

# THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH CAROLINA

**Revision to the Name of the Diocese Received First Reading Approval by Diocesan Convention November 18, 2022. Upon Receiving Second Reading Vote by Convention in 2023, the name of the Diocese will be The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina**

## CONSTITUTION

**All Proposed Revisions to the Constitution Received First Reading Approval by Diocesan Convention November 18, 2022, and will be Presented to Convention in 2023 for Second Reading Vote.**

### ARTICLE I

#### Recognition of the Authority of The Episcopal Church

The Episcopal ~~Diocese of South Carolina Church in South Carolina~~ accedes to and adopts the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, ~~as they now exist or may hereafter be amended by The Episcopal Church's General Convention, acknowledges its authority accordingly,~~ and agrees to be permanently and irrevocably governed thereby.

### ARTICLE II

#### Name **and Seal** of Diocese

**Section 1.** The Diocese shall be known by the name: **The Episcopal Church in Diocese of South Carolina.** The Diocese has also been known as and done business as "The Episcopal Church in South Carolina." "The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina," "The Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina", and "The Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Carolina."

The Diocese, which was first organized in 1785, is the historic and continuously existing Episcopal Diocese in South Carolina and was originally known as "The Protestant Episcopal Church for the Diocese of South Carolina."

**Section 2.** The Seal of the Diocese shall be:



## **ARTICLE III**

### **Jurisdiction**

The geographic territory of the Diocese is comprised of the following counties in the State of South Carolina: Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dillon, Dorchester, Florence, Georgetown, Hampton, Horry, Jasper, Marion, Marlboro, Orangeburg, Sumter, and Williamsburg.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Diocesan Convention Meetings**

*Section 1.* A diocesan Convention shall be held annually, at such time and place as shall have been determined upon by the preceding Convention.

*Section 2.* The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall have power to call a special meeting of the Convention by giving at least thirty (30) days' notice to every bishop, priest, and deacon entitled to a seat in the Convention, and to every parish and mission in the Diocese in union with the Convention. Such meeting shall be held when and where the authority so calling it shall determine. At such meeting no other business shall be transacted than that specified in the notice so calling said meeting. Whenever a special meeting of Convention is called for the purpose of electing a Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, or Bishop Suffragan, lay delegates from the several parishes and organized missions in union with Convention shall be elected after the call has been issued for such special meeting.

*Section 3.* If, in the judgment of the Ecclesiastical Authority, there exists sufficient cause to require a change of time or place for the meeting of a Convention either annual or special, the ecclesiastical authority may designate another time or place of holding such meeting. Any such meeting shall be held within 30 days after the time originally designated and after notice to every bishop, priest, and deacon, and parish and mission in the Diocese entitled to seat in the Convention.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Diocesan Convention Members**

*Section 1.* The Convention shall be composed of laypersons, bishops, priests, and deacons, as hereinafter provided.

*Section 2.* Each parish and mission in union with the Convention and in good standing shall be entitled to all of the privileges as members of the Convention.

*Section 3.* Each canonically resident bishop in the Diocese shall be entitled to all of the privileges of a member of the Convention.

*Section 4.* ~~Each~~ **All** canonically resident **clergy (priests and deacons)** ~~priest, currently serving a church, an institution of the Diocese, or on diocesan staff, is~~ **are** entitled to all

privileges as a member of the Convention, **including seat, voice, and vote**. ~~Each canonically resident retired priest who served a church, an institution of the Diocese, or on diocesan staff for at least five years immediately prior to retirement shall also be entitled to all privileges as a member of the Convention. Retired clergy who are canonically resident but ineligible for vote are entitled to seat and voice.~~

~~*Section 5.*— Each canonically resident deacon of the Diocese shall be entitled to seat and voice as a member of the Convention.~~

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Procedures Pertaining to Conventions**

*Section 1.* Each parish and mission in union with the Convention shall be entitled to lay representation in the Convention. A parish shall be represented by not more than four laypersons and a mission shall be represented by not more than two laypersons. The election of said lay delegates shall take place in each parish and each mission in union with the Convention, by ballot, from among the confirmed adult communicants in good standing, at a meeting of the members thereof. An equal number of lay delegates may be elected to serve as alternates or substitutes for such lay delegates so elected. A parish or mission shall not be entitled to vote if it has not filed its Parochial Reports by the February 1<sup>st</sup> preceding the Convention, unless they be accorded such privilege by a majority vote of the Convention.

*Section 2.* Except as otherwise provided, the terms of office of delegates so elected shall continue until their successors are elected. Each parish and mission shall file a report naming the delegates and alternate delegates with the secretary of the Convention at least thirty days prior to the Convention.

*Section 3.* The presiding officer of the Convention shall call on the Credentials Committee for a report of the clerical and lay delegates entitled to seat, voice and vote at the Convention.

*Section 4.* When the Convention shall have been called to order, the list of the Clergy of the Convention shall be presented to the Convention, and the names of the clerical members shall be called by the Secretary. Immediately thereafter the secretary shall proceed to call the names of the lay delegates. If a quorum is found present, the presiding officer shall declare the Convention duly organized. Provided, however, that if the clerical and lay delegates have been registered on the opening day of the Convention and such registration is then in the hands of the secretary, said roll calls may be dispensed with. If a question be made, the right of any clerical or lay delegates shall be determined according to the provisions of this Constitution.

*Section 5.* A majority of the clergy, who are serving in a parish or mission, and lay delegates from a majority of the parishes and missions in union with the Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

*Section 6.* The Bishop of the Diocese shall be the presiding officer of the Convention. In the absence of the Bishop, the next following individual shall be the presiding officer of the Convention:

1. Bishop Coadjutor
2. Bishop Suffragan
3. President of the Standing Committee
4. An individual selected from among the attending priests or lay delegates.

*Section 7.* The following provisions shall govern voting in Convention.

*Section 7.1.* On all questions before the Convention, unless otherwise required, the members shall deliberate and vote as one body unless twenty-five (25%) percent of the clerical and twenty-five (25%) percent of the lay delegates shall request a separate vote by Orders. If a separate vote by Orders is requested, the clergy shall vote individually and the lay delegates by churches (a majority from each parish having one vote and each mission having one-half vote). A majority vote of both Orders shall, in each case, be necessary for a decision.

*Section 7.2.* In the election of a Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan, the vote shall be by written or electronic ballot, and by Orders. A concurrent majority of both Orders is necessary to elect a Bishop. Provided, however, that two-thirds of all the clergy entitled to vote and two-thirds of all the parishes and missions entitled to representation be present; otherwise, two-thirds of the vote of each Order present shall be necessary to determine a choice.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Officers and Staff of the Diocese**

*Section 1.* The constitutional officers of the Diocese shall be a Chancellor, ~~an Assistant Chancellor (if elected)~~, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Historiographer, **and, at the Bishop's discretion, a Vice Chancellor**, each of whom shall be a confirmed communicant of the Church, and a member of a parish or mission in union with the Convention, or a priest canonically resident in the Diocese.

*Section 1.1.* The Chancellor and a Vice Chancellor shall be nominated by the Bishop and shall be elected by a majority vote of the Convention. If a Vice Chancellor is to be nominated by the Bishop, the nomination must be approved by the Chancellor. The term of office of the Vice Chancellor, if so elected, shall run concurrently with the term of the Chancellor. They shall serve for three years and **shall continue** until their successors are elected. Their duties shall be to act as legal advisors of the ~~Ecclesiastical Authority~~ **Bishop, Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, Trustees, Diocesan Convention**, and other Diocesan offices and organizations, in matters affecting the interest of the Church. They shall be ex-officio members of the Convention without the right to vote, unless a delegate from a parish or mission in union with the Convention. **If the office of the Chancellor or Vice Chancellor becomes vacant during the term of office, the Bishop, with the approval of the Standing Committee, shall appoint an Acting Chancellor or Acting Vice Chancellor to complete the remainder of the term of the vacant office.**

*Section 1.2* The Secretary shall be nominated by the Bishop and confirmed at each annual Convention and shall continue in office until his/her successor is elected. The Secretary shall be responsible for the publication of the Journal of the Convention. The Secretary's duties shall be as prescribed by the Constitution, Canons, resolutions, and Rules of Order of both the Convention of this Diocese and of the General Convention. The Secretary shall be an ex-officio member of the Convention without the right to vote, unless a delegate from a parish or mission in union with the Convention or a priest canonically resident in the Diocese. **If the office of Secretary becomes vacant during the term of office, the Bishop, with the approval of the Standing Committee, shall appoint an Acting Secretary to complete the remainder of the term of the vacant office.**

*Section 1.3.* The Treasurer shall be elected at each annual Convention and shall continue in office until a successor is elected. The Treasurer's duties shall be as prescribed by the Constitution, Canons, resolutions, and Rules of Order of both the Convention of this Diocese and of the General Convention. The Treasurer shall be an ex officio member of the Convention without the right to vote, unless the Treasurer is a delegate from a parish or mission in union with the Convention or a priest canonically resident in the Diocese. **If the office of the Treasurer becomes vacant during the term of office, the Bishop, with the approval of the Standing Committee, shall appoint an Acting Treasurer to complete the remainder of the term of the vacant office.**

*Section 1.4.* The Historiographer shall be nominated by the Bishop and confirmed by the Convention to serve for three years and until a successor is appointed. The duties of the Historiographer shall be prescribed by Canon.

*Section 2.* The Bishop may appoint such other officers and staff of the Diocese as the Bishop shall deem appropriate for the operation of the Diocese including, but not limited, to an Archdeacon, Canon to the Ordinary, and other diocesan officers and administrative staff as necessary for the work of the Diocese. They shall serve at the pleasure of the Bishop and have such duties as shall be as prescribed by the Bishop, the Constitution, Canons, resolutions, and Rules of Order of both the Convention of this Diocese and of the General Convention. In case there be no Bishop to act as the ecclesiastical authority, then the Standing Committee shall appoint the officers and staff to serve at its pleasure or until there be a Bishop, with ecclesiastical authority.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Admitting Parishes and Missions Into Union with the Convention**

*Section 1.* Parishes and/or missions, which have been organized as provided by the canons of both The Episcopal Church in **Diocese of South Carolina** and The Episcopal Church for not less than one year, may apply for and be admitted into union with the Convention by vote of the Convention, provided that the requirements hereinafter set forth in the canons have been met.

*Section 2.* At the annual Convention next succeeding the receipt of application for admission to union with the Convention, the Secretary shall communicate the same to the Convention on the first day of its session. After reference to both the Committee on Admission of New Parishes and the Committee on Constitution and Canons, the application shall be acted upon by the Convention.

*Section 3.* A parish or mission shall be accorded full privileges of membership in the Convention when it is admitted into union with the Convention, including the right of a voice and vote in the proceedings.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Standing Committee**

*Section 1.* There shall be a Standing Committee consisting of six priests of the Diocese and six laypersons, who are confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church in the Diocese. The Chancellor, unless an elected member of the Standing Committee, shall be an ex-officio member of the Standing Committee without vote. The members of the Standing Committee shall be elected by ballot for a term of three (3) years. At each annual Convention two priests and two laypersons shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. No priest or layperson whose term has expired shall be eligible for re-election until the passage of one Convention year from the date of said expiration.

*Section 2.* If there be no Bishop acting as the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese, the Standing Committee shall be the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese. In all decisions as the ecclesiastical authority, the Standing Committee shall vote by Orders; and a majority vote of the members present from each Order shall be necessary for a decision.

*Section 3.* At their first meeting after the election the Standing Committee shall choose one of the priests of their body to be their president and another member of their body to be their secretary, whose duty it shall be to keep regular minutes of all the proceedings and business of the committee. The committee shall maintain a written record of all of its activities and preserve the records and minutes of its meetings.

*Section 4.* The Standing Committee shall report to each annual Convention its activities and actions of the previous year.

*Section 5.* In the event of a vacancy caused by the death, resignation or other event, a replacement member shall be elected by a vote of the remaining members. The elected individual shall serve for the remainder of the term of the departed member.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Deputies to the General Convention**

*Section 1.* At an Annual Convention during the triennium between General Conventions, but preceding each General Convention, priests, **deacons**, and laypersons, in the appropriate number and having qualifications established by The Episcopal Church, shall be chosen by ballot to represent the Diocese at the next succeeding General Convention. No more than the requisite number of other priests, **deacons**, and laypersons, having the same qualifications, shall be chosen by ballot, as alternates for those selected. Such representatives and alternates shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified.

*Section 2.* In case any deputy of those first chosen shall decline such election, or be unable to serve as a deputy to the General Convention, the deputy shall forthwith inform the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese. The ecclesiastical authority shall thereupon appoint to the General Convention an alternate deputy in the order of the number of votes received at their election to replace any deputy unable to attend the General Convention. In case all of the alternates so elected shall decline to serve, or be unable to attend, the ecclesiastical authority may appoint a substitute deputy of like qualifications.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Discipline of a Bishop, Priest or Deacon**

A bishop, priest, or deacon shall be subject to discipline for offenses enumerated in both the canons of The Episcopal ~~Church in~~ **Diocese of** South Carolina and The Episcopal Church and, if found guilty, shall be sentenced in accordance therewith. The action shall be conducted according to both the canons of The Episcopal ~~Church in~~ **Diocese of** South Carolina and The Episcopal Church.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Amendment of Constitution**

No alteration or amendment of, or addition to, this Constitution shall be made unless the same be proposed in writing on the first day of an annual Convention and, after reference to the Committee on Constitution and Canons, is adopted by a majority vote of the Convention at which it is proposed, and further adopted by a two-thirds vote of both Orders present at the next annual Convention.