

# CONSTITUTION OF THE DIOCESE OF CONNECTICUT

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### Preamble

The Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut, historically and again today known as the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, consists of every member of every Episcopal Parish and Worshiping Community in our State. Together, we convene as a missionary society to participate ever more fully in God's mission of restoration and reconciliation, to employ faithfully the resources with which we are continually blessed, to promote solutions to challenges shared across our State, our Nation and the world, to foster our lives as disciples and apostles of Christ, and to enrich our common worship.

### Article I. Diocese

The Diocese of Connecticut, coextensive with the boundaries of the State of Connecticut, as a constituent part of the body known as the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, accedes to, recognizes and adopts the Constitution of that Church, and acknowledges its authority accordingly. The Diocese of Connecticut may be known by its historical name, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.

### Article II. Convention

Section 1. There shall be a Convention of the Diocese at least once a year at such place and time as established by the Mission Council of the Diocese.

Section 2. A Special Convention may be called by the Bishop Diocesan or by the Ecclesiastical Authority or by a two-thirds vote of the Standing Committee.

Section 3. A Convention To Elect a Bishop shall be called and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the canons of this Diocese concerning the Election of a Bishop.

Section 4. A) The Members of Convention are: the Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, Suffragan Bishop or Bishops, if any, the Chancellor of the Diocese, the Treasurer of the Diocese, the Secretary of the Diocese, the Secretary of Convention, the clerical members, and the

lay members. The clerical members of the Convention shall be all clergy canonically resident in this Diocese and not under discipline.

B) Those clergy canonically resident in the Diocese who miss two successive Annual Conventions without being excused by the Ecclesiastical Authority shall lose their right to seat and vote in successive Annual Conventions until they obtain permission from the Ecclesiastical Authority or its delegate to return.

C) The lay members to any Convention shall be the delegates elected by the Cathedral Congregation, Parishes, as well as any Worshiping Community with the permission of the Bishops and the Standing Committee. Each shall elect, from the adult communicants in good standing of the same, two lay delegates to the Convention. In the case of a vacancy, the governing body of that community shall have the authority to appoint a replacement. Lay members of the Mission Council and of the Standing Committee, current elected lay Deputies and lay Alternate Deputies to General Convention, and the lay Delegate to the Provincial Synod shall be *ex officio* members of the Convention unless they be otherwise delegates from their respective Parish or Worshiping Communities. All duly elected lay members of Convention who are not serving on the Vestry or Council of Advice of their respective Parish or Worshiping Community, shall become, upon their election, *ex officio* members of the Vestry or Council of Advice with voice but without vote.

Section 5. The President of any Convention shall be the Bishop Diocesan, or in the case of that person's absence, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there is one, or the Bishops Suffragan by seniority of their consecration, if there be any. In the absence of the Bishops, the President of the Standing Committee shall serve as President of Convention.

Section 6. One-third of all the voting clerical members of the Convention and one-third of all lay delegates shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a smaller number may adjourn.

Section 7. The Bishops shall nominate a Secretary of the Diocese, a Secretary of Convention and a Treasurer who shall be elected by the Convention, to hold office until a successor has been elected at an Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall present a report to each Annual Convention. In case of a vacancy in the offices of the Secretaries or of the Treasurer, the Bishops shall have the power to fill such vacancy until the meeting of the next Annual Convention.

Section 8. The clerical and the lay members of a Convention shall sit and deliberate in one body; and every question, unless it be otherwise provided in this Constitution, shall be decided by a majority of the voting members present; provided, however, that in any case when it is requested by five members, the two orders shall vote separately, and a concurrence of the two orders shall determine the vote of the Convention.

### Article III. Ecclesiastical Authority

Section 1. The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall be the Bishop Diocesan. In the event of the death, disability, or absence of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, Bishops Suffragan in order of Consecration, if there be any, shall become the Ecclesiastical

Authority. In the absence of all the Bishops, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority.

Section 2. There shall be a Nomination Committee for the election of a Bishop, as established by the Annual Convention. The election of a Bishop shall be in the following manner: the two orders, each voting separately, shall vote for some fit and qualified person for the office of Bishop. A concurrent majority of both orders present and voting shall be necessary to elect a Bishop. If in either order less than three-fifths of all entitled to vote are present, two-thirds of the votes in that order shall be necessary to determine the election by that order.

#### Article IV. The Standing Committee

The Standing Committee shall serve as a council of advice to the Bishops and will be constituted according to the Canons.

#### Article V. Mission Council of the Diocese of Connecticut

The Mission Council shall be a representative body of clerical and lay members of the Diocese which may exercise the full power and authority of the Diocese between sessions of the Diocesan Convention except in such other matters as may be reserved by Constitution or Canon to the Diocesan Convention, to the Bishops, to the Standing Committee, or when any such action would be inconsistent with any action or directives of the Diocesan Convention. The Mission Council shall be constituted according to the Canons of this Diocese.

#### Article VI. Provincial Synod and General Convention

Deputies and Alternate Deputies from this Diocese to the General Convention and the Provincial Synod shall be elected at an Annual Convention in a manner that the Diocesan Convention may determine; the Deputies thus elected shall continue in office for three years.

#### Article VII. Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution must be adopted by two-thirds of the members present and voting at two successive Annual Conventions.