

**CONSTITUTION OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

**Article I. Territory and accession**

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

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

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

**Article II. Ecclesiastical Authority**

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

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

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

**Article III. Convention**

**Section A. Meetings**

**1. Annual Convention**

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

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

**2. Special conventions**

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

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

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

d) Notice of such special convention shall be given by regular mail to all the clergy 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.

52 **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.

74 **Section C. Officers of convention**

75 **1. President of Convention**

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.

83 **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.

87 **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.

91 **4. Chancellor of Convention**

92 a) The annual convention shall elect a Chancellor of Convention.

- 93           b) The mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and term of office shall be  
94           prescribed by canon.

95           **Section D. Conduct of Convention**

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

135          5. **Other matters**

- 136               a) All actions of convention shall take effect upon the adjournment of that convention  
137               unless otherwise provided in the Constitution and Canons or in the act itself.
- 138               b) The convention may make provision in the Canons of the diocese for the adoption

139 and amendment of rules of order to govern and organize the convention for the  
140 conduct of its business.

141

142 **Article IV. The Standing Committee**

143 Section A. The annual convention shall elect persons to serve upon the Standing Committee of  
144 the diocese.

145 Section B. The Standing Committee shall consist of an equal number of clergy and lay  
146 members.

147 Section C. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and  
148 terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.

149 Section D. The Standing Committee shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
150 vacancies that may occur in its own body.

151

152 **Article V. Diocesan Council**

153 Section A. The Diocesan Council shall consist of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor,  
154 if any, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, the Chancellor of  
155 Convention and such other persons, elected by the annual convention, as may be prescribed  
156 by canon.

157 Section B. The number of members, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and  
158 terms of office shall be prescribed by canon.

159 Section C. The Diocesan Council shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
160 vacancies that may occur in its own body or among the officers of council, other than the  
161 bishop, that were elected by the convention.

162 Section D. The Diocesan Council shall be the board of directors of the Pennsylvania non-profit  
163 corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and shall have all the  
164 legal powers incident thereto and shall have the power to authorize any person to act on its  
165 behalf.

166 Section E. The Bishop Diocesan will be the chair and president of council and the corporation.  
167 A vice president for the council and corporation may be elected by council from among its  
168 members. The Secretary of Convention shall serve as secretary of the council and  
169 corporation. The Treasurer of Convention shall serve as treasurer of the council and  
170 corporation. The Chancellor of Convention shall serve as chancellor of the council and  
171 corporation.

172 Section F. It shall be the duty of the Diocesan Council to develop, prosecute, and oversee the  
173 mission and ministry of the church in the diocese, to develop a budget or budgets for the  
174 work of the diocese, to fulfill all other duties laid upon the Council by the corporate charter,  
175 by the Constitution and Canons, or by resolution of Convention, and to make full reports of  
176 its work to the Annual Convention.

177

178 **Article VI. Deputies to General Convention and Provincial Synod**

179 **Section A. Deputies to General Convention**

180 1. The Annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated meeting of  
181 the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the clerical and lay members voting  
182 separately, deputies and alternate deputies to the General Convention.

183 2. The number of deputies, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms  
184 of office shall be prescribed by canon provided that a sufficient number shall be elected

185 so as to assure that the diocese have the full number of deputies permitted by the  
186 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

187 **Section B. Deputies to the Provincial Synod**

- 188 1. The Annual Convention shall elect, by the clerical and lay members voting separately,  
189 deputies and alternate deputies to the Provincial Synod  
190 2. The number of deputies, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms  
191 of office shall be prescribed by canon provided that a sufficient number shall be elected  
192 so as to assure that the diocese have the full number of deputies permitted by the  
193 Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the ordinances of the Province.  
194

195 **Article VII. Canons**

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

200 Section B. A Committee on Constitution and Canons is hereby established whose  
201 membership, mode of nomination, qualifications for office, duties, and terms of office shall  
202 be prescribed in the canons. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall have  
203 authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all vacancies that may occur in its own body.  
204

205 **Article VIII. Election of bishops**

206 **Section A. Call for election and nomination process**

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

210 **Section B. Qualification of voters**

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

217 **Section C. Voting**

- 218 1. Voting shall be by written ballot with the clergy and lay members voting separately.  
219 2. If at least two thirds of the clergy eligible to vote are present and at least two thirds of  
220 the full number of lay delegates are present then a concurrent majority of votes cast in  
221 each order shall be necessary to elect.  
222 3. If a lesser number of clerical or lay delegates are present than are called for in Article  
223 VIII, Section C subsection 2 but a quorum as specified in Article III, Section D  
224 subsection 1 exists then a concurrent majority consisting of three fourths of votes cast  
225 in each order shall be necessary to elect.  
226

227 **Article IX. The Cathedral:**

228 Section A. The Cathedral of St. Paul in the city of Erie, established as such through the  
229 amendments of the Charter of St Paul's Church, Erie, and thus established upon a Cathedral  
230 Foundation, according to the tradition of the Anglican Communion and in conformity with

231 the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is a constituent part of the church and  
232 convention of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The Cathedral and the Cathedral  
233 Congregation shall be governed by the Chapter in accordance with the Cathedral Charter,  
234 the statutes and by-laws of the Cathedral, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of  
235 Northwestern Pennsylvania and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.  
236

237 **Article X. Ecclesiastical Discipline**

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

241 Section B. The Ecclesiastical Court shall have authority to fill, for the unexpired term, all  
242 vacancies that may occur in its own body.  
243

244 **Article XI. Amendments of the Constitution**

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

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

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

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

256 Section E. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall review this Constitution during  
257 the year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and  
258 propose amendments to this Constitution as they deem necessary or advisable.  
259  
260

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.

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

**Canon 1. Of Congregations**

- 307 Section A) A Congregation is a group of persons united for the purpose of carrying out the  
308 mission of the Church, which includes acknowledging the holiness of God, hearing  
309 God's word, offering prayer and worship, celebrating the sacraments and working,  
310 praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.
- 311 Section B) An Unorganized Congregation is a Congregation which has not been admitted  
312 into union with the Convention of the Diocese, but where, with the approval of the  
313 Bishop, there are members of this Church who meet for regular services at least four  
314 times a year.
- 315 Section C) A Mission is a Congregation which has been admitted into union with the  
316 Convention of the Diocese and does not meet the requirements of a Parish. Two or more  
317 Congregations may form a single Mission with the approval of the Bishop and the  
318 Diocesan Convention.
- 319 Section D) A Parish is a Congregation which is totally financially self-supporting and has at  
320 least 50 adult Communicants In Good Standing and has been granted Parish status by  
321 the Diocesan Convention. A Parish also maintains a place of worship, provides an  
322 adequate living for a full time priest equivalent to or exceeding the minimum salary and  
323 benefits currently required by the Diocese, remains current in payment of its assessment,  
324 and pays all its own operating expenses. Two or more Congregations may form a single  
325 Parish with the approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Convention.

326  
327 **Canon 2. Of The Organizing Of Missions**

- 328 Section A) A Congregation which seeks to become a Mission shall make written application  
329 to the Bishop, over the signatures of at least ten adult persons who propose to be  
330 members thereof. This application must be on the form provided by the Bishop and must  
331 include a statement that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and  
332 recognizes the authority over them of the National and Diocesan Constitutions and  
333 Canons.
- 334 Section B) If the Bishop consents to the organizing of the Mission as thus applied for, he  
335 shall name the congregation. In consultation with the Standing Committee he shall  
336 appoint for the first year fit persons to serve as Officers of the Mission.
- 337 Section C) When a Congregation shall have given notice to the Bishop of its intention to  
338 apply for admission into union with the convention as a Mission, has presented to the  
339 Diocesan Convention a certificate from the Bishop approving such application, and also  
340 a certificate from the Bishop showing that it has ten or more adult Communicants In  
341 Good Standing, it may be admitted into union with the Convention by a majority vote of  
342 the Diocesan Convention. When thus admitted, it shall be entitled to representation in  
343 the Diocesan Convention.
- 344 Section D) The title to real estate given to or purchased for a Mission shall be vested in The  
345 Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and all trust funds, endowments, or  
346 undesignated bequests secured for the benefit of the Mission shall be deposited with the  
347 Treasurer Of The Convention.

348  
349 **Canon 3. Of The Organizing Of Parishes**

- 350 Section A) A Mission which seeks to become a Parish shall make written application to the  
351 Annual Convention. This application shall include proof that:  
352 i. the Congregation has at least fifty adult Communicants in Good Standing;

- 353           ii. the Congregation has supported itself financially, including a full time priest, for  
354           three consecutive years;  
355           iii. that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and recognizes the authority  
356           over them of the National and Diocesan Constitution and Canons;  
357           iv. evidence that the Congregation will be able to continue to be self-supporting and to  
358           pay the diocesan assessment and the minimum salary and benefits of a full time  
359           Rector  
360           v. a certificate from the Ecclesiastical Authority approving the application of the  
361           Congregation.

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

365           Section C) A majority vote of the Convention shall change the status of the Congregation to  
366           Parish.

367  
368           **Canon 4. Of the Governance of Missions**

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

374           **Section B) Annual Meetings**

- 375           i. In every Mission an Annual Meeting shall be held in January or at such other time as  
376           the Ecclesiastical Authority may designate. Public notice of the same shall be given  
377           at all the services on the two preceding weekends.  
378           ii. The Annual Meeting shall be presided over by the Vicar, or if the office be vacant, or  
379           if the Vicar be absent, by the Bishop's Warden. When the Annual Meeting is called  
380           to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.  
381           iii. Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Mission who are physically present, who are at  
382           least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
383           and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
384           support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
385           shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of the  
386           Mission.  
387           iv. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Congregation at the same  
388           time.  
389           v. The Mission may nominate to the Ecclesiastical Authority not less than five nor  
390           more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be appointed as the  
391           Bishop's Committee. The length of one term of office for members of the Bishop's  
392           Committee shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,  
393           nominated each year at the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

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

- 395           i. A Special Mission Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the  
396           Ecclesiastical Authority. Such order shall specify the time and place of such meeting  
397           and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall be considered  
398           other than that specified in the call.

- 399           ii. Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
400                 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
401                 meeting and the business to be considered.  
402           iii. The Bishop shall preside over such meeting. At the request of the Ecclesiastical  
403                 Authority, the Vicar may preside. At the request of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the  
404                 Bishop's Warden may preside.

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

- 406           i. A Bishop's Committee may be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to assist the  
407                 Ecclesiastical Authority in governing the Mission. The Bishop's Committee shall  
408                 manage and be responsible for the property and material affairs of the Mission in  
409                 accordance with directions from the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
410           ii. In accordance with the canon "Of Membership in Convention" the Bishop's  
411                 Committee shall annually select delegates to represent the Mission at meetings of the  
412                 Diocesan Convention.  
413           iii. The Vicar, if there is one, shall preside at all meetings of the Bishop's Committee. In  
414                 the absence of a Vicar, the Bishop's Warden shall preside.  
415           iv. The Lay Officers of a Mission shall consist of the Bishop's Warden, Property  
416                 Warden, Clerk, and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing  
417                 of the Mission and at least 18 years of age.  
418           v. The Bishop's Warden and Property Warden shall be appointed annually by the  
419                 Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.  
420           vi. The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Mission are met and that  
421                 the buildings belonging to the Mission are kept in good repair and are adequately  
422                 insured. Under the Vicar, they shall see that all things needed for the orderly worship  
423                 of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments are provided. They shall  
424                 prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the absence of a Vicar, they  
425                 shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the  
426                 continuance of the services.  
427           vii. A Clerk shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members  
428                 of the Bishop's Committee to serve until a successor is appointed. The Clerk shall be  
429                 responsible to see that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special Mission Meetings  
430                 and of all meetings of the Bishop's Committee and shall attest to the same in the  
431                 book of Minutes of the Bishop's Committee, shall maintain in the said book the  
432                 annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Mission, shall keep all original  
433                 documents, and the list of voters provided for by these Canons. The Clerk shall turn  
434                 over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that belong to the  
435                 Mission.  
436           viii. A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be appointed annually by  
437                 the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.  
438                 Under the authority of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Bishop's Committee, the  
439                 Treasurer shall be responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds  
440                 of the Mission and to present a report on the same to each meeting of the Bishop's  
441                 Committee. Previous to the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the  
442                 Ecclesiastical Authority and to the Bishop's Committee a full and accurate statement  
443                 of the financial condition of the Mission. This statement shall also be read at the  
444                 Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Ecclesiastical

- 445 Authority shall require, but the cost of such bond shall be borne by the Mission. The  
446 Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all books, documents, and funds in her  
447 possession that belong to the Mission.  
448 **ix.** Regular meetings of the Bishop's Committee shall be held at least quarterly.  
449 **x.** Special meetings of the Bishop's Committee may be called at any time at the request  
450 of the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
451

452 **Canon 5. Of the Governance of Parishes**

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

455 **Section B) Of The Annual Parish Meeting**

- 456 **i.** In every Parish, the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held in January at a time and  
457 place designated by the Vestry. Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given at  
458 all the services on the two preceding weekends. With the consent of the  
459 Ecclesiastical Authority, the Annual Meeting may be held during a different month.  
460 **ii.** The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive  
461 reports from the Vestry, parish officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the  
462 new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.  
463 **iii.** The Annual Parish Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge,  
464 or if the office be vacant, or if the Rector or Priest-in-Charge be absent, by the  
465 Senior Warden. When the Annual Parish Meeting is called to order, the  
466 qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.  
467 **iv.** Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Parish who are physically present, who are at  
468 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
469 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
470 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
471 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all Parish Meetings.  
472 **v.** A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Parish Meeting shall consist  
473 of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons entitled to  
474 vote, whichever is less.  
475 **vi.** No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Congregation at the same  
476 time.  
477 **vii.** <sup>1</sup>Each Parish shall have a Vestry consisting of not less than five nor more than  
478 twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing elected by the annual Parish Meeting.  
479 The number of persons to serve on the Vestry of the Parish shall be set by resolution  
480 of two successive Annual Parish Meetings. Upon affirmative vote of the second  
481 Annual Parish Meeting the change in number shall take immediate effect.  
482 **viii.** The qualifications of persons to serve on the Vestry shall be the same as the  
483 qualifications to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting as set out above except that the  
484 person to be elected need not be present at the Meeting.  
485 **ix.** No cleric shall be eligible for election as a member of the Vestry.  
486 **x.** In each Parish the Vestry may by resolution designate the nominating Committee,  
487 otherwise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge together with the Senior Warden and the  
488 Junior Warden shall be the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee  
489 shall publish to the parish two weeks prior to the Annual Parish Meeting a ballot  
490 with sufficient qualified nominees to fill the vacancies on the Vestry for the

- 491                   upcoming year.
- 492           **xi.** Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 493                   The nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee. Any question of the
- 494                   nominee's qualification to serve shall be resolved by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge
- 495                   prior to the election of Vestry members. In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-
- 496                   Charge, the Senior Warden shall have the responsibility for determining the
- 497                   qualifications of any person nominated from the floor.
- 498           **xii.** Each Annual Parish Meeting shall elect persons to serve on the Vestry replacing
- 499                   those members whose term in office has ended.
- 500           **xiii.** The length of one term of office for members of the Vestry shall be three years with
- 501                   one third of the members, or as near as may be, elected each year at the Annual
- 502                   Parish Meeting.

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

- 504           **i.** A Special Parish Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the
- 505                   Ecclesiastical Authority or of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or by resolution of the
- 506                   Vestry, or on a petition to the Ecclesiastical Authority if such petition be signed by
- 507                   not less than one-third of the number entitled to vote at the last Annual Parish
- 508                   Meeting. All such orders, resolutions, or petitions shall specify the time and place of
- 509                   such meeting and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall
- 510                   be considered other than that specified in the call.
- 511           **ii.** Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two
- 512                   weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the
- 513                   meeting, the business to be considered, and by whose order the meeting is called.
- 514           **iii.** Such meeting may be presided over by the Bishop. If the Bishop does not preside,
- 515                   the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall preside. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge,
- 516                   the Ecclesiastical Authority may request the Senior Warden to preside.

517           **Section D) Of Vestries**

- 518           **i.** In accordance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of
- 519                   this Diocese the Vestry shall govern the Parish and shall manage and be responsible
- 520                   for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare
- 521                   of the Parish; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is provided with all
- 522                   things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and
- 523                   provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Parish
- 524                   Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next
- 525                   year.
- 526           **ii.** As to civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector
- 527                   or Priest-in-Charge shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the
- 528                   President of the corporation. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge then the Senior
- 529                   Warden shall be the President of the Corporation.<sup>ii</sup>
- 530           **iii.** The Vestry, in accordance with the Canon "Of Membership In Convention" shall
- 531                   elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan
- 532                   Convention.
- 533           **iv.** The Lay Officers of a Parish shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden,
- 534                   Clerk and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the
- 535                   Parish and at least 18 years of age. No cleric or spouse of a cleric may serve as an
- 536                   Officer of the Parish.

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- v. The Senior Warden shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, from among the members of the Vestry. If there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall nominate a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
  - vi. It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, to advise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge on all matters pertaining to the parish upon which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge may wish to consult the Senior Warden, and to inform the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of all matters which the Senior Warden feels the Rector needs to know.
  - 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.

- 583        **xii.** The Vestry shall fill any mid-term vacancies in their number or among the officers  
584        of the Parish by majority vote.
- 585        **xiii.** Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held at least quarterly.
- 586        **xiv.** Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called at any time at the request of the  
587        Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or of any two of the members. Notice of such meeting  
588        shall be given to the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the members of  
589        the Vestry. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the  
590        business to be considered. No other business shall come before such meeting except  
591        with the unanimous consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the  
592        members of the Vestry.
- 593        **xv.** At no meeting shall it be competent for the Vestry to transact any business except  
594        there be present the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, or, in the event of the  
595        absence of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or if the office be vacant, one of the  
596        Wardens; and except there be present a quorum consisting of a majority of the  
597        elected members of the Vestry. No action affecting the rights of the Rector or Priest-  
598        in-Charge shall be taken at any meeting at which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge has  
599        not had the opportunity to be present.
- 600        **xvi. Indemnification**
- 601        a. No member of the Vestry shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
602        any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
- 603               • said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office  
604               prescribed by these canons, and
- 605               • the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct  
606               or recklessness
- 607               • The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability  
608               of said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes  
609               pursuant to local, state, or federal law.
- 610        b. The Parish shall indemnify any Vestry member and may indemnify any other  
611        employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party  
612        to or who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or  
613        completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or  
614        investigative, including any action by or on behalf of the Parish by reason of the  
615        fact that he is or was a member of Vestry, employee, or agent of the parish,  
616        against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in  
617        settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such  
618        action, suit, or proceeding unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim  
619        for indemnification is determined by the Court to have constituted willful  
620        misconduct or recklessness. With respect to any such action, the Parish may  
621        participate therein at its own expense; and the Parish shall be entitled to assume  
622        the defense thereof, with Counsel selected by the Parish to the reasonable  
623        satisfaction of the party being indemnified. After notice from the Parish to such  
624        person of its election to assume the defense thereof, the Parish shall not be liable  
625        to such person for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such  
626        person in connection with the defense thereof. Such person shall have the right  
627        to employ separate Counsel in such action, but the fees and expenses of such  
628        Counsel incurred after a notice from the Parish of its assumption of the defense



- 675           i. At every visitation of the Bishop, the priest in charge of the Congregation, or the  
676           Warden if there be no priest in charge, shall submit the Parish Register to the Bishop  
677           for inspection.  
678           ii. The priest in charge of every Congregation, or if there be no priest in charge, the  
679           Warden and the Treasurer shall present the Annual Parochial Report to the  
680           Ecclesiastical Authority by the date specified.  
681           iii. It shall be the duty of the Vestry to see that a report, acceptable to the Ecclesiastical  
682           Authority, of the Annual Audit required by the National Canons is sent to the  
683           Ecclesiastical Authority on or before September first of each year.  
684

685           **Canon 7. Of The Reduction And Dissolution Of Congregations**

686           Section A) A Congregation may petition the Diocesan Convention for a change in status of  
687           that Congregation. With the assent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan  
688           Convention, by majority vote, may grant the petition and change the status of the  
689           Congregation.

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

- 693           i. A Congregation without a Rector, Vicar or Priest-in-Charge for three consecutive  
694           years  
695           ii. A Congregation without Officers of the Congregation for three consecutive years  
696           iii. A Congregation without divine service for one year.  
697           iv. A Congregation whose church or chapel has become disused and closed.  
698           v. A Congregation with less than ten adult Communicants for three consecutive years.  
699           vi. A Congregation failing for two years to pay its assessment in full.  
700           vii. A Congregation failing for two years to file its Annual Parochial Report required by  
701           the National Canons.  
702           viii. A Congregation failing for two years to file the report of their Annual Audit as  
703           required by the National and Diocesan Canons.

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

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

709           Section E) When any Congregation shall have been dissolved, its name shall be stricken  
710           from the roll of Congregations, all of its records shall be forwarded to the diocesan  
711           office, and the title to all its property, real and personal, including money, shall forthwith  
712           vest in, and be transferred to, the corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern  
713           Pennsylvania.  
714

715           **Canon 8. Of Property**

716           Section A) Any Congregation or other institution holding or intending to hold title to real  
717           property shall be incorporated. Its form of incorporation shall be in accordance with the  
718           laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in harmony with the Constitution and  
719           Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and the directions of Diocesan  
720           Convention.

- 721 Section B) All property, real and personal, held by or for the benefit of any Congregation of  
722 this Diocese is held in trust for the Diocese and The Episcopal Church. The existence of  
723 this trust, however, shall in no way limit the power and authority of the Congregation  
724 otherwise existing over such property so long as the congregation remains a part of, and  
725 subject to, this Church and its Constitution and Canons.
- 726 Section C) No mortgage, judgment lien, or indebtedness shall be incurred by any  
727 Congregation of this Diocese without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan,  
728 if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. No consent and  
729 approval shall be granted unless there is a reasonable plan for the repayment of all such  
730 obligations.
- 731 Section D) No real property titled to any Congregation or other institution of this Diocese  
732 shall be sold, given away, deliberately destroyed,<sup>iii</sup> or otherwise alienated or encumbered  
733 without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, and the  
734 Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council.
- 735 Section E) All Congregations, institutions, and other entities belonging to this Diocese or  
736 any of the Congregations of this Diocese shall be adequately insured with property and  
737 liability insurance that shall conform to a minimum standard for insurance established  
738 by the Diocesan Council and shall provide to the Diocese a certificate of insurance  
739 showing the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania to be an “additional insured” on said  
740 property.

741  
742 **Canon 9. Of The Priest In Charge Of A Congregation**

- 743 Section A) The priest in charge of a Congregation shall have, subject only to the rubrics of  
744 the Book of Common Prayer, the National and Diocesan Constitutions and Canons, and  
745 the godly counsel of the Bishop, the exclusive charge of all things pertaining to the  
746 spiritual interests of the Congregation. The priest shall order and direct the services of  
747 worship and music of the church and all that pertains thereto and shall have the spiritual  
748 direction and general oversight of the church school, the altar guild, and of all  
749 organizations connected with the Congregation. The priest may appoint persons to  
750 perform, under Clergy supervision, such duties pertaining to the services and to the care  
751 and decoration of the church as are properly performed by lay members.
- 752 Section B) The priest shall at all times have free access to the church or chapel and to the  
753 church hall, to open and use the same as shall be required for religious services and  
754 offices and for such parochial occasions and objects as the priest shall deem necessary.  
755 The priest may arrange, modify, or improve the furnishings, ornaments, appointments,  
756 and conveniences of the church or chapel as the priest shall deem necessary. The priest  
757 shall have control of the use of the church hall. In the exercise of these rights and duties,  
758 however, the priest shall not disturb the fabric of the building or involve the  
759 Congregation or the Diocese in any expenditure of funds not authorized by the  
760 Ecclesiastical Authority or by the Officers of the Parish.
- 761 Section C) All employees of any Congregation, and all other Clergy in any Congregation,  
762 are selected by, work under the supervision of, and may be terminated by the priest in  
763 charge of that Congregation.
- 764 Section D) The priest shall preside, with the right to vote, at all meetings of the Vestry or  
765 Bishop's Committee, and no such meeting shall be held unless the priest has been duly  
766 notified of the same at least twenty-four hours previous thereto.

- 767 Section E) The priest shall at all times have and exercise such other rights and shall perform  
768 such duties as pertain to this office under the laws and usages of The Episcopal Church.  
769 Section F) The priest shall keep such records and make such reports as may be directed by  
770 National or Diocesan Canons or by order of the Diocesan Convention.  
771 Section G) The priest in charge of a Congregation shall give to the proper Officers thereof  
772 and to the Ecclesiastical Authority at least one month's notice, in writing, of her intent to  
773 resign such charge.  
774 Section H) No Cleric shall officiate within the bounds of this Diocese, either by preaching,  
775 reading prayers, administering sacraments, or any other sacred functions, within the  
776 parochial, missionary, or other cure of a priest, unless the Cleric have received express  
777 permission for that purpose from the priest in charge of the cure, or, in the absence of  
778 the priest in charge, from the church Wardens or a majority of the Vestry. In the case of a  
779 vacant Mission, permission shall be obtained from the Ecclesiastical Authority. Nor  
780 shall any Cleric, not Canonically Resident, officiate within the bounds of the Diocese in  
781 a vacant Congregation without the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
782 Section I) A Cleric serving a Congregation may enter into a contractual agreement with  
783 another Congregation for pastoral services. Said contract shall cover all services to be  
784 provided by the Cleric to the contracting Congregation and all financial arrangements  
785 between the contracting Congregation and the Cleric. Said contract must be approved by  
786 both Vestries and the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
787 Section J) The priest in charge of a Mission is known as a Vicar.  
788

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

- 790 Section A) When the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of a Parish retires, resigns, becomes  
791 incapacitated or dies, the Wardens shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority and,  
792 with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, make due provision for services, the cost  
793 thereof to be paid by the Parish.  
794 Section B) In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens shall take care that  
795 the church building be kept from all secular and other uses not authorized by the  
796 Church. They shall make and certify all entries in the Parish Register required by these  
797 Canons and shall make out and present to the Ecclesiastical Authority the Annual  
798 Parochial Report.  
799 Section C) The Vestry shall elect a priest to be Rector of the Parish. The said election shall  
800 be subject to the following provisions:  
801 **i.** It shall be the prerogative of the Ecclesiastical Authority to submit to the Vestry the  
802 name or names of priests to be considered by them.  
803 **ii.** No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established  
804 by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.  
805 **iii.** No election shall be had until the name of the priest whom it is proposed to elect has  
806 been made known to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall  
807 have sixty days in which to communicate with the Vestry. No election may be had  
808 until the Vestry meets in special session to consider the comments of the  
809 Ecclesiastical Authority.  
810 **iv.** The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens of  
811 the Parish, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the  
812 Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

813 Section D) The call of the Rector shall be in writing, signed by the Wardens and Clerk of the  
814 Vestry for the Parish. It must express distinctly any special conditions, together with the  
815 stipulation of salary or support and provision for residence, which shall conform, at a  
816 minimum, with any resolutions regarding minimum salary and benefits. The salary may  
817 be increased or decreased as the parties may from time to time agree, due notice of  
818 which shall be given to the Ecclesiastical Authority by the Clerk of the Vestry.

819 Section E) Any priest appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to minister to a Parish as the  
820 Priest-in-Charge, but not elected by the Vestry thereof, is sent by the Ecclesiastical  
821 Authority upon such terms as to financial support, and for such a period of time, as may  
822 have been agreed upon by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the priest, and the Vestry of the  
823 Parish. This appointment and agreement shall be in writing.

824 **Section F) Assistants**

- 825 i. Prior to the calling of an Assistant, the Rector of the calling Parish shall submit the  
826 name of the priest he proposes to call to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The  
827 Ecclesiastical Authority shall have 60 days to communicate with the Rector and  
828 Vestry about the Cleric they propose to call.
- 829 ii. The Ecclesiastical Authority may accept Letters Dimissory for the Assistant or may  
830 grant the Assistant annual license to function within this Diocese.
- 831 iii. The provisions of Section D of this canon as to a written agreement on salary and  
832 conditions of call apply to the calling of an Assistant.
- 833

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

835 Section A) Every congregation shall have a special monetary fund called the Alms Fund.

836 Section B) The purpose of the Alms fund is to care for the poor and needy and to provide  
837 scholarships to church related camps, conferences, and events.

838 Section C) The Alms Fund shall be funded by:

- 839 i. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and
- 840 ii. Regular contributions:
- 841 a. by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
842 congregation or
- 843 b. by the loose offering taken at all services on one weekend a month.

844 Section D) Every congregation shall have an Almoner who shall oversee and distribute  
845 these funds for appropriate purposes. .

- 846 i. If there are clergy attached to the congregation, all of the clergy shall be Almoners.
- 847 ii. If there are no clergy attached to the congregation then the Vestry or Bishop's  
848 Committee shall elect annually a suitable Lay Person in Good Standing to be the  
849 Almoner.

850 Section E) The Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or personal  
851 expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.

852 Section F) Records of the income and expenses of the Alms Fund are confidential but not  
853 secret.

854 Section G) Reports on the usage of the Alms Fund shall be made to the Vestry or Bishop's  
855 Committee at least quarterly and annually to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.  
856 These reports shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current  
857 balance of the Alms Fund.

858 Section H) Like all congregational funds, the Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included

859 in the Annual Audit required by these canons.  
860

861 **Canon 12. Of Deaneries**

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

- 863 i. The Northwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Erie County;
- 864 ii. The Northeast Deanery comprising the Congregations in Warren County, Forest  
865 County and McKean County;
- 866 iii. The Southwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Crawford County, Mercer  
867 County, Lawrence County, Venango County and Foxburg Borough of Clarion  
868 County;
- 869 iv. The Southeast Deanery comprising the congregations in Jefferson County; Elk  
870 County; Cameron County; Clarion County, except for Foxburg Borough; and  
871 Clearfield County, except for Morris Township.

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

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

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

881  
882 **Title III. Of Diocesan Convention**  
883

884 **Canon 1. Of Membership In Convention**

885 **Section A) Clergy Members**

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

892 **Section B) Lay Members**

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

- 905 select Alternate Delegates in the same manner and with the same qualifications as  
906 Delegates. Substitution of an Alternate Delegate for a Lay Member of Convention  
907 must be certified to the Credentials Committee by the priest in charge of that  
908 Congregation. If there is no priest in charge, then a previously certified Lay Member  
909 from that Congregation shall certify the substitution.
- 910 **vi.** All Delegates to Convention shall be certified to the Credentials Committee on the  
911 form provided by the Committee and no later than March first.
- 912 **vii.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to submit the Annual  
913 Parochial Report due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Diocesan  
914 Convention shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention.
- 915 **viii.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to provide evidence,  
916 adequate to the Ecclesiastical Authority, of the Annual Audit required by National  
917 Canon due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Convention shall not be  
918 entitled to vote at that Convention.
- 919 **ix.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to pay the assessment levied  
920 upon that Congregation shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention unless that  
921 Congregation has been granted relief by the Diocesan Council and is current on that  
922 agreement. A Congregation shall be considered to have failed if their assessment is  
923 not paid current through the end of the month that occurs no less than 15 days prior  
924 to the start of any Convention.

925  
926 **Canon 2. Of Officers Of The Convention**

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

929 **i. President**

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

934 **ii. Secretary**

- 935 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
936 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing to be  
937 Secretary of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
938 office, the Secretary is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 939 b. The Secretary shall be responsible to take minutes and to produce a journal of  
940 the proceedings of every Diocesan Convention. This journal shall be available to  
941 the Congregations of the Diocese not more than 120 days after the adjournment  
942 of the Convention.
- 943 c. The Secretary shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Secretary of  
944 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
945 Constitution and these Canons.
- 946 d. The Secretary shall deliver to his successor all papers and materials in his  
947 possession which belong to the Diocese.

948 **iii. Treasurer**

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

- 951 Treasurer of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
952 office, the Treasurer is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 953 b. The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the direction of the Diocesan Council,  
954 for the collection, investment, and distribution of all money and securities due to,  
955 held by, or payable by the Diocese and for the proper accounting thereof. The  
956 Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and  
957 income and expense reports of all funds under the control of the Diocese or its  
958 officers to the Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all  
959 assets and liabilities of the Diocese and the income and expenses of the general  
960 operating funds to every meeting of the Diocesan Council and, as directed by  
961 Diocesan Council, the income and expenses of all other funds under the control  
962 of the Diocese or its officers.
- 963 c. The Treasurer shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Treasurer of  
964 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
965 Constitution and these Canons. The Treasurer and any assistants to the Treasurer  
966 may be bonded with the expense being paid by the Diocese.
- 967 d. The Treasurer shall deliver to her successor all papers and materials in the her  
968 possession which belong to the Diocese.

969 **iv. Chancellor**

- 970 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
971 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing who is  
972 licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be Chancellor  
973 of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office,  
974 the Chancellor is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
- 975 b. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan Council may  
976 elect one or more Vice Chancellors, qualified as above, as may from time to time  
977 appear necessary.
- 978 c. The Chancellors shall function as the solicitor for and the legal advisor to, in the  
979 following order: the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Diocesan  
980 Council, and the Convention of the Diocese.
- 981 d. The Chancellors shall be responsible to see that the Diocese follows and obeys  
982 the National Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and these  
983 Canons. The Chancellor shall interpret the meaning and application of these  
984 Constitutions and Canons. His rulings may be appealed to the Diocesan  
985 Convention or to the National Church as appropriate.
- 986 e. The Chancellors shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Chancellor  
987 of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
988 Constitution and these Canons.
- 989 f. The Chancellors shall deliver to their successors all papers and materials in their  
990 possession which belong to the Diocese.

991  
992 **Canon 3. Of Committees of Convention**

993 **Section A) Credentials**

- 994 i. A Credentials Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
995 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- 996 ii. The Credentials Committee shall consist of one Clergy Member and one Lay

997 Member of Convention.<sup>iv</sup>

998 **iii.** The Credentials Committee shall determine the right of persons to seat, voice, and  
999 vote at Convention and shall recommend to Convention persons to whom the  
1000 Convention should grant seat and voice.

1001 **iv.** Any person denied a seat, voice or vote by the Credentials Committee may appeal  
1002 such denial to the Convention which shall make the final determination by a  
1003 majority vote.

1004 **Section B) Dispatch of Business**

1005 **i.** A Dispatch of Business Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical  
1006 Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1007 **ii.** The Dispatch of Business Committee shall consist of one or more Members of  
1008 Convention.

1009 **iii.** The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of Convention in  
1010 seeing that all the business of Convention is done in an efficient and expeditious  
1011 manner. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of  
1012 Convention in developing an agenda and rules of order for the Convention.

1013 **Section C) Resolutions**

1014 **i.** A Resolution Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1015 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1016 **ii.** The Resolutions Committee shall consist of two Clergy and two Lay Members.<sup>v</sup>

1017 **iii.** The Resolutions Committee shall give due consideration to all resolutions submitted  
1018 to it and shall present all such resolutions to the Diocesan Convention.

1019 **iv.** The Resolutions Committee shall develop any resolutions of courtesy to be  
1020 considered by the Convention.

1021 **v.** The Resolutions Committee shall recommend to Convention a place and date to hold  
1022 the next Annual Diocesan Convention.<sup>vi</sup>

1023 **Section D) Nominations**

1024 **i.** A Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
1025 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.

1026 **ii.** The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.

1027 **iii.** The Nominations Committee shall be responsible to present a ballot with sufficient  
1028 nominees for each office to be filled by Convention.<sup>vii</sup>

1029 **Section E) Judges of Election**

1030 **i.** Judges of Election shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by  
1031 each annual Diocesan Convention.

1032 **ii.** Three Members of Convention shall be elected to be the Judges of Election.

1033 **iii.** The Judges of Election shall oversee the distribution and counting of ballots for each  
1034 election as instructed by the President of the Convention.

1035  
1036 **Canon 4. Of Nominations**

1037 Section A) Any Cleric or Lay Person may, and all are encouraged to, nominate qualified  
1038 persons to fill the various offices to be chosen at each annual Convention.

1039 Section B) The Nominations Committee of Convention shall give notice of the need for  
1040 such nominations and shall set a final date for receiving of the same which shall be not  
1041 less than thirty days prior to Convention. <sup>viii</sup>

1042 Section C) Any person submitting a nomination shall do so on such form provided and give

1043 such information as the Nominations Committee shall determine. Such information shall  
1044 include at least the name and contact information for each nominee; their consent to  
1045 serve if elected; a current digital photograph; and other relevant information.

1046 Section D) A list of all nominees shall be published and distributed to all Delegates at least  
1047 two weeks prior to the meeting of Convention.

1048 Section E) Additional nominations may be made from the floor of Convention. The  
1049 nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee and may present a short  
1050 statement.

1051

### **Canon 5. Of Resolutions**

1052 Section A) Resolutions properly considered by the Convention are those:

1053 **i.** Submitted by a Cleric in Good Standing.

1054 **ii.** Submitted by a Lay Person in Good Standing.

1055 **iii.** Submitted by some Congregation of this Diocese.

1056 **iv.** Submitted by the Diocesan Council.

1057 **v.** Submitted by some other committee mentioned in these Canons.

1058 Section B) All resolutions must bear the name of the individual or organization submitting  
1059 the resolution.

1060 Section C) All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary of Convention at least forty-  
1061 five days prior to any Convention. Resolutions submitted less than forty-five days in  
1062 advance may be considered on a two-thirds vote of the Convention.<sup>ix</sup>

1063 Section D) All resolutions submitted which would amend the Constitution or Canons of this  
1064 Diocese are to be considered by the Constitution and Canons Committee. The  
1065 Constitution and Canons Committee will review the resolution and

1066 **i.** Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter

1067 **ii.** Report the resolution to Convention with:

1068 **a.** A recommendation to adopt the resolution

1069 **b.** A recommendation to defeat the resolution

1070 **c.** A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the  
1071 resolution

1072 Section E) Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by persons  
1073 named in Section A i,ii, or iii of this Canon shall be considered by the Resolutions  
1074 Committee of Convention. The Resolutions Committee will review the resolution and

1075 **i.** Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter

1076 **ii.** Report the resolution to Convention with:

1077 **a.** A recommendation to adopt the resolution

1078 **b.** A recommendation to defeat the resolution

1079 **c.** A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the  
1080 resolution

1081 Section F) Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by Diocesan  
1082 Council or other committees will be reported to Convention by the Diocesan Council or  
1083 the committee and are assumed to have a recommendation that Convention adopt the  
1084 resolution.

1085

1086

### **Title IV. Of Constitutional Committees**

1087

1088

1089 **Canon 1. Of the Standing Committee**

- 1090 Section A) Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one Lay  
1091 Person in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Standing Committee. The  
1092 election shall be done on a vote by orders.
- 1093 Section B) The Standing Committee shall fulfill all duties prescribed for Standing  
1094 Committees in the National Constitution and Canons and in the Constitution of this  
1095 Diocese and in these Canons.
- 1096 Section C) The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a President of the  
1097 Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall elect from their own body a  
1098 Secretary.
- 1099 Section D) Within three months following each annual Diocesan Convention the Standing  
1100 Committee shall appoint a person, licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of  
1101 Pennsylvania, to serve as Church Attorney for a one year term.
- 1102 Section E) The Standing Committee shall meet upon the call of the Bishop and from time to  
1103 time in conformity with their own rules. They shall keep a record of their proceedings.
- 1104 Section F) When a duty is to be performed, or a power exercised, by the Standing  
1105 Committee a majority of the members shall be a quorum and a majority of the quorum  
1106 so convened shall be competent to act, unless the contrary is expressly required by the  
1107 National Constitution or Canons or the Constitution of this Diocese or these Canons.
- 1108 Section G) No member of the Standing Committee shall simultaneously serve as a member  
1109 of the following diocesan bodies:
- 1110 **i.** The Diocesan Council
  - 1111 **ii.** The Ecclesiastical Court
  - 1112 **iii.** The Commission on Ministry
- 1113

1114 **Canon 2. Of the Diocesan Council**

1115 **Section A) Members**

- 1116 **i.** The Bishop Diocesan, the Secretary of Convention, the Treasurer of Convention, and  
1117 the Chancellor of Convention shall have seat, voice, and vote on the Diocesan  
1118 Council.
- 1119 **ii.** The Lay Members of each annual Convention shall elect one Lay Person in Good  
1120 Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat, voice, and  
1121 vote.
- 1122 **iii.** The Priests in Good Standing at each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in  
1123 Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with seat,  
1124 voice, and vote.
- 1125 **iv.** The Deacons in Good Standing at every fourth annual Convention shall elect a  
1126 Deacon in Good Standing to serve a term of four years on the Diocesan Council with  
1127 seat and voice but no vote.

1128 **Section B) Officers**

- 1129 **i.** The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, shall preside at, and be the President of, the  
1130 Diocesan Council. The Secretary of Convention shall be the Secretary of the  
1131 Diocesan Council. The Treasurer of Convention shall be the Treasurer of the  
1132 Diocesan Council. The Chancellor of the Convention shall be the Chancellor of the  
1133 Diocesan Council.
- 1134 **ii.** If there is no Bishop Diocesan, the Diocesan Council shall elect annually one of the

1135 members of Council to be the President of the Diocesan Council.

- 1136 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall elect each year one of the members of the Council to  
1137 serve a one year term as Vice President of the Council.

1138 **Section C) Work of the Diocesan Council**

- 1139 **i.** The Diocesan Council shall oversee the program and priorities of the Diocese and  
1140 make a report thereon to the annual Convention of the Diocese.
- 1141 **ii.** The Diocesan Council shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation known  
1142 as The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.
- 1143 **iii.** The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention a budget  
1144 and schedule of assessments for the ensuing year.
- 1145 **iv.** The Diocesan Council may provide a means of relief to Congregations that are  
1146 having difficulty paying their assessment.
- 1147 **v.** The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention  
1148 minimum stipends and allowances for Clergy serving in the Diocese.

1149 **Section D) Committees**

- 1150 **i.** Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary to carry out  
1151 its work.
- 1152 **ii.** All committees shall have a definite term of existence and a stated purpose  
1153 determined by the council.
- 1154 **iii.** Committees shall consist of at least one member of Diocesan Council and such other  
1155 persons as Council may decide. These additional persons shall have seat, voice and  
1156 vote only as to the business of the committee. The member of Council on each  
1157 committee shall serve as liaison between the committee and Council.
- 1158 **iv.** The member of Council shall call the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter  
1159 each committee may effect its own organization provided that a quorum for the  
1160 transaction of business shall consist of a majority of all members of the committee.

1161 **Section E) Meetings**

- 1162 **i.** The Diocesan Council shall meet on a regular basis and at least once per calendar  
1163 quarter.
- 1164 **ii.** Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or Vice President of  
1165 the Council.
- 1166 **iii.** A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for the  
1167 transaction of business.

1168 **Section F) Indemnification**

- 1169 **i.** No member of Diocesan Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
1170 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
- 1171 **a.** said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed  
1172 by these canons, and
- 1173 **b.** the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, wilful misconduct or  
1174 recklessness.
- 1175 **c.** The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of  
1176 said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes pursuant  
1177 to local, state, or federal law.
- 1178 **ii.** The Diocese shall indemnify any Council member and may indemnify any other  
1179 employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or  
1180 who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed

1181 action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative,  
1182 including any action by or on behalf of the Diocese by reason of the fact that she is  
1183 or was a member of Council, employee, or agent of the Diocese, against expenses,  
1184 including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually  
1185 and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding  
1186 unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is  
1187 determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With  
1188 respect to any such action, the Diocese may participate therein at its own expense;  
1189 and the Diocese shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel  
1190 selected by the Diocese to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being  
1191 indemnified. After notice from the Diocese to such person of its election to assume  
1192 the defense thereof, the Diocese shall not be liable to such person for any legal or  
1193 other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense  
1194 thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action,  
1195 but the fees and expenses of such Counsel incurred after a notice from the Diocese  
1196 of its assumption of the defense thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
1197

1198 **Canon 3. Of the Constitution and Canons Committee**

1199 Section A) Each annual Convention shall elect one Priest in Good Standing and one Lay  
1200 Person in good standing to serve terms of three years on the Constitution and Canons  
1201 Committee.

1202 Section B) The Bishop Diocesan and a Chancellor of the Diocese shall be members ex-  
1203 officio of the Constitution and Canons Committee but shall not be counted in the  
1204 determination of a quorum.

1205 Section C) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall effect its own organization.

1206 Section D) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review and report to Convention  
1207 on all proposals to amend the Constitution or Canons of this Diocese.

1208 Section E) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review these Canons during the  
1209 year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and  
1210 propose such amendments to these Canons as they deem necessary or advisable.  
1211

1212 **Canon 4. Of the Commission On Ministry**

1213 Section A) Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority each annual Convention shall  
1214 elect nine persons to serve one year terms on the Commission On Ministry. These  
1215 persons may be any Cleric in Good Standing or Lay Person in Good Standing.

1216 Section B) The chair of the Commission shall be appointed from among its members by the  
1217 Ecclesiastical Authority.

1218 Section C) The Commission shall effect its own organization.

1219 Section D) The Commission shall faithfully fulfill all duties laid upon such Commissions by  
1220 the Nation Constitution and Canons and by the Constitution of this Diocese and by  
1221 these Canons.

1222 Section E) Additional persons may be co-opted by the Commission from time to time  
1223 because of their expertise or special knowledge. Any such co-opted members are given  
1224 seat and voice at meetings of the Commission but do not have a vote on Commission  
1225 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<sup>x</sup> (note a new Canon 6 takes effect July1, 2011 (see footnote) this current Canon 6 remains in effect through June 30, 2011)**

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.

Section C) Vacancies occurring within the membership of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall be filled by majority vote of the remaining members of the Court. Persons elected to fill a vacancy must be from the same order as the person they replace. Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy unless sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.

Section D) Within two months following each annual Diocesan Convention the members of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall elect from among themselves by majority vote one person to serve as Presiding Judge for a one year term.

Section E) Charges for which a Cleric may be made to stand trial are contained in the National Canons.

Section F) The mode and manner of making charges, securing presentments, and of conducting trials shall be as established in the national Canons.

Section G) The powers, duties and procedures of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court and the definition of terms used herein shall be governed by Title IV of the National Canons.

Section H) The Standing Committee shall serve as the Review Committee.

**Title V. Miscellaneous**

**Canon 1. Of Special Offerings**

**Section A) Bishops' Alms Fund**

- i. The Diocese shall have a special monetary fund called the Bishops' Alms Fund.
- ii. The purpose of the Bishops' Alms Fund is to care for the poor and needy and to provide scholarships to seminaries, church related camps, conferences, and events.
- iii. The Bishops' Alms Fund shall be funded by:
  - a. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and
  - b. Regular contributions:
    - by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the diocese or
    - by the loose offering taken at all services when a Bishop visits a Congregation.
- iv. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall be the Almoner who shall oversee and distribute these funds for appropriate purposes.

- 1273 v. The Bishops' Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or  
1274 personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.  
1275 vi. Records of the income and expenses of the Bishops' Alms Fund are confidential but  
1276 not secret.  
1277 vii. Reports on the usage of the Bishops' Alms Fund shall be made to the Diocesan  
1278 Council at least quarterly and annually to the Diocesan Convention. These reports  
1279 shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current balance of the  
1280 Bishops' Alms Fund.  
1281 viii. Like all funds, the Bishops' Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included in the  
1282 Annual Audit required by these canons.  
1283

1284 **Canon 2. Of the Historiographer**

- 1285 Section A) The Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Historiographer at each annual  
1286 Convention who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.  
1287 Section B) The Historiographer shall have charge of all documents belonging to the Diocese  
1288 which relate to its history or that of any Congregation of the Diocese, of the Journals of  
1289 all Conventions of this Diocese, and of all books and papers committed to him by the  
1290 Convention or Ecclesiastical Authority.  
1291 Section C) In the event of the dissolution of a Congregation of this Diocese, the books,  
1292 records, and historical information of that Congregation shall be delivered into the  
1293 custody of the Historiographer.  
1294 Section D) All books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, held by the  
1295 Historiographer shall be kept in good condition and in such place as designated by the  
1296 Diocesan Council.  
1297 Section E) The Historiographer shall issue proper certificates based upon the records in his  
1298 charge  
1299 Section F) Subject to the exclusions provided in the Canons, all books, papers and  
1300 documents, in whatever form they may exist, shall be open to the inspection of the  
1301 Bishop Diocesan, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and  
1302 any committee of the Convention.  
1303

1304 **Canon 3. Of the Cathedral**

- 1305 Section A) The Parish church of St. Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania is hereby designated as the  
1306 Cathedral of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.  
1307 Section B) Governance of the Cathedral<sup>xi</sup>  
1308 i. The Cathedral shall be governed by a Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws not in  
1309 conflict with the National Constitution and Canons, the Constitution of this Diocese  
1310 or these Canons.  
1311 ii. Amendments may be made to the Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws in the  
1312 following manner:  
1313 a. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority and the  
1314 Standing Committee for their advice and consent.  
1315 b. Consent of both the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Standing Committee having  
1316 been received, the proposed amendment shall be submitted to a meeting of the  
1317 Cathedral Congregation. A majority of two thirds of those present shall be  
1318 required to adopt the amendment.

1319 Section C) The Cathedral Congregation shall be entitled to representation in the Convention  
1320 of this Diocese in accordance with the Canon on Membership in Convention.  
1321

1322 **Canon 4. Of The Election Of A Bishop**

1323 Section A) On the call by the Bishop Diocesan for the election of a successor, or of a Bishop  
1324 Co-Adjutor or of a Bishop Suffragan or upon the death, resignation, or permanent  
1325 disability of the Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee shall appoint nine persons to  
1326 serve as a Search Committee and the Diocesan Council shall appoint nine persons to  
1327 serve as a Transition Committee. The persons appointed to these committees may be any  
1328 Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing.

1329 Section B) The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate  
1330 to the electing Convention three to five persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.

1331 i. There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.

1332 ii. Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three  
1333 Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written  
1334 petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.

1335 iii. All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the  
1336 National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese and by these  
1337 Canons.

1338 Section C) The Transition Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary for the consecration,  
1339 welcome, and transition to a new Bishop.  
1340

1341 **Canon 5. Of The Election Of Deputies To The General Convention**

1342 Section A) The annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated  
1343 meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay  
1344 Members voting separately, four Priests in Good Standing and four Confirmed Adult  
1345 Lay Persons in Good Standing to be Deputies to the General Convention.

1346 Section B) After the election of Deputies as prescribed in Section A, additional ballots shall  
1347 be taken, with the Clergy and Lay members voting separately, to elect four Priests and  
1348 four Lay Persons, qualified as above, from among the remaining nominees to be  
1349 Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.  
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1351 **Canon 6. Of The Election Of Deputies To The Provincial Synod**

1352 Section A) The Annual Convention following each triennial meeting of The General  
1353 Convention of The Episcopal Church shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay Members voting  
1354 separately, one Priest in Good Standing and two Confirmed Adult Lay Persons in Good  
1355 Standing to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

1356 Section B) After the election of Deputies as prescribed in section a, an additional ballot shall  
1357 be taken, with the Clergy and Lay Members voting together, to elect and rank those  
1358 remaining nominees to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod.  
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- i Convention 2010 adopted Section vii and following in order to clarify the previous version of the canon and to provide for a nominating process.
- ii Convention 2009 added “Priest-in-Charge” to make clear that a Priest-in-Charge is the president of the Corporation and presiding officer.
- iii “Deliberately destroyed” was added by Convention 2010
- iv Convention 2010 changed the number of members for the Credentials Committee from three clergy and three lay members to one from each order.
- v 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.
- vi Convention 2010 did away with a separate Site of the Next Convention Committee and gave this responsibility to the Resolutions Committee.
- vii 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.
- viii 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
- ix Convention 2009 changed the deadline for resolutions from 60 days to 45 before the meeting of convention.
- x 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 new Canon 6 takes effect July 1, 2011 and follows here:

**Canon 6. Of The Ecclesiastical Court**

**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.
- ii. In accordance with the National Canons the Ecclesiastical Court in this diocese shall be known as the Disciplinary Board.
- iii. 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 none of whom may be members of the Standing Committee.
- 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

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30 replace and meet the same requirements.

- 31 **iii.** Vacancies must be filled within three months of notification of the vacancy unless  
32 sooner required by other provisions of National or Diocesan canons.
- 33 **iv.** Persons elected to fill vacancies, other than pursuant to a challenge as provided  
34 below, shall serve out the unexpired term of the person they replace.
- 35 **v.** With respect to a vacancy resulting from a challenge, the replacement member of the  
36 Board shall serve only for the proceedings for which the elected Board member is  
37 not serving as a result of the challenge.

38 **Section D) Preserving Impartiality**

- 39 **i.** In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or  
40 Hearing Panel of the Board shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or  
41 undue bias, that member shall immediately notify the President of the Board and  
42 request a replacement member of the Panel.
- 43 **ii.** Respondent's Counsel and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge any  
44 member of a Panel for conflict of interest or undue bias by motion to the Panel for  
45 disqualification of the challenged member. The members of the Panel not the  
46 subjects of the challenge shall promptly consider the motion and determine whether  
47 the challenged Panel member shall be disqualified from participating in that  
48 proceeding.

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

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

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

59 **Section H) Church Attorney:** The Bishop, in consultation with the Standing Committee,  
60 shall appoint each year an attorney to serve as Church Attorney. The person so appointed  
61 must be a duly licensed attorney but need not reside within the diocese.

62 **Section I) Advisors:**

- 63 **i.** In each proceeding under this Canon, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor for the  
64 Complainant and an Advisor for the Respondent. The Complainant and the  
65 Respondent have the right to reject these Advisors and to name other persons as  
66 Advisors. Persons serving as Advisors shall hold no other appointed or elected  
67 position provided for under this Canon, and shall not include Chancellors or vice  
68 chancellors of this or any other diocese or any person likely to be called as a witness  
69 in the proceeding.
- 70 **ii.** **WARNING TO RESPONDENTS:** no Advisor, Panel, or other officer named in this  
71 canon has yet been granted confidentiality by the civil authorities. Anything told to  
72 such a person or panel may be used against you in a civil court. Only your licensed  
73 attorney and your confessor have such immunity.

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

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

79 Section L) **Costs:** The reasonable costs and expenses of the Board, Intake Officer(s),  
80 Investigator, Church Attorney, Advisors appointed by the Bishop, Clerk and those  
81 providing pastoral care as directed by the Bishop shall be the obligation of the Diocese.

82 **Section M) Records of Proceedings**

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

85 ii. Records of all proceedings under this Canon shall be permanently preserved in the  
86 archives of the diocese and in the Archives of the Episcopal Church as prescribed in  
87 Title IV of the National Canons.

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xi 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.