Episcopal Elections

Submitted by: Faith & Order Commission

RESOLVED, that the 234th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut adopt the revisions to the Canons set forth in Appendix A to this resolution, to be effective upon November 1, 2018.

Explanation

Article II of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church requires that each Diocesan Convention prescribe rules for choosing Bishops. ECCT’s current process for electing bishops, adopted in 1980, has become obsolete due to other canonical changes. Accordingly, our Convention directed the Faith & Order Commission to study alternatives, identify a process faithful to TREC-CT, and propose canonical changes necessary to implement a new process for electing bishops. The Canons proposed for adoption in this resolution respond to Convention’s direction.

How does this resolution further God’s mission of restoration and reconciliation with all creation?

The proposed Canons allow ECCT to continue living into our new life together by adopting processes for selecting bishops that are consistent with TREC-CT.

Requirements to Implement:

The proposed Canons are not anticipated to impose any incremental cost on ECCT.
Appendix A

Canon XV - Bishop Transition Process

Section 1. When a vacancy in the office of Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Suffragan exists or is anticipated, the Standing Committee shall issue a notice to ECCT and the office of the Presiding Bishop:

A. Announcing that a vacancy in the office of Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Suffragan exists or is anticipated;

B. Requesting that the steps required by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church for an episcopal election be undertaken;

C. Calling for a special convention for an episcopal election or for an episcopal election at a future regularly scheduled convention, upon completion of the steps required by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church for an episcopal election;

D. Calling for the formation of a Bishop Transition Committee ("BTC"), and setting a date by which the BTC shall be elected.

Section 2. The BTC shall consist of twenty-four (24) members who are adult communicants in good standing or clergy in good standing canonically resident in ECCT, selected as follows:

A. Twelve (12) members selected by the Regions, with each Region selecting one (1) lay person who is a member of a Parish or Worshiping Community in the Region, and one (1) clergy person living or working in the Region;

B. Twelve (12) members selected by the Mission Council from a pool of twenty-four (24) lay or clergy persons nominated by the Standing Committee, giving priority to members of ECCT Ministry Networks; the resulting group of 12 shall include at least four lay persons and at least four clergy persons.

Section 3. The Mission Council shall propose an interim budget for costs associated with the episcopal transition process until the next Budget of Convention is adopted by
a Convention of ECCT, which shall be ratified by the Standing Committee ("BTC Budget").

Section 4. The BTC shall convene for the first time at the call of the President of the Standing Committee. Once convened, the BTC shall:

A. Adopt such rules and procedures for its operation as it deems prudent;
B. Organize itself into such subcommittees as it may believe necessary and appropriate;
C. Determine appropriate leadership (e.g. BTC leadership, subcommittee chairpersons, etc.), as it believes necessary and appropriate;
D. Engage such consultants, chaplains, or professionals to assist it in its work as it feels essential;
E. Follow the call of the Holy Spirit in:
   i. Creating a profile of ECCT;
   ii. Identifying suitable candidates, including conducting complete and comprehensive background checks;
   iii. Providing particular support and encouragement to minority candidates;
   iv. Affording the Bishop Diocesan the opportunity to interview candidates for Bishop Suffragan and consulting with the Bishop Diocesan before selecting nominees from among the candidates for Bishop Suffragan;
   v. Choosing nominees ("Committee Nominees") from among the candidates;
   vi. Facilitating opportunities for ECCT to learn about and to meet the Committee Nominees and any Petition Nominees (as described below), and for all of those nominees to learn about and to meet members of ECCT;
   vii. Providing emotional and spiritual support to the current bishop or bishops, the candidates, the Committee Nominees, the Petition Nominees, if any, the Bishop-Elect, and their respective families, and ECCT staff;
viii. Assisting with the consecration or installation of the Bishop-Elect; and

ix. Assisting with the transition between bishops;

F. Take full advantage of existing administrative and professional resources of ECCT, including accounts payable, legal counsel, communications, human resources, and other capacities existing within ECCT, to avoid unnecessary expense in the transition process and to complete its work within the BTC Budget.

Section 5. When ready, the BTC shall announce the Committee Nominees to the public in a manner reasonably calculated to inform both ECCT and The Episcopal Church of their identities. When the BTC issues this notice, it shall also provide the notice to the Secretary of the Diocese.

Section 6. After BTC notifies the Secretary of the Diocese of the identities of the Committee Nominees, additional candidates (“Petition Candidates”) may be proposed by petition to the BTC, as follows:

A. Petition Candidates may be proposed only by lay or clerical delegates to Convention;

B. A Petition Candidate must be proposed in writing, using a form made available by the BTC, signed by not less than ten (10) clergy delegates resident in at least four (4) different Regions, and by not less than ten (10) lay delegates resident in at least four (4) different Regions;

C. A delegate to convention may not propose more than one Petition Candidate;

D. Each proposal of a Petition Candidate shall include a written consent to the proposal signed by the Candidate;

E. Proposals of Petition Candidates will be accepted by the Secretary of the Diocese for a period of ten (10) calendar days after the BTC notifies the Secretary of the Diocese of the identities of the Committee Nominees;

F. The BTC shall screen each Petition Candidate in the manner that it screened the Committee Nominees;
G. If the BTC concludes that one or more of the Petition Candidates satisfies the canonical requirements for election and has satisfied the screening process applied to all Committee Nominees, the BTC shall certify those Petition Candidates as “Petition Nominees.”

Section 7. At the conclusion of the period for submission of Petition Candidates, if no proposals of Petition Candidates have been submitted to the BTC, or at the conclusion of the screening process required with respect to each Petition Candidate, and in all cases in a time sufficient to allow for the orderly introduction of Committee Nominees and any Petition Nominees to ECCT, the BTC shall submit the Committee Nominees and the Petition Nominees, if any, to the Secretary of Convention as the final slate of nominees for election.

Section 8. The Election Convention shall proceed in accordance with rules of order adopted at the Convention, provided:

A. The Ecclesiastical Authority or its delegate shall preside over the Convention;

B. Nominations for election to the office of bishop may not be made from the floor;

C. Nominations for election may be withdrawn only by the nominee;

D. Nominations speeches will not be permitted.