

# **CANONS OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF CONNECTICUT**

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## **CANON I -THE ORGANIZATION AND CONDUCT OF PARISHES, AND OF THEIR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

Section 1. A) Parishes may be constituted by the Bishop Diocesan, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee on the written application of not less than ten baptized adult persons. If the application seeks to form a new Parish in any town or city wherein a Parish or Parishes already exist, the Bishop Diocesan shall notify the Rector and Vestry of each such Parish or Parishes of such application.

B) The site of any existing Church or Chapel shall not be changed by any Parish or Worshiping Community without the approval of the Bishop Diocesan, acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee. The Bishop Diocesan shall notify the Rector and Vestry of any other Parish or Parishes considered affected by the proposed change.

Section 2. When permission to form a new Parish has been granted, the Standing Committee shall transmit to the applicants with the certificate of permission (1) a form of organizing the Parish, (2) a form of recording the action of the first meeting of such Parish, and (3) a form of application for admission into union with the Convention of the Diocese of Connecticut. The act of organization, executed in accordance with form (1), shall be entered in full upon the records of the Parish, and attested by the Clerk as the original act, or a true copy thereof, as the case may be. The three forms above named shall be in substance as follows:

A) We the subscribers, baptized persons in the state of Connecticut, do hereby unite to form and do hereby form ourselves and our successors into an

Section 11. A) The Bishops shall make available to the Parishes of our Diocese a system of support and accountability to encourage and enable the development of their life and ministry. Specific provisions shall be made to assist parishes not served by full-time clergy, or unable to meet financial obligations. Such assistance may be in the form of financial subsidy included in the Budget of Convention, pastoral intervention or regional co-operative ministry teams that will work with Parishes whose contributions to the Diocesan Convention's Budget fall below 10% of the Parish's total operating revenues. Such Parishes shall work with Diocesan leadership within a system of accountability and support in close relationship with the Bishops' Office with special emphasis on the development of their life and ministry.

B) ~~If a Parish fails to contribute 10% of its total operating revenues to the Diocesan Convention's Budget for two consecutive fiscal years, the Bishop may declare it an "aided parish" exercising full authority over its day-to-day administrative, financial and spiritual life.~~ If a Parish's or Worshiping Community's cumulative draw on its endowment(s) over a three-year period exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) of the average net asset value of its endowment(s) during the withdrawal period, ~~beginning in Fiscal Year 2016, excepting parishes currently expecting to call a rector in 2016, such parishes will begin in Fiscal Year 2017, the Bishop may or~~ if a Parish fails to contribute 10% of its total operating revenues to the Diocesan Convention's Budget for two consecutive fiscal years, the Bishops may, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee and upon the recommendation of the Mission Council, (i) require that the Parish or Worshiping Community place its entire endowment-(s) in a fund to be managed for its sole benefit in the Donations & Bequests for Church Purposes investment program, from which withdrawals would be limited to a sustainable disbursement rate, ~~absent approval of the Standing Committee and the Bishop, and and/or~~ (ii) declare the Parish or Worshiping Community an "aided parish," ~~exercising full authority over its day-to-day administrative, financial, and spiritual life~~ to be unsustainable.

C) Where, in the judgment of the Bishops, any such Parish shall fail to fulfill the obligations set forth in these Canons, the Bishops may, ~~upon the recommendation of the Mission Council,~~ with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee and upon the recommendation of the Mission Council, terminate the existence of any such Parish after due notification of such intent at least six (6) months prior to such termination. Such notification shall also set forth the right of such Parish to appear before the Standing Committee and Mission Council prior to termination.

Section 12. Any Parish desiring to terminate or to suspend its parochial organization, may do so by vote of two-thirds of the adult communicants in good standing entitled to vote present at a Parish meeting legally warned for that purpose, with the approval of and under such conditions as shall be required by the Bishop Diocesan and Standing Committee provided that such conditions shall include the valid transfer by the Parish to the Diocese of Connecticut of all right, title and interest of such Parish to all property, real and personal, theretofore owned or controlled by it, and the valid and effective succession of the Diocese to all fiduciary rights and obligations of such Parish.

Section 13. Two or more Parishes may merge into a single Parish with the approval of, and in such manner and under such conditions as shall be required by the Bishops and Standing Committee, and ratified by the Annual Convention. The resulting parish shall be a single

Section 2. At each annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention, Clerical and Lay Members of the Cathedral Chapter shall be chosen to serve in accordance with the Constitution of the Cathedral.

## CANON VII – MISSION COUNCIL

Section 1. The Mission Council of the Diocese shall be composed of:

A) Two members, one clerical and one lay, determined by each Region, each to serve a three-year term;

B) Nine members, clerical or lay, from Ministry Networks, elected by Convention upon the nomination of the Bishop, each to serve a three-year term; the Bishop shall nominate candidates for election from Ministry Networks equal to at least twice the number of positions to be filled by election of Convention;

C) The Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, and the Bishops Suffragan, if there be any, *ex officio*, who shall preside in that order at meetings of the Mission Council;

D) The Treasurer of the Diocese, the Assistant Treasurer of the Diocese, if there be one, the Secretary of the Diocese, the Secretary of Convention, and the Chancellor of the Diocese, *ex officio*.

Section 2. The members of the Mission Council, except those serving *ex officio*, shall be organized into three classes of as equal number as possible, the election of which shall be staggered. Members of the Mission Council shall be adult members of the Church, as defined by the Canons. Terms of members of the Mission Council shall start on January 1 of the year following their election. Members who have served a full term on the Mission Council may be elected to one additional term. The Mission Council shall have the authority to fill vacancies in its membership for the period remaining until the next Annual Convention upon the nomination by the Bishop.

Section 3. The Mission Council shall exercise the full power and authority of the Convention between its sessions except in relation to amendments to the Constitution and Canons, the adoption of the Budget of Convention, the admission of new parishes, or such other matters as may be reserved by Constitution or Canon to the Annual Convention, or the Bishops, or the Standing Committee, or when any such action would be inconsistent with any action or directives of the Convention.

Section 4. The Mission Council shall have the power to adopt such bylaws, rules, and regulations as may be necessary for its own government, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut. The Mission Council shall hold stated meetings, and shall make and preserve a full record of all its acts.

Section 5. The Mission Council shall constitute a Finance Committee and may constitute from time to time such other committees as it deems advisable, and may appoint persons