20 Section G) The powers, duties and procedures of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court and the
21 definition of terms used herein shall be governed by Title IV of the National Canons.
- 22 Section H) The Standing Committee shall serve as the Review Committee.
23

xviii Convention 2013 removed words prohibiting members of the Standing Committee from serving on the Disciplinary Board.

xix Convention 2014 changed the wording of this Canon by deleting “in consultation with” and adding “with the consent of.” This was to make clear tha the Standing Committee would have to vote on the appointment.

xx Section B was changed by Convention in 2009 to add subsection ii so as to provide a way for the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws to be amended.