

1     **Title I. General Provisions**

2     **Canon 1. Definition of terms**

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

4     **Section A)** "Church" means The Episcopal Church.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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35    **Canon 2.** Words in the singular number include the plural and in the plural number include the  
36         singular.

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

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

43  
44    **Canon 1. Of Congregations**

45    **Section A)** A Congregation is a group of persons united for the purpose of carrying out the

48 mission of the Church, which includes acknowledging the holiness of God, hearing  
49 God's word, offering prayer and worship, celebrating the sacraments and working,  
50 praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

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

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

59 **Section D)** A Parish is a Congregation which is totally financially self-supporting and has at  
60 least 50 adult Communicants In Good Standing and has been granted Parish status by  
61 the Diocesan Convention. A Parish also maintains a place of worship, provides an  
62 adequate living for a full time priest equivalent to or exceeding the minimum salary and  
63 benefits currently required by the Diocese, remains current in payment of its assessment,  
64 and pays all its own operating expenses. Two or more Congregations may form a single  
65 Parish with the approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Convention.

66

## 67 **Canon 2. Of The Organizing Of Missions**

68 **Section A)** A Congregation which seeks to become a Mission shall make written application  
69 to the Bishop, over the signatures of at least ten adult persons who propose to be  
70 members thereof. This application must be on the form provided by the Bishop and must  
71 include a statement that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and  
72 recognizes the authority over them of the National and Diocesan Constitutions and  
73 Canons.

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

77 **Section C)** When a Congregation shall have given notice to the Bishop of its intention to  
78 apply for admission into union with the convention as a Mission, has presented to the  
79 Diocesan Convention a certificate from the Bishop approving such application, and also  
80 a certificate from the Bishop showing that it has ten or more adult Communicants In  
81 Good Standing, it may be admitted into union with the Convention by a majority vote of  
82 the Diocesan Convention. When thus admitted, it shall be entitled to representation in  
83 the Diocesan Convention.

84 **Section D)** The title to real estate given to or purchased for a Mission shall be vested in The  
85 Diocese Of Northwestern Pennsylvania and all trust funds, endowments, or  
86 undesignated bequests secured for the benefit of the Mission shall be deposited with the  
87 Treasurer Of The Convention.

88

## 89 **Canon 3. Of The Organizing Of Parishes**

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

92 **i.** the Congregation has at least fifty adult Communicants in Good Standing;

- 93           ii. the Congregation has supported itself financially, including a full time priest, for
- 94           three consecutive years;
- 95           iii. that the Congregation accedes to, will be governed by, and recognizes the authority
- 96           over them of the National and Diocesan Constitution and Canons;
- 97           iv. evidence that the Congregation will be able to continue to be self-supporting and to
- 98           pay the diocesan assessment and the minimum salary and benefits of a full time
- 99           Rector
- 100          v. a certificate from the Ecclesiastical Authority approving the application of the
- 101          Congregation.

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

105       **Section C)** A majority vote of the Convention shall change the status of the Congregation to  
106       Parish.

#### 107       **Canon 4. Of the Governance of Missions**

109       **Section A)** The government of a Mission is in the Ecclesiastical Authority, which may  
110       appoint as its representative a priest to be Vicar of the Mission who shall conform to the  
111       instruction of the Ecclesiastical Authority and be responsible to it. The Bishop shall be  
112       the Rector of all Missions, and the Vicar of each Mission shall make such reports as  
113       required by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

#### 114       **Section B) Annual Meetings**

- 115          i. In every Mission an Annual Meeting shall be held in January or at such other time as
- 116          the Ecclesiastical Authority may designate. Public notice of the same shall be given
- 117          at all the services on the two preceding weekends.
- 118          ii. The Annual Meeting shall be presided over by the Vicar, or if the office be vacant, or
- 119          if the Vicar be absent, by the Bishop's Warden. When the Annual Meeting is called
- 120          to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 121          iii. Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Mission who are physically present, who are at
- 122          least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,
- 123          and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the
- 124          support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as
- 125          shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all meetings of the
- 126          Mission.
- 127          iv. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Congregation at the same
- 128          time.
- 129          v. The Mission may nominate to the Ecclesiastical Authority not less than five nor
- 130          more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing to be appointed as the
- 131          Bishop's Committee. The length of one term of office for members of the Bishop's
- 132          Committee shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,
- 133          nominated each year at the Annual Meeting of the Mission.

#### 134       **Section C) Of Special Mission Meetings**

- 135          i. A Special Mission Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the
- 136          Ecclesiastical Authority. Such order shall specify the time and place of such meeting
- 137          and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall be considered

- 138 other than that specified in the call.  
139 **ii.** Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
140 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
141 meeting and the business to be considered.  
142 **iii.** The Bishop shall preside over such meeting. At the request of the Ecclesiastical  
143 Authority, the Vicar may preside. At the request of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the  
144 Bishop's Warden may preside.

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

- 146 **i.** A Bishop's Committee may be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to assist the  
147 Ecclesiastical Authority in governing the Mission. The Bishop's Committee shall  
148 manage and be responsible for the property and material affairs of the Mission in  
149 accordance with directions from the Ecclesiastical Authority.  
150 **ii.** In accordance with the canon "Of Membership in Convention" the Bishop's  
151 Committee shall annually select delegates to represent the Mission at meetings of the  
152 Diocesan Convention.  
153 **iii.** The Vicar, if there is one, shall preside at all meetings of the Bishop's Committee. In  
154 the absence of a Vicar, the Bishop's Warden shall preside.  
155 **iv.** The Lay Officers of a Mission shall consist of the Bishop's Warden, Property  
156 Warden, Clerk, and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing  
157 of the Mission and at least 18 years of age.  
158 **v.** The Bishop's Warden and Property Warden shall be appointed annually by the  
159 Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.  
160 **vi.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Mission are met and that  
161 the buildings belonging to the Mission are kept in good repair and are adequately  
162 insured. Under the Vicar, they shall see that all things needed for the orderly worship  
163 of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments are provided. They shall  
164 prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the absence of a Vicar, they  
165 shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the  
166 continuance of the services.  
167 **vii.** A Clerk shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members  
168 of the Bishop's Committee to serve until a successor is appointed. The Clerk shall be  
169 responsible to see that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special Mission Meetings  
170 and of all meetings of the Bishop's Committee and shall attest to the same in the  
171 book of Minutes of the Bishop's Committee, shall maintain in the said book the  
172 annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Mission, shall keep all original  
173 documents, and the list of voters provided for by these Canons. The Clerk shall turn  
174 over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that belong to the  
175 Mission.  
176 **viii.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be appointed annually by  
177 the Ecclesiastical Authority from among the members of the Bishop's Committee.  
178 Under the authority of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Bishop's Committee, the  
179 Treasurer shall be responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds  
180 of the Mission and to present a report on the same to each meeting of the Bishop's  
181 Committee. Previous to the Annual Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the  
182 Ecclesiastical Authority and to the Bishop's Committee a full and accurate statement

- 183 of the financial condition of the Mission. This statement shall also be read at the  
184 Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Ecclesiastical  
185 Authority shall require, but the cost of such bond shall be borne by the Mission. The  
186 Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all books, documents, and funds in her  
187 possession that belong to the Mission.
- 188 ix. Regular meetings of the Bishop's Committee shall be held at least quarterly.
  - 189 x. Special meetings of the Bishop's Committee may be called at any time at the request  
190 of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

191  
192 **Canon 5. Of the Governance of Parishes**

193 **Section A)** This Canon supersedes and takes the place of the By-laws of all Parishes in the  
194 Diocese.

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

- 196 i. In every Parish, the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held in January at a time and  
197 place designated by the Vestry. Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given at  
198 all the services on the two preceding weekends. With the consent of the  
199 Ecclesiastical Authority, the Annual Meeting may be held during a different month.
- 200 ii. The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive  
201 reports from the Vestry, parish officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the  
202 new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.
- 203 iii. The Annual Parish Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge,  
204 or if the office be vacant, or if the Rector or Priest-in-Charge be absent, by the  
205 Senior Warden. When the Annual Parish Meeting is called to order, the  
206 qualifications for voters as defined in these Canons shall be read.
- 207 iv. Lay Persons in Good Standing of the Parish who are physically present, who are at  
208 least 18 years of age, who are regular attendants at the services of the local church,  
209 and who are regular contributors for the six months preceding the meeting to the  
210 support of the local church and to the work of the Diocese and National Church as  
211 shown on the books of the Treasurer, shall be entitled to vote at all Parish Meetings.
- 212 v. A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Parish Meeting shall consist  
213 of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons entitled to  
214 vote, whichever is less.
- 215 vi. No Lay Person shall vote or hold office in more than one Congregation at the same  
216 time.
- 217 vii. The Parish shall elect not less than five nor more than twelve adult Lay Persons in  
218 Good Standing to the Vestry. The actual number to be elected shall be set by  
219 resolution of two successive Annual Parish Meetings. No cleric shall be eligible for  
220 election as a member of the Vestry. The length of one term of office for members of  
221 the Vestry shall be three years with one third of the members, or as near as may be,  
222 elected each year at the Annual Parish Meeting.

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

- 224 i. A Special Parish Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the  
225 Ecclesiastical Authority or of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or by resolution of the  
226 Vestry, or on a petition to the Ecclesiastical Authority if such petition be signed by  
227 not less than one-third of the number entitled to vote at the last Annual Parish

228 Meeting. All such orders, resolutions, or petitions shall specify the time and place of  
229 such meeting and the business to be considered. At such meeting, no business shall  
230 be considered other than that specified in the call.

- 231 **ii.** Notice of such meeting shall be read publicly in church at all services on two  
232 weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the  
233 meeting, the business to be considered, and by whose order the meeting is called.  
234 **iii.** Such meeting may be presided over by the Bishop. If the Bishop does not preside,  
235 the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall preside. If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge,  
236 the Ecclesiastical Authority may request the Senior Warden to preside.

237 **Section D) Of Vestries**

- 238 **i.** In accordance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of  
239 this Diocese the Vestry shall govern the Parish and shall manage and be responsible  
240 for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare  
241 of the Parish; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is provided with all  
242 things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and  
243 provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Parish  
244 Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next  
245 year.
- 246 **ii.** As to civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector  
247 shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the President of the  
248 corporation. If there is no Rector then the Senior Warden shall be the President of  
249 the Corporation.
- 250 **iii.** The Vestry, in accordance with the Canon "Of Membership In Convention" shall  
251 elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan  
252 Convention.
- 253 **iv.** The Lay Officers of a Parish shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden,  
254 Clerk and Treasurer who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the  
255 Parish and at least 18 years of age. No cleric or spouse of a cleric may serve as an  
256 Officer of the Parish.
- 257 **v.** The Senior Warden shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the  
258 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, from among the members of the Vestry. If there be no  
259 Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall nominate  
260 a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
- 261 **vi.** It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector or Priest-in-  
262 Charge, to advise the Rector or Priest-in-Charge on all matters pertaining to the  
263 parish upon which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge may wish to consult the Senior  
264 Warden, and to inform the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of all matters which the Senior  
265 Warden feels the Rector needs to know.
- 266 **vii.** If there is no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to  
267 assume all the temporal duties of the Rector including, but not limited to, presiding  
268 at Vestry meetings, signing documents, filing reports, and maintaining the Parish  
269 Register. In addition, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to provide for the  
270 continuation of Divine Worship.
- 271 **viii.** The Junior Warden shall be elected annually from among their number by the  
272 Vestry. It shall be the duty of the Junior Warden to see to the care of the Parish's

- 273 physical property making sure that it is being kept clean and in good order and  
274 repair. In the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden is to assume the  
275 duties of the Senior Warden.
- 276 **ix.** The Wardens shall see that the financial obligations of the Parish are met and that  
277 the buildings belonging to the Parish are kept in good repair and are adequately  
278 insured. Under the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall see that all things needed  
279 for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the sacraments  
280 are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of divine worship. In the  
281 absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, they shall, with the advice of the  
282 Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
- 283 **x.** A Clerk shall be elected annually by the Vestry from among their number to serve  
284 until a successor has been chosen. The Clerk shall be responsible to see that minutes  
285 are taken of all Annual and Special Parish Meetings and of all meetings of the Vestry  
286 and shall attest to the same in the Book of Minutes of the Vestry, shall maintain in  
287 the said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Parish, shall keep  
288 all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these canons. The Clerk  
289 shall turn over to his successor all books and documents in his possession that  
290 belong to the Parish.
- 291 **xi.** A Treasurer, not a Cleric or the spouse of a Cleric, shall be elected annually by the  
292 Vestry from among their number. Under the authority of the Vestry, the Treasurer is  
293 responsible to collect, receive, disburse, and account for the funds of the Parish.  
294 Previous to the Annual Parish Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the Vestry a  
295 full and accurate statement of the financial condition of the Parish. This statement  
296 shall also be read at the Annual Parish Meeting before the election of officers. At  
297 every meeting of the Vestry the Treasurer shall report the total assets and liabilities  
298 of the Parish and the income and expenses of the general operating funds. As  
299 directed the Treasurer shall report the income and expenses of any other funds. The  
300 Treasurer shall furnish such bond as the Vestry shall require, but the cost of such  
301 bond shall be borne by the Parish. The Treasurer shall turn over to her successor all  
302 books, documents, and funds in her possession that belong to the Parish.
- 303 **xii.** The Vestry shall fill any mid-term vacancies in their number or among the officers  
304 of the Parish by majority vote.
- 305 **xiii.** Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held at least quarterly.
- 306 **xiv.** Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called at any time at the request of the  
307 Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or of any two of the members. Notice of such meeting  
308 shall be given to the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the members of  
309 the Vestry. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the  
310 business to be considered. No other business shall come before such meeting except  
311 with the unanimous consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens, and the  
312 members of the Vestry.
- 313 **xv.** At no meeting shall it be competent for the Vestry to transact any business except  
314 there be present the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, or, in the event of the  
315 absence of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or if the office be vacant, one of the  
316 Wardens; and except there be present a quorum consisting of a majority of the  
317 elected members of the Vestry. No action affecting the rights of the Rector or Priest-

318 in-Charge shall be taken at any meeting at which the Rector or Priest-in-Charge has  
319 not had the opportunity to be present.

320 **xvi. Indemnification**

- 321 a. No member of the Vestry shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
322 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:
- 323 • said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office
  - 324 prescribed by these canons, and
  - 325 • the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct
  - 326 or recklessness
  - 327 • The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability
  - 328 of said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes
  - 329 pursuant to local, state, or federal law.
- 330 b. The Parish shall indemnify any Vestry member and may indemnify any other  
331 employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party  
332 to or who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or  
333 completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or  
334 investigative, including any action by or on behalf of the Parish by reason of the  
335 fact that he is or was a member of Vestry, employee, or agent of the parish,  
336 against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in  
337 settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such  
338 action, suit, or proceeding unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim  
339 for indemnification is determined by the Court to have constituted willful  
340 misconduct or recklessness. With respect to any such action, the Parish may  
341 participate therein at its own expense; and the Parish shall be entitled to assume  
342 the defense thereof, with Counsel selected by the Parish to the reasonable  
343 satisfaction of the party being indemnified. After notice from the Parish to such  
344 person of its election to assume the defense thereof, the Parish shall not be liable  
345 to such person for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such  
346 person in connection with the defense thereof. Such person shall have the right  
347 to employ separate Counsel in such action, but the fees and expenses of such  
348 Counsel incurred after a notice from the Parish of its assumption of the defense  
349 thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.

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

352 **Section A) Books and Records**

353 **i. Members**

- 354 a. It shall be the duty of the priest in charge to keep, so far as is practicable, a list of  
355 the families and individuals within the Congregation to be retained for the use of  
356 a successor.
- 357 b. In every Congregation, there shall be provided a proper book or books, to be  
358 called The Parish Register, in which the priest in charge of the Congregation, or,  
359 if the Congregation be vacant, one of the Wardens, shall record the names of all  
360 persons baptized, confirmed, married, and deceased within the Congregation,  
361 with such other facts as to dates, places, and persons as are important matters of  
362 record, all of which shall be certified by the signature of the person making the

363 records together with the names of all persons who are Communicants of the  
364 Church, with memoranda as to their reception, removal, or death.  
365 c. Provision shall be made for the due recording of such other items and statistics  
366 as are required in the Annual Parochial Report prescribed by the National  
367 Canons.

368 **ii. Minutes**

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

372 **iii. Financial**

373 a. Every Congregation shall maintain paper or computer records, with adequate  
374 backups, of all the financial affairs of the Congregation. Such records shall  
375 include records of all assets and liabilities, income and expenses, and the  
376 location of the evidence showing ownership of all assets.

377 b. Statements of all investment, banking, and other accounts must be sent to the  
378 official mailing address of the Congregation and not to private homes.

379 **Section B) Preservation**

380 i. The Parish Register, Minute Book, and financial records of the Congregation shall  
381 be kept in the church, chapel, or other property belonging to the Congregation or  
382 Diocese or at such other secure location determined by the Vestry or Bishop's  
383 Committee.

384 ii. Consideration is to be given to the preservation of all items in case of natural or man  
385 made disaster when determining a secure location. Adequate backups and copies  
386 should be made and held in a different location.

387 iii. Prior to taking any books or records away from the location specified in section 1,  
388 the person taking them must notify the priest in charge or Warden of the  
389 Congregation. No one may give notice to themselves.

390 iv. Books or records may be away from the location specified in Section A for only  
391 short periods of time.

392 v. Items of historical interest should be collected and preserved in similar secure  
393 locations.

394 **Section C) Reports**

395 i. At every visitation of the Bishop, the priest in charge of the Congregation, or the  
396 Warden if there be no priest in charge, shall submit the Parish Register to the Bishop  
397 for inspection.

398 ii. The priest in charge of every Congregation, or if there be no priest in charge, the  
399 Warden and the Treasurer shall present the Annual Parochial Report to the  
400 Ecclesiastical Authority by the date specified.

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

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

405 **Section A)** A Congregation may petition the Diocesan Convention for a change in status of  
406 that Congregation. With the assent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan  
407

408 Convention, by majority vote, may grant the petition and change the status of the  
409 Congregation.

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

- 413 i. A Congregation without a Rector, Vicar or Priest-in-Charge for three consecutive  
414 years  
415 ii. A Congregation without Officers of the Congregation for three consecutive years  
416 iii. A Congregation without divine service for one year.  
417 iv. A Congregation whose church or chapel has become disused and closed.  
418 v. A Congregation with less than ten adult Communicants for three consecutive years.  
419 vi. A Congregation failing for two years to pay its assessment in full.  
420 vii. A Congregation failing for two years to file its Annual Parochial Report required by  
421 the National Canons.  
422 viii. A Congregation failing for two years to file the report of their Annual Audit as  
423 required by the National and Diocesan Canons.

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

427 **Section D)** With the consent of the Standing Committee the Bishop may dissolve an  
428 Unorganized Congregation.

429 **Section E)** When any Congregation shall have been dissolved, its name shall be stricken  
430 from the roll of Congregations, all of its records shall be forwarded to the diocesan  
431 office, and the title to all its property, real and personal, including money, shall forthwith  
432 vest in, and be transferred to, the corporation known as The Diocese Of Northwestern  
433 Pennsylvania.

434  
435 **Canon 8. Of Property**

436 **Section A)** Any Congregation or other institution holding or intending to hold title to real  
437 property shall be incorporated. Its form of incorporation shall be in accordance with the  
438 laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and in harmony with the Constitution and  
439 Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and the directions of Diocesan  
440 Convention.

441 **Section B)** All property, real and personal, held by or for the benefit of any Congregation of  
442 this Diocese is held in trust for the Diocese and The Episcopal Church. The existence of  
443 this trust, however, shall in no way limit the power and authority of the Congregation  
444 otherwise existing over such property so long as the congregation remains a part of, and  
445 subject to, this Church and its Constitution and Canons.

446 **Section C)** No mortgage, judgment lien, or indebtedness shall be incurred by any  
447 Congregation of this Diocese without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan,  
448 if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council. No consent and  
449 approval shall be granted unless there is a reasonable plan for the repayment of all such  
450 obligations.

451 **Section D)** No real property titled to any Congregation or other institution of this Diocese  
452 shall be sold, given away or otherwise alienated or encumbered without the consent and

453 approval of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, and the Standing Committee and the  
454 Diocesan Council.

455 **Section E)** All Congregations, institutions, and other entities belonging to this Diocese or  
456 any of the Congregations of this Diocese shall be adequately insured with property and  
457 liability insurance that shall conform to a minimum standard for insurance established  
458 by the Diocesan Council and shall provide to the Diocese a certificate of insurance  
459 showing the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania to be an “additional insured” on said  
460 property.

461  
462 **Canon 9. Of The Priest In Charge Of A Congregation**

463 **Section A)** The priest in charge of a Congregation shall have, subject only to the rubrics of  
464 the Book of Common Prayer, the National and Diocesan Constitutions and Canons, and  
465 the godly counsel of the Bishop, the exclusive charge of all things pertaining to the  
466 spiritual interests of the Congregation. The priest shall order and direct the services of  
467 worship and music of the church and all that pertains thereto and shall have the spiritual  
468 direction and general oversight of the church school, the altar guild, and of all  
469 organizations connected with the Congregation. The priest may appoint persons to  
470 perform, under Clergy supervision, such duties pertaining to the services and to the care  
471 and decoration of the church as are properly performed by lay members.

472 **Section B)** The priest shall at all times have free access to the church or chapel and to the  
473 church hall, to open and use the same as shall be required for religious services and  
474 offices and for such parochial occasions and objects as the priest shall deem necessary.  
475 The priest may arrange, modify, or improve the furnishings, ornaments, appointments,  
476 and conveniences of the church or chapel as the priest shall deem necessary. The priest  
477 shall have control of the use of the church hall. In the exercise of these rights and duties,  
478 however, the priest shall not disturb the fabric of the building or involve the  
479 Congregation or the Diocese in any expenditure of funds not authorized by the  
480 Ecclesiastical Authority or by the Officers of the Parish.

481 **Section C)** All employees of any Congregation, and all other Clergy in any Congregation,  
482 are selected by, work under the supervision of, and may be terminated by the priest in  
483 charge of that Congregation.

484 **Section D)** The priest shall preside, with the right to vote, at all meetings of the Vestry or  
485 Bishop's Committee, and no such meeting shall be held unless the priest has been duly  
486 notified of the same at least twenty-four hours previous thereto.

487 **Section E)** The priest shall at all times have and exercise such other rights and shall perform  
488 such duties as pertain to this office under the laws and usages of The Episcopal Church.

489 **Section F)** The priest shall keep such records and make such reports as may be directed by  
490 National or Diocesan Canons or by order of the Diocesan Convention.

491 **Section G)** The priest in charge of a Congregation shall give to the proper Officers thereof  
492 and to the Ecclesiastical Authority at least one month's notice, in writing, of her intent to  
493 resign such charge.

494 **Section H)** No Cleric shall officiate within the bounds of this Diocese, either by preaching,  
495 reading prayers, administering sacraments, or any other sacred functions, within the  
496 parochial, missionary, or other cure of a priest, unless the Cleric have received express  
497 permission for that purpose from the priest in charge of the cure, or, in the absence of

498 the priest in charge, from the church Wardens or a majority of the Vestry. In the case of a  
499 vacant Mission, permission shall be obtained from the Ecclesiastical Authority. Nor  
500 shall any Cleric, not Canonically Resident, officiate within the bounds of the Diocese in  
501 a vacant Congregation without the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

502 **Section I)** A Cleric serving a Congregation may enter into a contractual agreement with  
503 another Congregation for pastoral services. Said contract shall cover all services to be  
504 provided by the Cleric to the contracting Congregation and all financial arrangements  
505 between the contracting Congregation and the Cleric. Said contract must be approved by  
506 both Vestries and the Ecclesiastical Authority.

507 **Section J)** The priest in charge of a Mission is known as a Vicar.

508

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

510 **Section A)** When the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of a Parish retires, resigns, becomes  
511 incapacitated or dies, the Wardens shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority and,  
512 with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, make due provision for services, the cost  
513 thereof to be paid by the Parish.

514 **Section B)** In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens shall take care that  
515 the church building be kept from all secular and other uses not authorized by the  
516 Church. They shall make and certify all entries in the Parish Register required by these  
517 Canons and shall make out and present to the Ecclesiastical Authority the Annual  
518 Parochial Report.

519 **Section C)** The Vestry shall elect a priest to be Rector of the Parish. The said election shall  
520 be subject to the following provisions:

- 521 i. It shall be the prerogative of the Ecclesiastical Authority to submit to the Vestry the  
522 name or names of priests to be considered by them.
- 523 ii. No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established  
524 by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.
- 525 iii. No election shall be had until the name of the priest whom it is proposed to elect has  
526 been made known to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall  
527 have sixty days in which to communicate with the Vestry. No election may be had  
528 until the Vestry meets in special session to consider the comments of the  
529 Ecclesiastical Authority.
- 530 iv. The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens of  
531 the Parish, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the  
532 Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

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

539 **Section E)** Any priest appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to minister to a Parish as  
540 the Priest-in-Charge, but not elected by the Vestry thereof, is sent by the Ecclesiastical  
541 Authority upon such terms as to financial support, and for such a period of time, as may  
542 have been agreed upon by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the priest, and the Vestry of the

543 Parish. This appointment and agreement shall be in writing.

544 **Section F) Assistants**

- 545 i. Prior to the calling of an Assistant, the Rector of the calling Parish shall submit the  
546 name of the priest he proposes to call to the Ecclesiastical Authority. The  
547 Ecclesiastical Authority shall have 60 days to communicate with the Rector and  
548 Vestry about the Cleric they propose to call.
- 549 ii. The Ecclesiastical Authority may accept Letters Dimissory for the Assistant or may  
550 grant the Assistant annual license to function within this Diocese.
- 551 iii. The provisions of Section D of this canon as to a written agreement on salary and  
552 conditions of call apply to the calling of an Assistant.
- 553

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

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

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

558 **Section C)** The Alms Fund shall be funded by:

- 559 i. Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and  
560 ii. Regular contributions:  
561 a. by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
562 congregation or  
563 b. by the loose offering taken at all services on one weekend a month.

564 **Section D)** Every congregation shall have an Almoner who shall oversee and distribute  
565 these funds for appropriate purposes. .

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

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

572 **Section F)** Records of the income and expenses of the Alms Fund are confidential but not  
573 secret.

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

578 **Section H)** Like all congregational funds, the Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included  
579 in the Annual Audit required by these canons.

580

581 **Canon 12. Of Deaneries**

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

- 583 i. The Northwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Erie County;  
584 ii. The Northeast Deanery comprising the Congregations in Warren County, Forest  
585 County and McKean County;  
586 iii. The Southwest Deanery comprising the Congregations in Crawford County, Mercer  
587 County, Lawrence County, Venango County and Foxburg Borough of Clarion

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County;

- iv. The Southeast Deanery comprising the congregations in Jefferson County; Elk County; Cameron County; Clarion County, except for Foxburg Borough; and Clearfield County, except for Morris Township.

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

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

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

### **Title III. Of Diocesan Convention**

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

##### **Section A) Clergy Members**

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

##### **Section B) Lay Members**

- i. All Lay Members of Diocesan Convention must be Lay Persons In Good Standing of some Congregation in union with the Diocesan Convention.
- ii. Every Congregation admitted into union with the Convention of the Diocese is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention two lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof unless otherwise limited by canon.
- iii. Any Congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual Parochial Report of 75 to 149 is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention three lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.
- iv. Any congregation with an Average Sunday Attendance shown in the Annual Parochial Report of 150 or greater is entitled to send to any Diocesan Convention four lay delegates who will have seat, voice and vote and be Lay Members thereof.
- v. In order that they may be fully represented in Convention, all Congregations may select Alternate Delegates in the same manner and with the same qualifications as Delegates. Substitution of an Alternate Delegate for a Lay Member of Convention must be certified to the Credentials Committee by the priest in charge of that Congregation. If there is no priest in charge, then a previously certified Lay Member from that Congregation shall certify the substitution.
- vi. All Delegates to Convention shall be certified to the Credentials Committee on the form provided by the Committee and no later than March first.
- vii. Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to submit the Annual

633 Parochial Report due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Diocesan  
634 Convention shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention.

635 **viii.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to provide evidence,  
636 adequate to the Ecclesiastical Authority, of the Annual Audit required by National  
637 Canon due not less than six weeks prior to the start of any Convention shall not be  
638 entitled to vote at that Convention.

639 **ix.** Lay Members from any Congregation which has failed to pay the assessment levied  
640 upon that Congregation shall not be entitled to vote at that Convention unless that  
641 Congregation has been granted relief by the Diocesan Council and is current on that  
642 agreement. A Congregation shall be considered to have failed if their assessment is  
643 not paid current through the end of the month that occurs no less than 15 days prior  
644 to the start of any Convention.

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646 **Canon 2. Of Officers Of The Convention**

647 **Section A)** The Officers of Convention shall consist of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and  
648 Chancellor.

649 **i. President**

650 **a.** The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, will be President of and preside at meetings  
651 of the Diocesan Convention.

652 **b.** If there is no Bishop Diocesan then the person to preside at the Convention is  
653 chosen in accordance with the provisions in the Diocesan Constitution.

654 **ii. Secretary**

655 **a.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
656 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing to be  
657 Secretary of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
658 office, the Secretary is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.

659 **b.** The Secretary shall be responsible to take minutes and to produce a journal of  
660 the proceedings of every Diocesan Convention. This journal shall be available to  
661 the Congregations of the Diocese not more than 120 days after the adjournment  
662 of the Convention.

663 **c.** The Secretary shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Secretary of  
664 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
665 Constitution and these Canons.

666 **d.** The Secretary shall deliver to his successor all papers and materials in his  
667 possession which belong to the Diocese.

668 **iii. Treasurer**

669 **a.** Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
670 elect either a Lay Person in Good Standing or a Cleric in Good Standing to be  
671 Treasurer of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming  
672 office, the Treasurer is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.

673 **b.** The Treasurer shall be responsible, under the direction of the Diocesan Council,  
674 for the collection, investment, and distribution of all money and securities due to,  
675 held by, or payable by the Diocese and for the proper accounting thereof. The  
676 Treasurer shall make a full report of all assets and liabilities of the Diocese and  
677 income and expense reports of all funds under the control of the Diocese or its

- 678 officers to the Annual Convention. The Treasurer shall make a full report of all  
679 assets and liabilities of the Diocese and the income and expenses of the general  
680 operating funds to every meeting of the Diocesan Council and, as directed by  
681 Diocesan Council, the income and expenses of all other funds under the control  
682 of the Diocese or its officers.
- 683 c. The Treasurer shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Treasurer of  
684 Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
685 Constitution and these Canons. The Treasurer and any assistants to the Treasurer  
686 may be bonded with the expense being paid by the Diocese.
  - 687 d. The Treasurer shall deliver to her successor all papers and materials in the her  
688 possession which belong to the Diocese.
- 689 **iv. Chancellor**
- 690 a. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, each annual Convention shall  
691 elect either a Cleric in Good Standing or a Lay Person in Good Standing who is  
692 licensed to practice law in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be Chancellor  
693 of Convention and to serve until a successor is elected. Upon assuming office,  
694 the Chancellor is granted seat, voice, and vote in Convention.
  - 695 b. Upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Diocesan Council may  
696 elect one or more Vice Chancellors, qualified as above, as may from time to time  
697 appear necessary.
  - 698 c. The Chancellors shall function as the solicitor for and the legal advisor to, in the  
699 following order: the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Diocesan  
700 Council, and the Convention of the Diocese.
  - 701 d. The Chancellors shall be responsible to see that the Diocese follows and obeys  
702 the National Constitution and Canons and the Diocesan Constitution and these  
703 Canons. The Chancellor shall interpret the meaning and application of these  
704 Constitutions and Canons. His rulings may be appealed to the Diocesan  
705 Convention or to the National Church as appropriate.
  - 706 e. The Chancellors shall faithfully fulfill all the duties imposed on the Chancellor  
707 of Convention by the National Constitution and Canons and by the Diocesan  
708 Constitution and these Canons.
  - 709 f. The Chancellors shall deliver to their successors all papers and materials in their  
710 possession which belong to the Diocese.

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

713 **Section A) Credentials**

- 714 i. A Credentials Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
715 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.
- 716 ii. The Credentials Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members of  
717 Convention.
- 718 iii. The Credentials Committee shall determine the right of persons to seat, voice, and  
719 vote at Convention and shall recommend to Convention persons to whom the  
720 Convention should grant seat and voice.
- 721 iv. Any person denied a seat, voice or vote by the Credentials Committee may appeal  
722 such denial to the Convention which shall make the final determination by a

723 majority vote.

724 **Section B) Dispatch of Business**

- 725 i. A Dispatch of Business Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical  
726 Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
727 ii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall consist of one or more Members of  
728 Convention.  
729 iii. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of Convention in  
730 seeing that all the business of Convention is done in an efficient and expeditious  
731 manner. The Dispatch of Business Committee shall assist the President of  
732 Convention in developing an agenda and rules of order for the Convention.

733 **Section C) Resolutions**

- 734 i. A Resolution Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
735 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
736 ii. The Resolutions Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.  
737 iii. The Resolutions Committee shall give due consideration to all resolutions submitted  
738 to it and shall present all such resolutions to the Diocesan Convention.  
739 iv. The Resolutions Committee shall develop any resolutions of courtesy to be  
740 considered by the Convention.

741 **Section D) Nominations**

- 742 i. A Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and  
743 elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
744 ii. The Nominations Committee shall consist of three Clergy and three Lay Members.  
745 iii. The Nominations Committee shall be responsible to present a slate of nominees for  
746 each office to be filled by Convention.

747 **Section E) Judges of Election**

- 748 i. Judges of Election shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected by  
749 each annual Diocesan Convention.  
750 ii. Three Members of Convention shall be elected to be the Judges of Election.  
751 iii. The Judges of Election shall oversee the distribution and counting of ballots for each  
752 election as instructed by the President of the Convention.

753 **Section F) Site of the Next Convention**

- 754 i. A Site of the Next Convention Committee shall be nominated by the Ecclesiastical  
755 Authority and elected by each annual Diocesan Convention.  
756 ii. The Site of the Next Convention Committee shall consist of one Clergy Member and  
757 two Lay Members.  
758 iii. The Site of the Next Convention Committee shall recommend to Convention a place  
759 and date to hold the next Annual Diocesan Convention.

760  
761 **Canon 4. Of Nominations**

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

764 **Section B)** The Nominations Committee of Convention shall give notice of the need for  
765 such nominations and shall set a final date for receiving of the same which shall be not  
766 less than sixty days prior to Convention.

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

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

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

773 **Section E)** Additional nominations may be made from the floor of Convention. The  
774 nominator shall first obtain the consent of the nominee and may present a short  
775 statement.

776

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

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

- 779 i. Submitted by a Cleric in Good Standing.
- 780 ii. Submitted by a Lay Person in Good Standing.
- 781 iii. Submitted by some Congregation of this Diocese.
- 782 iv. Submitted by the Diocesan Council.
- 783 v. Submitted by some other committee mentioned in these Canons.

784 **Section B)** All resolutions must bear the name of the individual or organization submitting  
785 the resolution.

786 **Section C)** All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary of Convention at least sixty  
787 days prior to any Convention. Resolutions submitted less than sixty days in advance  
788 may be considered on a two-thirds vote of the Convention.

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

- 792 i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
- 793 ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
  - 794 a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
  - 795 b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
  - 796 c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the  
797 resolution

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

- 801 i. Put the resolution in proper form to bring about the intent of the submitter
- 802 ii. Report the resolution to Convention with:
  - 803 a. A recommendation to adopt the resolution
  - 804 b. A recommendation to defeat the resolution
  - 805 c. A recommendation to be released from any further consideration of the  
806 resolution

807 **Section F)** Resolutions not affecting the Constitution and Canons submitted by Diocesan  
808 Council or other committees will be reported to Convention by the Diocesan Council or  
809 the committee and are assumed to have a recommendation that Convention adopt the  
810 resolution.

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

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**Canon 1. Of the Standing Committee**

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

**Canon 2. Of the Diocesan Council**

**Section A) Members**

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

**Section B) Officers**

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

858 Diocesan Council.

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

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

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

864 i. The Diocesan Council shall oversee the program and priorities of the Diocese and  
865 make a report thereon to the annual Convention of the Diocese.

866 ii. The Diocesan Council shall serve as the board of directors of the corporation known  
867 as The Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

868 iii. The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention a budget  
869 and schedule of assessments for the ensuing year.

870 iv. The Diocesan Council may provide a means of relief to Congregations that are  
871 having difficulty paying their assessment.

872 v. The Diocesan Council shall develop and present to each annual Convention  
873 minimum stipends and allowances for Clergy serving in the Diocese.

874 **Section D) Committees**

875 i. Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary to carry out  
876 its work.

877 ii. All committees shall have a definite term of existence and a stated purpose  
878 determined by the council.

879 iii. Committees shall consist of at least one member of Diocesan Council and such other  
880 persons as Council may decide. These additional persons shall have seat, voice and  
881 vote only as to the business of the committee. The member of Council on each  
882 committee shall serve as liaison between the committee and Council.

883 iv. The member of Council shall call the first meeting of each committee. Thereafter  
884 each committee may effect its own organization provided that a quorum for the  
885 transaction of business shall consist of a majority of all members of the committee.

886 **Section E) Meetings**

887 i. The Diocesan Council shall meet on a regular basis and at least once per calendar  
888 quarter.

889 ii. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the President or Vice President of  
890 the Council.

891 iii. A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum for the  
892 transaction of business.

893 **Section F) Indemnification**

894 i. No member of Diocesan Council shall be personally liable for monetary damages for  
895 any action taken, or any failure to take any action, unless:

896 a. said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed  
897 by these canons, and

898 b. the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, wilful misconduct or  
899 recklessness.

900 c. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of  
901 said person pursuant to any criminal statute, or for the payment of taxes pursuant  
902 to local, state, or federal law.

903                   ii. The Diocese shall indemnify any Council member and may indemnify any other  
904                   employee or agent, who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or  
905                   who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed  
906                   action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative,  
907                   including any action by or on behalf of the Diocese by reason of the fact that she is  
908                   or was a member of Council, employee, or agent of the Diocese, against expenses,  
909                   including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually  
910                   and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding  
911                   unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is  
912                   determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With  
913                   respect to any such action, the Diocese may participate therein at its own expense;  
914                   and the Diocese shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel  
915                   selected by the Diocese to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being  
916                   indemnified. After notice from the Diocese to such person of its election to assume  
917                   the defense thereof, the Diocese shall not be liable to such person for any legal or  
918                   other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense  
919                   thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action,  
920                   but the fees and expenses of such Counsel incurred after a notice from the Diocese  
921                   of its assumption of the defense thereof, shall be at the expense of such person.  
922

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

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

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

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

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

933                   **Section E)** The Constitution and Canons Committee shall review these Canons during the  
934                   year following every meeting of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and  
935                   propose such amendments to these Canons as they deem necessary or advisable.  
936

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

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

941                   **Section B)** The chair of the Commission shall be appointed from among its members by the  
942                   Ecclesiastical Authority.

943                   **Section C)** The Commission shall effect its own organization.

944                   **Section D)** The Commission shall faithfully fulfill all duties laid upon such Commissions  
945                   by the Nation Constitution and Canons and by the Constitution of this Diocese and by  
946                   these Canons.

947                   **Section E)** Additional persons may be co-opted by the Commission from time to time

948 because of their expertise or special knowledge. Any such co-opted members are given  
949 seat and voice at meetings of the Commission but do not have a vote on Commission  
950 business. Co-opted members will not be counted towards a quorum.

951

952 **Canon 5. Of the Examining Chaplains**

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

958

959

960 **Canon 6. Of the Ecclesiastical Court**

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

963

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

967

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

973

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

977

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

980

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

983

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

986

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

988

989 **Title V. Miscellaneous**

990

991 **Canon 1. Of Special Offerings**

992

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

994

995 **i.** The Diocese shall have a special monetary fund called the Bishops' Alms Fund.

996

997 **ii.** The purpose of the Bishops' Alms Fund is to care for the poor and needy and to  
998 provide scholarships to seminaries, church related camps, conferences, and events.

999

1000 **iii.** The Bishops' Alms Fund shall be funded by:

1001

1002 **a.** Special gifts for the relief of the poor and needy and

1003

1004 **b.** Regular contributions:

1005

1006 **•** by a monthly deposit from the regular budgeted operating funds of the  
1007 diocese or

1008

- 993                           • by the loose offering taken at all services when a Bishop visits a  
994                           Congregation.  
995           iv. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall be the Almoner who shall oversee and distribute  
996           these funds for appropriate purposes.  
997           v. The Bishops' Alms Fund may not be used to pay for or reimburse any business or  
998           personal expenses of any Almoner or the family of any Almoner.  
999           vi. Records of the income and expenses of the Bishops' Alms Fund are confidential but  
1000           not secret.  
1001           vii. Reports on the usage of the Bishops' Alms Fund shall be made to the Diocesan  
1002           Council at least quarterly and annually to the Diocesan Convention. These reports  
1003           shall include income by category, expenses by category, and current balance of the  
1004           Bishops' Alms Fund.  
1005           viii. Like all funds, the Bishops' Alms Fund is subject to and shall be included in the  
1006           Annual Audit required by these canons.  
1007

1008           **Canon 2. Of the Historiographer**

1009           **Section A)** The Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a Historiographer at each annual  
1010           Convention who shall continue in office until a successor is appointed.

1011           **Section B)** The Historiographer shall have charge of all documents belonging to the  
1012           Diocese which relate to its history or that of any Congregation of the Diocese, of the  
1013           Journals of all Conventions of this Diocese, and of all books and papers committed to  
1014           him by the Convention or Ecclesiastical Authority.

1015           **Section C)** In the event of the dissolution of a Congregation of this Diocese, the books,  
1016           records, and historical information of that Congregation shall be delivered into the  
1017           custody of the Historiographer.

1018           **Section D)** All books, papers and documents, in whatever form they may exist, held by the  
1019           Historiographer shall be kept in good condition and in such place as designated by the  
1020           Diocesan Council.

1021           **Section E)** The Historiographer shall issue proper certificates based upon the records in his  
1022           charge

1023           **Section F)** Subject to the exclusions provided in the Canons, all books, papers and  
1024           documents, in whatever form they may exist, shall be open to the inspection of the  
1025           Bishop Diocesan, the Chancellor, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, and  
1026           any committee of the Convention.  
1027

1028           **Canon 3. Of the Cathedral**

1029           **Section A)** The Parish church of St. Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania is hereby designated as the  
1030           Cathedral of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

1031           **Section B)** The Cathedral shall be governed by a Cathedral Charter, Statutes and Bylaws not  
1032           in conflict with the National Constitution and Canons, the Constitution of this Diocese  
1033           or these Canons.

1034           **Section C)** The Cathedral Congregation shall be entitled to representation in the Convention  
1035           of this Diocese in accordance with the Canon on Membership in Convention.  
1036

1037           **Canon 4. Of The Election Of A Bishop**

1038           **Section A)** On the call by the Bishop Diocesan for the election of a successor, or of a  
1039           Bishop Co-Adjutor or of a Bishop Suffragan or upon the death, resignation, or  
1040           permanent disability of the Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee shall appoint nine  
1041           persons to serve as a Search Committee and the Diocesan Council shall appoint nine  
1042           persons to serve as a Transition Committee. The persons appointed to these committees  
1043           may be any Cleric in Good Standing or any Lay Person in Good Standing.

1044           **Section B)** The Search Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary to select and nominate  
1045           to the electing Convention three to five persons to be a Bishop in this Diocese.

1046           **i.** There will be no nominations permitted from the floor.

1047           **ii.** Additional persons may be nominated by written petition signed by at least three  
1048           Clergy in Good Standing and ten adult Lay Persons in Good Standing. Such written  
1049           petition must be submitted by a deadline established by the Search Committee.

1050           **iii.** All persons nominated must comply with, and be qualified for office by, the  
1051           National Constitution and Canons, by the Constitution of this Diocese and by these  
1052           Canons.

1053           **Section C)** The Transition Committee shall conduct all tasks necessary for the consecration,  
1054           welcome, and transition to a new Bishop.

1055

1056           **Canon 5. Of The Election Of Deputies To The General Convention**

1057           **Section A)** The annual Convention, in the second year preceding that in which a stated  
1058           meeting of the General Convention will be held, shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay  
1059           Members voting separately, four Priests in Good Standing and four Confirmed Adult  
1060           Lay Persons in Good Standing to be Deputies to the General Convention.

1061           **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in Section A, additional ballots shall  
1062           be taken, with the Clergy and Lay members voting separately, to elect four Priests and  
1063           four Lay Persons, qualified as above, from among the remaining nominees to be  
1064           Alternate Deputies to the General Convention.

1065

1066           **Canon 6. Of The Election Of Deputies To The Provincial Synod**

1067           **Section A)** The Annual Convention following each triennial meeting of The General  
1068           Convention of The Episcopal Church shall elect, by the Clergy and Lay Members voting  
1069           separately, one Priest in Good Standing and two Confirmed Adult Lay Persons in Good  
1070           Standing to be Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

1071           **Section B)** After the election of Deputies as prescribed in section a, an additional ballot  
1072           shall be taken, with the Clergy and Lay Members voting together, to elect and rank those  
1073           remaining nominees to be Alternate Deputies to the Provincial Synod.

1074