Episcopal Diocese
of
The Rio Grande

Constitution and Canons

As Amended by the 63rd Diocesan Convention
October 2015
PREAMBLE

The Diocese of the Rio Grande is a constituent member of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, one of the duly constituted Dioceses of the Anglican Communion, a discipline of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. These Constitutions and Canons for the Diocese of the Rio Grande are adopted to supplement the constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in providing the framework for propagating the catholic faith as interpreted in the doctrine, discipline and worship in this church.

ARTICLE I

TITLE AND BOUNDS OF THE DIOCESE

That part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (otherwise known as the Episcopal Church) which is within the State of New Mexico and the Counties of El Paso, Culberson, Reeves, Jeff Davis, Brewster, Presidio, Terrell, Hudspeth and Pecos in the State of Texas, shall be known as the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

ARTICLE II

ACCEDING TO THE CONSTITUTION AND CANONS OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION

The Diocese of the Rio Grande recognizes and accedes to the authority of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

ARTICLE III

ANNUAL CONVENTION

SECTION 1

There shall be an Annual Convention of the Diocese. The Convention shall exercise the legislative powers of the Diocese. The Convention shall meet at such time and place as may be designated by the preceding Convention. However, for sufficient cause, the Ecclesiastical Authority, in consultation with the host parish or mission, shall have the power to alter the time and place of the meeting.

SECTION 2

The Bishop or the Standing Committee of the Diocese may call a special session of the Convention upon such notice as may be required by canon.

SECTION 3

Membership of the Convention shall be provided by canon. Except when a vote is taken by orders, the Convention shall deliberate and act as one body.
SECTION 4

The Bishop shall be the Presiding Officer of the Convention, ex officio, with all rights of membership. If there is no Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop shall serve as Presiding Officer. In the absence of a Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop, the Presiding Officer shall be elected as provided by Canon.

SECTION 5

To constitute a quorum, the clerical order shall be represented by at least one Clergy person from each of a majority of the parishes and missions entitled to representation; and the lay order shall likewise be represented by at least one representative from each of a majority of the parishes and missions entitled to representation, except in the case of the election of a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Suffragan Bishop, as provided in Article VI, Section 4 below.

ARTICLE IV

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee of this Diocese, required by the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention, shall consist of equal numbers of clerical members and lay members. The members shall be elected by the Annual Convention as provided by canon and shall be members of the Convention, ex officio, with all right of membership. Vacancies in the Standing Committee shall be filled as provided by canon.

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS OF THE DIOCESE

The Officers of the Diocese shall consist of a Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, Historian, Canonist and Chancellors. These officers shall be members of the Convention, ex officio, with all rights of membership.

ARTICLE VI

ELECTION OF A BISHOP

SECTION 1

A Diocesan Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Suffragan Bishop shall be elected at an Annual Convention, or at a Special Convention called for that purpose. The membership of Convention shall consist of the lay membership as provided by canon and all clergy, canonically resident for at least one year who are in compliance with any canonical reporting requirements of the Diocese and the Episcopal Church for the preceding two years.

SECTION 2

When there is a vacancy in the office of Bishop, the Standing Committee shall nominate at least three qualified persons. Other nominations may be made from the floor of the Convention.
SECTION 3

After nominations have been made, the clergy and lay members in each Order shall vote concurrently by Orders. A majority of the membership in each Order shall be required for election.

SECTION 4

A quorum for the election of a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Suffragan Bishop shall be a majority of the eligible clergy and a majority of the lay membership. The majority of the lay membership must represent a majority of the congregations.

ARTICLE VII

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution shall become effective only after a two-thirds affirmative vote of Convention at two successive Annual Conventions.
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CANON 1
DEFINITIONS

As used in these Constitution and Canons:

“The Bishop” refers to the regularly elected and consecrated Bishop who is in charge of the Diocese.

A “Canonically Resident” clergyperson in good standing is one who

(a) has been ordained in and for this Diocese, or
(b) has been ordained in another Diocese or Missionary District for this Diocese, or
(c) has had Letters Dimissory accepted by the Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese, and who resides within the limits of this Diocese.

For the Purpose of (a) and (b) above, the time of canonical residence shall be calculated from the date of ordination as a Deacon. Canonical residence ends with the acceptance of Letter Dimissory by the Ecclesiastical Authority of another Diocese.

“The Church” refers to The Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

“Communicant in Good Standing” as defined in the General Canons is a member of this Church who has received Holy Communion in this Church at least three times during the preceding year and whose name has been entered in the Parish Register of a congregation of this Diocese. For purposes of statistical consistency throughout the Church, a communicant sixteen years of age and over is to be considered an adult communicant.

“Congregation” refers to a Parish, an aided Parish or a mission in union with the Diocese.


“Convention” refers to the annual meeting of the Diocese, as described in the General Canons and the Constitution of this Diocese.

“The Diocese” refers to the Diocese of the Rio Grande of The Episcopal Church.

“Ex-officio delegates” are members of Convention, with all rights of membership and shall be the Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, Canonist and Chancellors of the Diocese, lay members of the Standing Committee and Diocese Investment Board, the lay members at large of Diocesan Council, and the Deans and Vice-Deans of each Deanery.

“General Constitution” and “General Canons” refer to the Constitution and Canons for the Government of The Episcopal Church, adopted in General Convention.

“Parish Register” refers to the records mandated to be maintained by the General Canons and these Canons for each congregation.

“Parochial Report” is the annual report of each congregation mandated by General Canons and these Canons.
To be “Qualified to Serve” means a person elected or appointed to any office, committee, commission, board or task force, shall be either canonically resident, if clergy, or an adult Communicant in Good Standing in this Diocese, if laity, and in either case, actually residing in this Diocese at the time of election or appointment and throughout the term for which elected or appointed. If not so qualified to serve, a vacancy is created in the position held which shall be filled as directed by Canon.

A “Qualified Voter” of a congregation is an adult communicant in good standing whose name is enrolled on the Parish Register.
CANON 2

CONVENTION

SECTION 1

(a) At the time and place appointed for the Convention, the Bishop or other Presiding Officer shall call the Convention to order. If there be a quorum present, the Secretary shall so declare to the Presiding Officer. If there be no Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, or Suffragan Bishop, the President of the Standing Committee or a member thereof shall act as the Presiding Officer until such time as the Convention elects a Presiding Officer from among the clergy present.

(b) All Canonically resident clergy shall be delegates to the Convention, as shall all clergy canonically resident in other dioceses, but holding a formal appointment from the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese. Clergy of other denominations in full communion with the Episcopal Church who hold a formal appointment from the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese shall also be delegates. These provisions, however, shall not confer any right to clergy not canonically resident or clergy of other denominations to participate in the election of a Bishop. The lay delegates shall consist of (1) ex-officio delegates; (2) the wardens from each congregation; and (3) the elected delegates and alternates to Convention based upon the adult communicant members of each congregation in accordance with the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Communicants Over 16</th>
<th>Delegates/Alternates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-24</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-250</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251-550</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>551-850</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>851+</td>
<td>5</td>
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Any person serving as a delegate/alternate of a congregation must be an adult Communicant in Good Standing of the congregation for which the person serves as a lay delegate or alternate and qualified to serve.

(c) In the event that a delegate and all of the alternate delegates are unable to attend a meeting of the Convention, the Rector or Vicar of the congregation shall select persons to serve as delegates.

(d) It shall be the duty of the clergy or a warden of each congregation to forward to the Secretary a list of the wardens and delegates in the form prescribed by these Canons not later than thirty days prior to the Convention.

(e) Should the membership right of any person be questioned, the matter shall be referred to a Committee on Credentials, consisting of two clergy and three lay delegates to be named by the Presiding Officer.

SECTION 2

(a) The order of business of each Convention, except as otherwise provided by these Canons, shall be arranged by the Bishop or other Presiding Officer after consultation with the Secretary.

(b) For all matters not covered by the Constitution or Canons or by special rules of order adopted by the Convention, the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern Convention proceedings. All election shall be by ballot, unless the same is dispensed with by unanimous consent. No vote may be cast by proxy.
(c) The Bishop or other Presiding Officer shall appoint all interim Committees and Commissions, and such Convention Officers as may be required.

SECTION 3

(a) If a special meeting of the Convention is called, the Secretary shall give notice to all congregations and ex-officio delegates, designating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting. Such notices shall be given at least thirty days prior to the meeting.

(b) The delegates of the preceding Convention shall be the delegates of any special meeting of the Convention, unless, in the interim, other delegates have been elected or selected.

SECTION 4

A vote by orders may be requested by five clerical delegates or may be requested by five lay delegates provided in either event the delegates represent five separate congregations. For a vote by orders, each delegate to the Convention shall have one vote. A concurrent majority in each order shall be necessary for an affirmative action or election.

SECTION 5

All proposed resolutions of the Convention, except those which may be introduced to the Convention by special request of the Bishop, shall be submitted to the Resolutions Commission not less than sixty (60) days preceding the meeting of the Convention at which they are to be proposed, unless the Convention shall by two-thirds majority, without debate, vote to accept the introduction of a proposed resolution.

SECTION 6

All nominations for elections by the Convention, except those nominations that may be made from the floor of the Convention, shall be submitted to the Nominating Commission not less than seventy-five (75) days preceding the meeting of the Convention at which they are to be made.

SECTION 7

All reports to be made to the Convention shall be submitted to the Bishop not less than forty-five (45) days preceding the meeting of the Convention at which they are to be made.

SECTION 8

All courtesy resolutions of the Convention, except those that may be introduced to the Convention by special request of the Bishop, shall be submitted to the Resolutions Commission by the end of the first day of the meeting of the Convention.

SECTION 9

All resolutions and nominations received prior to Convention shall be included in the advance reports to delegates to Convention at least thirty days prior to Convention.
CANON 3

BISHOP

SECTION 1

(a) The Bishop shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, except as may otherwise be provided in the General Constitution and General Canons or the Constitution and Canons.

(b) Reference in the Constitution and these Canons to the Bishop means the Diocesan Bishop. In the absence or disability of the Diocesan Bishop, one of the following persons shall act as Bishop:

(1) the Bishop Coadjutor;
(2) the Suffragan Bishop, in the absence or disability of a Bishop Coadjutor;
(3) a Bishop, in the absence or disability of the Coadjutor or Suffragan, who has been given provisional charge of the Diocese under the General Constitution and General Canons.

SECTION 2

(a) The Diocesan Bishop, for sufficient cause, may request the election of a Bishop Coadjutor. In the request, the Bishop shall advise the Convention of the duties he expects to assign to the Bishop Coadjutor. The assignment of duties in the request shall not prevent the assignment of other or additional duties to the Coadjutor.

(b) A Bishop Coadjutor shall be a member of the Cathedral Chapter, ex-officio, with all rights of membership, and shall annually give a report of his official Episcopal Acts to the Convention.

SECTION 3

(a) The Diocesan Bishop, for sufficient cause, may request the election of a Suffragan Bishop. The Suffragan Bishop shall serve at the direction of the Bishop.

(b) A Suffragan Bishop shall be a member of the Cathedral Chapter, ex-officio, with all rights of membership, and shall annually give a report of his official Episcopal Acts to the Convention.

SECTION 4

The Bishop may appoint one or more Archdeacons. An Archdeacon may be the Rector or the Vicar of a congregation.

SECTION 5

The Bishop shall be a member, ex-officio, with all rights of membership, of all Diocesan committees, except the Standing Committee.
CANON 4

STANDING COMMITTEE

SECTION 1

(a) The Standing Committee shall consist of three clerical members and three lay members elected by the Convention for a term of three years. The terms shall be staggered so that one clerical and one lay position expire each year. A member may be elected for two full consecutive terms, and becomes eligible for election again three years after the expiration of that member’s second term.

(b) Clerical members must be canonically and actually resident in the Diocese at least one year prior to election and qualified to serve. Lay members must be adult communicants in good standing within the Diocese for at least one year prior to election and qualified to serve.

(c) Vacancies created by reason of the death, resignation, or removal from the Diocese of a member shall be filled by the remaining members by the election of a person qualified to serve until the next Convention.

(d) The lay members shall be *ex-officio* delegates of the Convention.

SECTION 2

(a) The Standing Committee shall elect a President and a Secretary at its first meeting following the Convention to serve for one year, or until their successors are elected.

(b) A majority of the members of the Standing Committee shall constitute a quorum. A vote of a majority of the entire Committee is required to exercise the power of the Committee.

(c) Members of the Standing Committee shall be entitled to reimbursement for actual expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Committee.

(d) Whenever members of the Standing Committee are absent from two consecutive meetings, whether regular or special, without good cause being shown, they shall be presumed to have resigned their position and vacancy is created.

SECTION 3

The Standing Committee shall have all the powers and it shall perform all the duties set forth by the General Constitution and General Canons and by the Constitution and Canons, including but not limited to the following:

(a) serving as council of advice to the Bishop;

(b) exercising Ecclesiastical Authority in the vacancy or disability of the Bishop;

(c) acting according to the Canons in the selection, examination and certification of persons seeking holy orders;

(d) implementing actions assigned by the Convention of the Diocese in accordance with the General Constitution and General Canons and with the Constitution and Canons;
(e) supervising secular legal functions of the Diocese;

(f) advising on Diocesan personnel positions;

(g) adopting rules and operating procedures for the conduct of its business;

(h) calling a special session of the Convention.

SECTION 4

The Standing Committee shall make an annual report to the Convention.

SECTION 5

The Standing Committee and the Bishop shall be the final authority in all matters relating to Diocesan personnel.

SECTION 6

The Standing Committee and Bishop shall conduct an annual review of compensation for all Diocesan personnel. The Standing Committee shall conduct an annual review of compensation for the Bishop. The recommendations resulting from such reviews of compensation shall be referred to the Diocesan Council.

SECTION 7

Any voting member of the Standing Committee shall not be eligible to serve on the Diocesan Council or the Commission on Ministry, with the exception of the Standing Committee representatives appointed by the Standing Committee to the Diocesan Council and the Commission on Ministry. Those appointed representatives shall not be eligible for election or appointment as presiding officer of said bodies.
CANON 5

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

SECTION 1

(a) The Diocesan Council shall consist of members at large (two clergy and two lay persons elected by Convention), the Diocesan Treasurer, a member of the Standing Committee appointed annually by the Standing Committee, the Deans and Vice-Deans of each Deanery and the Bishop. The Canon to the Ordinary, or the Assistant to the Bishop, if there be one, as well as the cathedral dean, shall be a member with voice but no vote. The two-year terms of the members at large shall be staggered so that one clerical and one lay position expire each year. Members at large may be elected for two consecutive terms, and become eligible for election again two years after the expiration of their second term.

(b) The clerical members at large must be canonically resident in the Diocese and qualified to serve, and lay members must be adult communicants in good standing for at least one year prior to election and qualified to serve.

(c) Vacancies created by reason of the death, resignation or removal from the Diocese of any of the members at large shall be filled by election by the Standing Committee with recommendations from the Diocesan Council. Such elected replacement members shall serve until the next Convention at which the vacancy shall be filled by election. Vacancies of the elected representatives of the Deaneries shall be filled as provided in the bylaws of the Deanery.

(d) Whenever elected members of the Diocesan Council are absent from two consecutive meetings, whether regular or special, without good cause being shown, they shall be presumed to have resigned their position and vacancies are created.

SECTION 2

The lay members of the Diocesan Council shall be ex-officio delegates of Convention.

SECTION 3

(a) The Bishop or, if there be a vacancy in the office of the Bishop, the President of the Standing Committee, shall be President of the Diocesan Council. The Diocesan Council shall elect a Vice President and Secretary following the Convention for a one-year term, or until their successors are elected. The Vice President shall preside in the absence of the President.

(b) A majority of the elected members of the Diocesan Council shall constitute a quorum.

(c) Members of the Diocesan Council, and persons or groups appointed by the Diocesan Council to carry out its work, shall be entitled to reimbursement for actual expenses incurred in attending meetings.

SECTION 4

The Diocesan Council shall have all the powers and it shall perform all the duties set forth by the Canons of this Diocese, including but not limited to the following:

(a) implementing actions assigned by the Convention of the Diocese in accordance with the General Constitution and General Canons and with the Constitution and Canons;
(b) reviewing diocesan programs and goals, and serving as diocesan program
planning group;

(c) determining budget and fair share policy;

(d) adopting rules and operating procedures for the conduct of its business.

SECTION 5

The Diocesan Council shall make an annual report to the Convention.

SECTION 6

The Diocesan Council shall have charge of, and shall be the Convention of the Diocese ad interim for the planning, coordination, and development of the mission of the Diocese, with the exception that the Standing Committee shall fill vacancies on the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council and the Commission on Ministry.

SECTION 7

(a) The Diocesan Council shall meet at least four times annually. The President of the Diocesan Council shall set the regular meeting dates and, if necessary, dates of special meetings.

(b) The Diocesan Council shall prepare and propose the annual budget to the Convention. Prior to its July meeting, the Diocesan Council shall consider and recommend the proposed budget for the following year.

SECTION 8

The Diocesan Council shall formulate its own bylaws, including procedures for the appointment of such persons and groups as needed to carry out the work of the Diocesan Council.

SECTION 9

The bylaws of the Diocesan Council shall provide for the appointment of a Finance Committee and an Audit Committee. Such Committees shall have all the respective powers and shall perform all the respective duties set forth by the General Canons and those directed by the Diocesan Council.

SECTION 10

There shall be an Executive Committee of the Diocesan Council, with duties delegated by the Diocesan Council, which shall consist of the President, the Diocesan Treasurer, the Canon to the Ordinary, or Assistant to the Bishop, if there be one, with voice but no vote, and two persons elected by the Diocesan Council from its membership. One of the elected members shall be a Dean or Vice-Dean, and the other elected member shall be a member at large.

SECTION 11

Any voting member of the Diocesan Council shall not be eligible to serve on the Standing Committee or the Commission on Ministry, with the exception of the Standing Committee representatives appointed by the Standing Committee to the Diocesan Council and the Commission on Ministry. A Dean of a Deanery may not also be a member at large.
CANON 6

CHURCH PROPERTY

SECTION 1

(a) Title to all real property within the State of New Mexico acquired by the Diocese, from or for the use of any Parish, mission, or institution, shall be held for the use of the Church by the “Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation”. The Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, Suffragan Bishop, Chancellors, the Treasurer of the Diocese, and members of the Standing Committee shall constitute the membership of the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in New Mexico. The Bishop shall be President and the President of the Standing Committee shall be Vice President of this Corporation.

(b) Title to all real property in the State of Texas acquired by the Diocese, from or for the use of any Parish, mission, or institution, shall be held for the use of the Church in the name of the “Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation”. The Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, Suffragan Bishop, Chancellors, the Treasurer of the Diocese, and the members of the Standing Committee shall constitute the membership of the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas. The Bishop shall be President and the President of the Standing Committee shall be Vice President of this Corporation.

SECTION 2

An incorporated Parish may hold property in its name subject to the requirements of this Canon. Upon the request of an incorporated Parish, property held for the Parish by the Diocese shall be conveyed to the Parish. A Parish may not encumber, sell, lease or alienate real property without the written consent of the Bishop and Trustees of the Property. All of the terms of any such proposed transaction shall be submitted to the Bishop and Trustees of the Property.

SECTION 3

Parishes seeking approval for the acquisition of encumbered real property, the encumbrance of real property or for any change in the terms of an existing encumbrance shall submit the following information to the Trustees of the Property:

(a) a description of the property to be encumbered, with a statement of existing encumbrances on such property, if any;

(b) the amount of the money to be borrowed or the terms of any proposed change, renewal or extension of an existing encumbrance;

(c) the terms of and the source of funds for repayment;

(d) a copy of its current budget;

(e) a statement of the use which will be made of the money; and

(f) the need for the proposed expenditure.
SECTION 4

Any new mission, Parish or institution formed within the Diocese or joining the Diocese shall be subject to all of the requirements of this Canon and shall enter into such agreements and make such transfers and other conveyances as may be required by the Bishop and the Standing Committee to confirm that all real and personal property of the mission, Parish or institution then owned or thereafter acquired shall be held, sold, transferred, alienated, conveyed, mortgaged or encumbered, in whole or in part, only in conformity with this Canon.

SECTION 5

(a) All trust and permanent funds, monies, securities, and all other tangible and intangible personal property, whether acquired by gift or bequest or raised by resolution of the Convention, and belonging to the Diocese or any unincorporated Parish, mission, or institution shall be under the control of the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation, or of the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation, and shall be invested and administered by the Diocesan Investment Board or as directed by the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation, or of the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation, and subject to oversight of the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation or of the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation. The Treasurer of the Diocese shall give an accounting of such funds and other personal property annually to the Convention.

(b) Funds from the sale of property belonging to any mission being held by the Trustees of the Corporation and invested shall be held by the Trustees for the use of that mission for future building or the acquisition of property. Until such need for the use of the corpus being held, any income from the invested funds may be used by the mission for its operation or, if not needed, added to the corpus for future use.

SECTION 6

In all property matters, the General Canons governing property held in trust for the Church and the Diocese shall be definitive.

SECTION 7

All real and personal property now and/or in the future held by or for the benefit of any Parish, Mission, or institution of the Diocese, is and shall be held in irrevocable trust for the benefit of the Diocese and the Church, regardless of the named owner of legal title thereof. So long as a Parish, Mission, or institution of this Diocese remains a part of, and subject to, the Diocese and the Church, the existence of such trust over property held by or for its benefit does not limit its power or authority existing over such property as otherwise permitted by the Canons of the Diocese and the General Canons.
SECTION 1

The Diocesan Investment Board shall invest and administer the monies and other properties of the Diocese as may be assigned to its keeping by the Diocesan Council or the Trustees of the Property. The investment and administration of monies and other properties by the Diocesan Investment Board shall be subject to oversight of the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation or of the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation.

SECTION 2

The Diocesan Investment Board shall consist of the Bishop, the Treasurer of the Diocese, and three to eight members appointed by the Trustees of the Property. The terms of the appointed members shall be three years. The members shall be adult communicants in good standing who are resident within the Diocese and who are qualified to serve. The members shall elect a Chair from among the membership at the first meeting of the Board following the Convention, with the Chair to serve until a new Chair is elected. Vacancies created by reason of death, resignation or removal from the Diocese shall be filled by appointment by the Trustees of the Property.

SECTION 3

The Diocesan Investment Board may appoint a Comptroller who shall keep the accounts of all monies and properties invested under the authority and control of the Diocesan Investment Board. The Diocesan Investment Board shall report to the Trustees of the Property at least annually, and shall also provide reports to the Diocesan Council and the Convention.

SECTION 4

The corpus of all monies and properties under the authority and control of the Diocesan Investment Board, including all interest and other income derived there from, may be invested, reinvested or remitted to the Diocese of the Rio Grande in accordance with the designated purposes for which the funds were established. The Diocesan Investment Board may employ such counselors and advisors as it deems necessary in fulfilling its investment responsibilities.

SECTION 5

(a) The monies and other properties raised and acquired under the authority of Resolution Number 8 of the Fifth Annual Convention of the Diocese, together with any additions and accretions thereto, shall be a separate permanent fund known as the Episcopal Advancement Fund (hereafter referred to in this Section as the Fund).

(b) The principal of the Fund shall be invested and reinvested under the direction of the Diocesan Investment Board. The Board may make loans and from time to time, the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation, or the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation, may direct the Board to make loans from the Fund for capital projects at reasonable rates of interest to qualified congregations of the Diocese in accordance with such regulations and procedures as the Board may adopt. The interest and other income of the Fund shall be accumulated, invested and reinvested, and subject to oversight of the
Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, a Corporation, or of the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, a Corporation, appropriated from time to time for reserves and to the expenses of management, to the making of grants for urgent capital, missionary, and advancement work of the church in this Diocese, and to the increase of the permanent principal of the Fund.
CANON 8

DIOCESAN CAMPS AND CONFERENCE CENTERS

SECTION 1

The Camp and Conference Center ministry shall be carried out through sites and facilities designated for that purpose.

SECTION 2

The Board of Directors of the Camps and Conference Centers, a sub-committee of the Diocesan Council, shall be composed of the Bishop, a member of the Standing Committee appointed annually by the Standing Committee, a member of the Diocesan Council appointed annually by the Diocesan Council, and four other members appointed by the Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, for three-year terms. Two of the four members serving for three-year terms shall be appointed the first year, one the second year, and one the third year. These members shall be adult communicants in good standing who are residents in the Diocese, not more than three of whom shall be ordained. All members must be qualified to serve. No member shall serve more than two consecutive full three-year terms. Three years must elapse after the second consecutive term before former members are eligible for appointment to the board. Vacancies shall be filled in the same way as the original appointment, with the appointee serving for the unexpired term. The Board of Directors shall elect a Chair from its members.

SECTION 3

The responsibilities of the Board of Directors shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(a) oversight of the program and year round use of the camp and conference facilities, which program shall be developed with advice and consent of the Diocesan Council;

(b) development and implementation of long range plans for existing camp and conference facilities and possible future development, in consultation with the Trustees of the Property;

(c) hiring and supervision of staff, with all hiring to be subject to the approval of the Bishop and Standing Committee;

(d) development of an adequate funding base for program and development in consultation with the Diocesan Council;

(e) submission of annual financial reports to the Diocesan Council.

SECTION 4

The Board shall report annually to the Convention. Reports shall be made to the Diocesan Council in the sixth month following each Convention and at such other times as the Diocesan Council may require.
CANON 9

OFFICERS OF THE DIOCESE

SECTION 1

(a) A Secretary shall be appointed by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority, subject to the approval of the Convention. The Secretary shall remain in office until a successor is selected. The Secretary shall see to the taking of the minutes of the proceedings of the Convention, and see to the preservation of its records; attest the public acts of the body; deliver the Journals and records of the Convention to the Registrar; and perform such other duties as may be directed by the Convention or by the Bishop, or Ecclesiastical Authority, or by the enactments of the General Convention. The minutes of the proceedings of the Convention may be taken and maintained under the direction of the Secretary in any form that will provide a record of the proceedings.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Secretary to deliver to the Registrar the minutes of the Convention, together with the Journals, files, papers, reports, and all other documents within six months after the adjournment of the Convention. The minutes may be destroyed by the Registrar three years after receipt.

(c) Following each General Convention, the Secretary shall distribute a copy of the General Constitution and General Canons to each congregation in the Diocese.

SECTION 2

An Assistant Secretary may be appointed by the Secretary. If a vacancy shall occur in the office of Secretary, the duties of the Secretary shall be carried out by the Assistant Secretary, or if none, by a Secretary pro tem appointed by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority.

SECTION 3

An Executive Secretary may be appointed by the Bishop, subject to the approval of the Convention, to assist in administering the program and finances of the Diocese and perform such other duties as shall be prescribed by the Bishop.

SECTION 4

(a) A Registrar shall be appointed by the Bishop, or Ecclesiastical Authority, subject to the approval of the Convention. The Registrar shall receive all Journals, files, papers and such other documents as may be forwarded to him by the Bishop, catalog or index the items received, and provide for their safekeeping, and perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Convention.

(b) An Historian shall be appointed annually by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority. The Historian shall collect, preserve, arrange, and edit historical and biographical material pertaining to the Diocese, its congregations, institutions, and activities, when such material is received by the Registrar, or is delivered to the Historian by any officer or institution of the Diocese.

SECTION 5

(a) A Treasurer shall be elected by the Convention for a term of three years. In addition to the duties prescribed by other canons, the Treasurer shall:
(1) receive and disburse all funds collected under the authority of the Convention, except those funds which are collected and disbursed under special provisions, in these canons or otherwise;
(2) supervise the keeping of the accounts of the Fair Share of giving of the congregations;
(3) provide the Secretary, before the opening of each Convention, with a list of all congregations delinquent in the full payment of their Fair Share of giving;
(4) present to each Convention a statement of accounts of the congregations for the previous year;
(5) publish an account of the fair share of giving of each congregation in the official newspaper of the Diocese;
(6) maintain custody of all funds assigned to the Treasurer’s keeping by the Bishop, the Convention, and the Finance Commission, and file an account of such funds at the Convention.

(b) The accounts and the books of the Treasurer shall be audited by a certified public accountant, and the auditor’s report shall be provided to the Secretary not later than thirty (30) days prior to the Convention.

(c) An Assistant Treasurer may be appointed by the Standing Committee upon nomination by the Bishop. The Assistant Treasurer shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the Treasurer. In the event of the death, resignation, or disability of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer shall succeed to the office until the next Convention.

SECTION 6

Two Chancellors shall be appointed annually by the Bishop, or Ecclesiastical Authority, subject to the approval of the Convention. The Chancellors shall be clergy or lay adult communicants of the Diocese in good standing. One shall be a resident member of the Bar of the State of Texas, and one shall be a resident member of the Bar of the State of New Mexico. The Chancellors shall be the legal advisors to the Bishop, the Convention, and the several boards and committees of the Diocese.

SECTION 7

A Canonist may be appointed annually by the Bishop subject to the approval of the Convention. It shall be the duty of the Canonist to maintain an accurate codification of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese. The Canonist shall be a member of the Constitution and Canons Commission, ex-officio, with all rights of membership and, upon request, shall advise the Bishop on canon law.

SECTION 8

(a) Should a vacancy occur in any elective or appointive office, a successor shall be appointed by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority, with the approval of the Standing Committee, to serve until the next Convention, unless otherwise provided by canon.

(b) Unless otherwise provided by canon, each elective officer shall make an annual report to the Convention.

(c) All officers, elected or appointed, shall be either clergy or lay adult communicants in good standing, resident within the Diocese for not less than one year prior to their election or appointment and shall be qualified to serve.

SECTION 9
The Diocese of the Rio Grande shall indemnify and save harmless any individual serving on the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, the Finance Commission, the Trustees of the Property of the Protestant Episcopal Church in New Mexico, the Trustees of the Property of the Episcopal Church, Diocese of the Rio Grande, in Texas, the Diocesan Investment Board, the Board of Directors of the Camps and Conference Centers, the Budget and Audit Committee, the Officers of the Diocese, the Assistants to the Bishop by whatever title they may be called together with the Diocesan staff, and the officers of the Diocesan institutions, against any and all reasonable expenses, costs, liabilities and claims (including, without limitation, legal fees to defend against such liabilities and claims) arising out of their discharge in good faith of responsibilities under or incident to their service for the Diocese, including expenses, costs and attorney’s fees actually or reasonably incurred in connection with the defense of any action, suit or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which such person is made a party by reason of being or having served as an officer or agent of the Diocese, excepting only expenses and liabilities arising out of willful misconduct or bad faith. The indemnification shall include any amounts paid to satisfy a judgment or to compromise or settle a claim. This indemnity shall not preclude such further indemnities as may be available under any insurance purchased by the Diocese or provided by the Diocese through any other agreement. It is the intention of the Diocese that the indemnification provided for in this Section shall not limit, but shall be in addition to any immunity or indemnification otherwise provided by law.
CANON 10

DEPUTIES TO THE GENERAL CONVENTION AND PROVINCIAL SYNOD

SECTION 1

At the Convention occurring two years prior to each General Convention of the Church, the Convention shall elect clerical and lay deputies, plus alternates, to represent the Diocese at the succeeding General Convention and any Synod of the Province. The number of such deputies shall be determined by the General Convention, and an equal number of alternates shall be elected. The deputies elected to the General Convention shall also represent the Diocese at the Synod of the Province.

SECTION 2

(a) Each clerical deputy must be canonically and actually resident in this Diocese for at least one year prior to election. Each lay deputy must be actually resident and an adult communicant in good standing of a congregation of this Diocese for at least one year prior to election.

(b) Any clerical deputy who shall cease to be canonically resident and actually residing in this Diocese, and any lay deputy who ceases to be actually residing in this Diocese or an adult communicant in good standing shall no longer be qualified to serve as a deputy to represent the Diocese at the General Convention and the Synod, and shall be deemed unable to represent the Diocese.

SECTION 3

(a) The deputies shall serve until their successor are elected or designated. In the event that a deputy is unable to represent the Diocese at the General Convention and/or the Synod, or any session thereof, the Bishop shall designate the alternate or alternates to attend.

(b) If any deputy shall cease to serve or be disqualified from serving as a deputy for any reason, the Bishop shall designate an alternate to serve in place of the deputy until the next Convention. If all alternates have been so appointed to serve as deputies and there be an insufficient number of deputies to represent the Diocese at the General Convention or at the Synod, the Bishop shall appoint such additional deputies as may be necessary to provide full representation for the Diocese, such appointed deputies to serve until the next Convention.

SECTION 4

The Secretary of the Diocese shall notify the Secretary of the General Convention and the Secretary of the Synod of the names and addresses of the persons who will represent the Diocese at the General Convention and Synod in the form and manner required by Canon or instructions from the General Convention or Synod.
CANON 11

DEANERIES AND REGIONAL MINISTRIES

SECTION 1

(a) The Diocese may be divided into Deaneries by the Bishop with the advice of the Diocesan Council.

(b) All congregations within the geographic limits of a Deanery are members of the Deanery. The delegates to Convention from the member congregations of the Deanery shall be the representatives to Deanery meetings.

(c) In each Deanery the Bishop shall appoint a Dean who serves at the pleasure of the Bishop. Deans shall be ex-officio delegates of the Convention, with all rights of membership.

(d) Each Deanery shall elect a Vice-Dean to the Diocesan Council for a two-year term. The Vice-Dean shall be of the opposite order of the Dean. In even-numbered years the Northwest and the Southeast Deaneries shall elect. In odd-numbered years the Southwest and the Northeast Deaneries shall elect. A person may serve as the elected representative for two full consecutive terms, and become eligible for election again two years after the expiration of his/her second term.

(e) Each Deanery shall have a Deanery Board, consisting of the Dean, the Vice-Dean, the Deanery Treasurer, and at least two but no more than five other members elected by the Deanery. The Deanery Treasurer and the other elected members of the Deanery Board are to be elected in accordance with Deanery bylaws. The Dean shall preside at all meetings of the Deanery and of the Deanery Board.

(f) The Deanery shall be responsible for identification of mission needs, and shall supervise and be annually accountable for funds allocated to it by the Diocesan Council.

SECTION 2

(a) The Diocese may also be divided into Regional Ministry Areas by the Bishop with the advice of the Diocesan Council.

(b) Each Regional Ministry shall be served by a Board whose chairperson shall be a clergy supervisor appointed by the Bishop.

(c) Membership on a Regional Ministry Board shall include the Bishop’s Wardens and one delegate from each mission congregation, and one delegate from each Parish congregation, all of whom are canonically resident and actually residing within the geographical bounds of a Regional Ministry Area.
CANON 12

MISSIONS

SECTION 1

(a) The Bishop may organize, suspend or dissolve missions in consultation with the Diocesan Council and Standing Committee. The Bishop shall have authority over the affairs of a mission and shall appoint a Vicar or some other person as representative.

(b) No new mission shall be organized or regular services instituted except as authorized by the Bishop, acting in consultation with the Diocesan Council. No mission may change its location without the prior approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Council.

(c) An application to establish a new mission may be made by twelve (12) adult communicants in good standing in the form prescribed in Canon 20. An application may also be made by a Parish Vestry seeking to establish a parochial mission. In the latter case, the application may be made by resolution of the Vestry, agreeing to sponsor the mission and hold property in trust for the mission.

SECTION 2

The Bishop shall appoint a Bishop’s Committee for each mission, consisting of the Vicar, a Warden and not more than eleven (11) laypersons. The Vicar shall be chair. The Warden and members shall be qualified voters of the mission. The Warden and the members shall serve at the pleasure of the Bishop. The Committee shall elect a treasurer and clerk who need not be members of the Committee.

SECTION 3

The Bishop’s Committee of a mission congregation seeking base budget support shall make their request to the Diocesan Council each year.

SECTION 4

(a) The qualified voters of each mission shall meet annually for the purpose of recommending persons to be appointed to the Bishop’s Committee, electing delegates and alternates to the Convention, receiving reports covering parochial statistics and finances and the transaction of such other business not prohibited by canon or civil law. The bylaws of the mission may provide for staggered election to multi-year terms, not to exceed three years, for delegates to the Convention.

(b) The Bishop, or, in the Bishop’s absence, the Vicar, shall preside at the meeting. In the absence of both, the Warden, or, in the absence of the Warden, a member of the Bishop’s Committee, in order of seniority, shall preside.

(c) Special meetings of the mission may be called by the Bishop, the Vicar, the Warden, any two members of the Bishop’s Committee or on the petition of at least twenty-five (25) percent of the qualified voters of the mission. Notice of the special meeting shall be given by the monthly bulletin, if any, or by announcement on two consecutive Sundays at the regular Sunday service. In addition, if a meeting is called by the Bishop, the Bishop may direct that notice be given by any reasonable method.
SECTION 5

A mission receiving financial aid from the Diocese shall annually report its financial condition, including receipts and disbursements, in such form as the Bishop may prescribe.

SECTION 6

An Every Member Canvass, or some other stewardship program, shall be conducted annually by each mission prior to the Convention.

SECTION 7

All missions are subject to the provisions of Canon 6 regarding church property.
CANON 13
PARISHES

SECTION 1

A mission congregation may apply for parochial status in the form prescribed in these Canons. Parochial status may be granted by the Bishop acting with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Council. The mission must be able to demonstrate that it can meet the following conditions:

(a) ability to support a full-time rector at not less than the diocesan minimum compensation, including providing an adequate housing allowance or a rectory;

(b) ability to provide and maintain permanent facilities for the exclusive use of the congregation for worship and other congregational activities, unless such congregation is wholly within a public land enclave, and thereby prohibited from owning property; provided, however, for good cause shown, the Bishop with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Council may waive the requirement of this subsection upon such conditions and requirements as the Bishop together with the Diocesan Council may deem proper;

(c) ability to pay the Fair Share under the apportionment formula of the Diocese.

SECTION 2

(a) A Parish congregation is considered an aided Parish when it is unable to pay the minimum diocesan stipend and all financial requirements for a Rector. An aided Parish may remain an aided Parish for a period not to exceed five years. If during this period the congregation is unable to meet these financial requirements it shall become a mission congregation with the advice and consent of the Bishop and Diocesan Council. If the Parish becomes vacant while being an aided Parish, the Bishop shall have the right to call and appoint the Rector.

(b) If at any time a Parish is unable to meet its financial obligations, including payment of its fair share of giving, the Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Council, may change the status of the congregation from a Parish to an organized mission, or may, with the full disclosure of all financial records and the presentation of a plan to meet financial obligations the following year, lower the Parish’s fair share.

(c) In addition to the provisions of Section 2 (b) above, the Convention may, by a two-thirds majority vote, dissolve a Parish, reduce it to mission status, or suspend the Parish’s representation at the Convention, unless such Parish has been designated as an aided Parish, for any of the following reasons:

(1) failure of the Parish to make a Parochial Report for two successive years;
(2) failure of the Parish to employ a rector or a settled minister for a period of six months;
(3) willful disregard or disobedience by the Parish of a provision of the General Constitution and General Canons or those of this Diocese;
(4) failure to pay its fair share of giving as determined by the formula.

SECTION 3

(a) The qualified voters of each Parish shall meet annually for the purpose of electing members to the Vestry and delegates and alternates to the Convention, receiving reports covering parochial statistics and finances, and the transaction of such other business not prohibited by Canon or civil law. The bylaws
of the Parish may provide for staggered election to multi-year terms, not to exceed three years, for
deleagtes to the Convention.

(b) Special meetings of the Parish may be called by the Bishop, the Rector, a Warden, or any two
members of the Vestry, or on the petition of twenty-five (25) percent of the qualified voters of the Parish.
Notice of the special meeting shall be given by the monthly bulletin, if any, or by announcement on two
consecutive Sundays at the regular Sunday service. In addition, if a meeting is called by the Bishop, the
Bishop may direct that notice be given by any reasonable method.

(c) The Bishop or Rector shall preside at all meetings of the Parish. In the absence of both, the
Senior Warden, or, in the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden, shall preside. In the absence
of the Bishop, Rector, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden, a member of the Vestry, in order of seniority,
shall preside.

SECTION 4

A Parish may incorporate under state law, provided that the corporate name includes the words
“Episcopal Church,” and the articles of incorporation specify that the Rector, Wardens and Vestry shall
constitute the board of directors. A Parish may adopt bylaws, which shall incorporate by reference the
General Constitution and General Canons and those of this Diocese. A copy of the bylaws and articles of
incorporation, if any, shall be filed with the Bishop.

SECTION 5

An Every Member Canvass, or some other stewardship program, shall be conducted annually by each
Parish prior to the Convention.

SECTION 6

A Parish may not change its geographical or physical location without the prior approval in writing of the
Bishop and the Diocesan Council and the Standing Committee.
CANON 14

VESTRIES

SECTION 1

(a) The Vestry shall consist of the Rector of the Parish, a Senior Warden, a Junior Warden and elected members. The number of the elected members of the Vestry shall be divisible by three, and may not exceed fifteen members. All members of the Vestry shall be qualified voters of the Parish.

(b) The Senior Warden may be:

(1) elected from among the Vestry membership by the qualified voters of the Parish;
(2) elected from among the Vestry by the Vestry;
(3) appointed by the Rector from among the Vestry;
(4) appointed by the Rector from among the qualified voters of the Parish.

The Parish bylaws shall provide the manner of election or appointment of the Senior Warden. The term of office of the Senior Warden may not exceed three consecutive years.

(c) The Junior Warden may be:

(1) elected annually from among the Vestry members by the qualified voters of the Parish;
(2) elected annually from among the Vestry members by the Vestry.

The Parish bylaws shall provide the manner of election of the Junior Warden. The term of office of the Junior Warden may not exceed three consecutive years.

(d) One-third of the elected Vestry members shall be elected annually by the qualified voters of the Parish, for a term of three years. Vacancies in the Vestry shall be filled by the vote of a majority of the remaining members. The person chosen to fill the vacancy shall serve until the next succeeding Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting shall elect a person to fill the unexpired term.

(e) Upon the establishment of a new Parish, Vestry members shall be elected as follows: one-third to serve for a period of one year, one-third for two years, and one-third for three years.

(f) In any Parish having thirty (30) or more adult communicants, a retiring Vestry member who has served a full term of three years shall not be eligible for election to the Vestry until one year after the expiration of the full term.

(g) At its first meeting after the Annual Meeting, the Vestry shall elect a treasurer and a clerk who need not be Vestry members.

SECTION 2

(a) Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held monthly at a time and place to be fixed by the Vestry, or in default thereof, by the Rector.

(b) Special meetings of the Vestry may be called by the Rector or one of the Wardens, by the Bishop, or by two members of the Vestry, upon such notice as the Vestry shall prescribe.
(c) A majority of the Vestry shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; provided, however, that one of the quorum must be the Rector or a Warden.

(d) The Rector shall preside at meetings of the Vestry and shall have all the rights of other members. In the absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden, or in the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden, shall preside.

SECTION 3

If a Warden or Vestry member is absent from four regular or special consecutive meetings without good cause recorded in the minutes of the meetings missed, that member shall be dropped from the Vestry and a vacancy declared. The remaining members shall fill the vacancy as provided in this Canon.

SECTION 4

The Vestry shall have responsibility for the business matters of the Parish, including providing, and keeping in good order, a house of worship and all the necessary furnishings and appointments of the same; providing all things requisite to the carrying on of the work of the Parish, and making payments of all Parish obligations, including the Fair Share and other obligations to the Diocese.

SECTION 5

The Vestry shall elect a Rector in accordance with the Canons of the General Convention after conference with the Bishop and after due consideration of all nominations presented by the Bishop. The Vestry shall have the right to consider other nominees.
CANON 15
MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS OF MINISTERS

SECTION 1
The Rector or Vicar shall have general supervision of every organization of the congregation, and no organization may be formed without consent of the Rector or Vicar.

SECTION 2
In addition to the information required by the General Canons, a record of all public services shall be kept by the Rector or Vicar in the Parish Register, including the place, date and nature of the service. For the service of Holy Communion, the number of persons participating in the communion shall also be recorded.

SECTION 3
The statistics and records kept in the Parish Register, or any portion thereof, shall be reported by the Rector or Vicar to the Bishop on such form and at such intervals as the Bishop may prescribe and shall be compiled annually and reported to the Convention.

SECTION 4
The Senior Warden of a Parish, or the Warden of a mission, is responsible for maintaining parochial statistics and making parochial Reports in the absence of the Rector, Vicar or other settled minister.

SECTION 5
Licenses for Lay Readers, Pastoral Leaders, Lay Preachers, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, or Catechists shall be granted in accordance with the General Canons for a definite term not to exceed three years. The report seeking renewal of these licenses shall be filed with the Bishop no later than two weeks before the license expires.

SECTION 6
In addition to the requirements of the General Canons, a person seeking a license as a Lay Reader, Pastoral Leader, Lay Preacher, Lay Eucharistic Minister, or Catechist must obtain written recommendation of a majority of the Vestry or Bishop’s Committee.

SECTION 7
All clergy of the Diocese shall undertake continuing education regularly. An annual report of continuing education activities shall be made to the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry.

SECTION 8
All members of the clergy, having subscribed to the Declaration required by Article VIII of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church, and all postulants, candidates for ordination, and ordinands, shall be under the obligation to model in their own lives the received teaching of the Church that all its members are to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony.
CANON 16
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY OF THE BAPTIZED

SECTION 1

The Commission on Ministry of the Baptized shall consist of four clergy persons, four lay members, a recent ordinand, a member of the Standing Committee appointed annually by the Standing Committee, and may include a psychiatrist, psychologist, pastoral counselor, or vocational deacon, all of whom shall have voice and vote. The Canon Theologian and Canon to the Ordinary shall be ex-officio members without vote. The Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members annually.

SECTION 2

In the odd years, one clergy person shall be elected for a four-year term, and one lay person shall be appointed by the Bishop for a four-year term. In the even years, one lay person shall be elected for a four-year, and one clergy person shall be appointed by the Bishop for a four-year term.

SECTION 3

A recent ordinand shall be appointed annually by the Bishop for a one-year term. The Standing Committee shall appoint, annually, one of its members for a one-year term. A psychiatrist, psychologist, or pastoral counselor may be appointed annually by the Bishop for a one-year term, such appointment to be within the standards established by the Commission on Ministry of the Baptized. A vocational deacon may be appointed annually by the Bishop for a one-year term. The clergy persons shall be canonically resident in the Diocese. The lay members shall be adult communicants in good standing.

SECTION 4

Should any vacancy occur between the meetings of Convention, the vacancy shall be filled by the Bishop, from the same order, with the approval of the Standing Committee. The person chosen to fill the vacancy will serve until the next succeeding Convention, at which time, if the vacancy is from an appointed position, the Bishop shall appoint a successor for the remainder of the unexpired term from the same order. If the vacancy is from an elected position, the Convention will fill the vacancy for the unexpired term from the same order. A member may serve two consecutive four-year terms, and again becomes eligible to serve four years after the expiration of the second term.
CANON 17
ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1

The ecclesiastical discipline of a priest or deacon shall be governed by Title IV of the Canons for the Government of the Episcopal Church. As used in this Canon, the terms Disciplinary Board, Conference Panel, Hearing Panel, Reference Panel, Advisors, Respondent, Respondent’s Counsel, Church Attorney, Intake Officer, and Investigator shall have the duties, functions, and responsibilities as set forth in Title IV.

SECTION 2

(a) There is hereby established a Disciplinary Board consisting of nine (9) members, five (5) of whom shall be clergy canonically resident in the Diocese, and four (4) of whom shall be adult Communicants in Good Standing and members of a congregation in the Diocese. The members of the Disciplinary Board shall be elected at the Diocesan Convention. Nominations shall be made in accordance with Diocesan Canons. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the Diocesan Convention. Each member shall be elected for a four (4) year term, except if a member is elected to fill a vacancy the term of such member shall be the unexpired term of the member being replaced.

(b) The first election for members of the Disciplinary Board shall be at the Diocesan Convention held in 2011. At the first election, nine (9) members shall be elected to serve on the Disciplinary Board with their terms to commence immediately upon the adjournment of the Diocesan Convention. The terms of office of the members of the Board elected at the Diocesan Convention in 2011 shall be staggered and arranged into four classes, with the first class of members expiring on January 1, 2013, the second class on January 1, 2014, the third class on January 1, 2015, and the fourth class on January 1, 2016. The persons selected to fill each of the terms at the time of the first election shall be determined according to the number of votes cast for each person elected, with persons receiving the largest number of votes serving the longest term, the group receiving the next largest number of votes serving the second longest term, and the group elected with the fewest number of votes serving the shortest term. Thereafter, at each Diocesan Convention members shall be elected to fill the vacancies for the terms that end on January 1 following the Diocesan Convention. No member shall be eligible for re-election for a year after the end of the member’s second consecutive full term.

(c) Vacancies on the Board shall be filled as follows:

(1) Upon a determination that a vacancy exists, the President of the Board shall promptly notify the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority of the vacancy. The Bishop, or in the absence of a Bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority, having consulted with the Standing Committee, shall appoint a replacement member of the same order.

(2) A person appointed to the Board to fill a vacancy shall serve until the next Diocesan Convention at which time an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term which has been filled by appointment. Such election shall be held following the same procedure and in the same manner as other elections for members of the Board.

(3) These provisions for filling a vacancy on the Board shall not apply to a temporary vacancy arising when a member is disqualified or is otherwise unable to serve in a proceeding pending before the Board. In the event such a temporary vacancy or
vacancies arises, and the Board is unable to function because of the vacancies, the President of the Board may request the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority to make one or more temporary appointments to the Board for the purpose of hearing the proceeding then pending before the Board. Any such temporary appointment or appointments shall be made in consultation with the Standing Committee, and shall be ratified by Diocesan Council. A temporary appointment to the Board shall continue only for the purpose of the proceeding for which the temporary appointment is made, and shall terminate upon the final conclusion of the proceeding for which the temporary appointment has been made.

SECTION 3

In any proceeding under this Canon, if any member of a Conference Panel or a Hearing Panel shall become aware of a personal conflict of interest or believes in good faith that the member is for any reason unable to serve with respect to the proceeding then pending, that member shall notify the President of the Board and request a replacement member to serve. Respondent, Respondent’s Counsel, and the Church Attorney shall have the right to challenge a member of a Panel for conflict of interest or bias by filing with the Panel a motion to disqualify, which motion shall set forth the specific grounds on which the challenge is based. The remaining members of the Panel shall rule upon the motion to disqualify; and if for any reason the remaining members of the Panel are unable for any reason to rule upon the motion to disqualify, then the motion shall be referred to the full Board for a ruling. Upon the disqualification of a member of a Panel, the President of the Board shall promptly appoint another member to the Panel.

SECTION 4

Within sixty (60) days following January 1 of each year, the Board shall convene to elect a President from among its members who shall serve for that year. At meetings of the Board or of any Panel at which a Respondent or witnesses are to appear, members must attend in person. At all other meetings, including meetings with the Respondent’s Attorney or the Church Attorney, members shall be permitted to attend by telephone or electronic media.

SECTION 5

An Intake Officer or Intake Officers shall be appointed from time to time by the Bishop or in the absence of a Bishop by the Ecclesiastical Authority who shall serve at the pleasure of the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority. The names, addresses, and other contact information for the Intake Officers shall be published or otherwise made available throughout the Diocese.

SECTION 6

From time to time, as circumstances may require, the Bishop, or in the absence of a Bishop the Ecclesiastical Authority, shall appoint an Investigator in consultation with the President of the Board. Investigators shall be responsible for conducting an investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding any matter referred to them by the Intake Officer or President of the Board. More than one Investigator may be appointed. Investigators may, but need not, be members of the Church. Investigators shall present the findings of the investigation in writing to the Reference Panel.
SECTION 7

The Bishop, or in the absence of a Bishop the Ecclesiastical Authority, shall appoint one or more persons to serve as Church Attorneys. Any person selected to serve as the Church Attorney must be a duly licensed attorney in good standing to practice law. Church Attorneys need not reside within the Diocese, but must be available to consult with the President of the Board. A Church Attorney may be removed from office by the Bishop, or in the absence of a Bishop by the Ecclesiastical Authority, with or without cause.

SECTION 8

The Bishop, or in the absence of a Bishop the Ecclesiastical Authority, shall appoint an Advisor for the complaining party and an Advisor for the Respondent.

SECTION 9

The Board shall appoint a Clerk to assist the Board with the management and safekeeping of its records, and to provide administrative support to the Board. The Clerk need not be a member of the Board. A person serving on the Diocesan staff shall be eligible to be appointed Clerk.

SECTION 10

Reasonable costs and expenses of the Board, the Intake Officer, the Investigator, the Church Attorney, the Clerk, Advisors, the Conference Panel and the Hearing Panel shall be the obligation of the Diocese.

SECTION 11

Records of active proceedings before the Board including during the period of any appeal shall be preserved and maintained in the custody of the Clerk, or in the absence of the Clerk by the Diocesan office. Upon the final conclusion of a proceeding, records of the proceeding shall be preserved to the extent required by Title IV.
SECTION 1

St. John's Church in the See City of Albuquerque is the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of the Rio Grande and the official seat of the Bishop. The Bishop shall have the right to use the Cathedral for any of the services of the Church at any time, after reasonable notice to the Dean.

SECTION 2

(a) The Cathedral Chapter shall be the governing body of the Cathedral. The voting members of the Chapter shall be the Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor, if any, the Suffragan Bishop, if any, the Dean, the Chancellors, the Treasurer of the Diocese, three at-large members elected by the Annual Convention, and the Wardens and Vestry of the Cathedral Parish. Honorary canons appointed by the Bishop shall be ex-officio members without voting privileges.

(b) The Annual Convention shall elect one at-large member annually to serve on the Chapter for a three-year term. No member shall be eligible for re-election until three years have elapsed after the completion of the term. Vacancies in the at-large membership may be filled by the Chapter until the next succeeding Annual Convention. The Convention may elect a person to fill an unexpired term.

(c) The Bishop shall be President and the Dean, Vice-President, of the Chapter.

(d) The Chapter may adopt bylaws not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention or of this Diocese and may incorporate under the laws of the State of New Mexico. A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 3

The Dean of the Cathedral shall be elected by the Chapter upon the nomination of the Bishop. The Dean shall be the Rector of the Cathedral Parish, and shall have pastoral charge of the Cathedral congregation. He shall preside at meetings of the Cathedral Vestry and the annual Parish meetings. He shall have control of the services, except as the Bishop may otherwise provide.

SECTION 4

Except as provided in this Canon, the Cathedral Church shall be a Parish Church, with the usual Parish organizations. The Rector and Vestry shall have the customary rights and duties of a Parish Rector and Vestry.

SECTION 5

The Bishop may appoint honorary Canons of the Cathedral.
CANON 19

COMMISSION ON EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS

SECTION 1

There shall be a Commission on Episcopal Schools consisting of at least three members appointed by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority, subject to the approval of the Convention, to serve on a rotating basis for a term of three years. Members may not serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms. The members shall elect a Chair.

SECTION 2

It shall be the duty of the Commission on Episcopal Schools to establish guidelines and standards for the establishment, recognition, and certification of all Episcopal Schools within the Diocese.

SECTION 3

This Commission shall report annually in writing to the Convention.
CANON 20
CERTIFICATES AND FORMS

SECTION 1
Certification of lay delegates to the Convention shall be in the following form, and sent to the Secretary of the Diocese. This certificate must be signed by the Rector or Vicar, or by a Warden.

I do hereby certify that at a meeting of the congregation of __________________________ (Parish) (Mission) in __________________________ held on the day of __________ A.D. 20________ that the following named persons were chosen from the qualified voters of said (Parish) (Mission) to represent this congregation at the Convention.

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In addition, the following will represent the congregation by virtue of holding office as a Warden:

________________________________________________________

Signed

________________________________________________________

SECTION 2
Whenever it is desired that the services of the Church be extended to a new area, interested persons shall submit an application to the Bishop in the following form:

To the Right Reverend __________________________, Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

We, the undersigned, adult communicants in good standing of the Episcopal Church, do hereby request the establishment of a mission of the Diocese at __________________________ be known as ________________ Mission. Conditional upon your favorable action upon this application, we do collectively and individually bind ourselves and all who shall hereafter become members of such mission to confirm to and observe the General Constitution and General Canons and those of this Diocese.

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________
SECTION 3

When the congregation of an organized mission shall desire to become a Parish, a petition shall be presented to the Bishop, signed by at least twelve qualified voters of the mission, as follows:

To the Bishop and Diocesan Council of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of the Rio Grande:

We, the undersigned, petition that ______________________ Mission, located at ______________________ in which locality we reside, be made a Parish in communion with the Episcopal Church in the United States of America and the Diocese of the Rio Grande, the authority of whose Constitution and Canons we do hereby recognize, and to whose liturgy and mode of worship and discipline we promise conformity, and do further agree to submit to and obey such further canonical directions as may be from time to time received from the Ecclesiastical Authority, and we agree to further the work of the Church in said Diocese.

_________________________  ___________________________  ___________________________

_________________________  ___________________________  ___________________________

_________________________  ___________________________  ___________________________
CANON 21

INSURANCE

The Trustees of the Property shall have the authority to establish standards for insurance coverages and minimum amounts of coverages to be maintained by each congregation. Such insurance coverages shall include comprehensive liability, workers’ compensation, physical damage to property, health coverage and such other coverages as may be required by the Standing Committee in accordance with applicable state laws.

With regard to all real property and improvements, insurance coverages and amounts must be acceptable to the applicable Trustees of the Property.

The Parochial Report of each congregation shall include a statement concerning insurance coverages maintained by the congregation for its programs, properties and insurance benefits for clergy and employees.

If any congregation fails to maintain any insurance as herein required, the Standing Committee may cause such insurance to be acquired at the expense of such congregation.
CANON 22

EMPLOYMENT

No person shall be called as a Rector or Vicar by, or assume any clergy position in, any congregation within the Diocese, until a reasonable inquiry into background and references shall have been completed consistent with the General Canons and such Diocesan policies as may be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Standing Committee.

The Bishop and the Standing Committee shall establish appropriate policies and standards to govern the hiring, employment and supervision of all lay employees, both full- and part-time, who are employed by the Diocese, or whose employment is the responsibility of the Diocese, which shall include all missions approved by the Diocese. These policies and standards may, at the direction of the Bishop, be extended to volunteers.

All congregations within the Diocese shall adopt employment policies and procedures which shall be consistent with standards established by the Bishop and the Standing Committee.
SECTION 1

The corporation known as the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest (“ETSS”), organized and existing as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Texas, is hereby recognized and designated as an institution of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

SECTION 2

In conformity with the ETSS By-laws, as amended, the following persons shall be elected to the Board of Trustees of the Seminary in the following manner: 6 adult confirmed communicants in good standing actually or canonically resident in the Diocese of Texas, nominated by the Bishop of Texas and elected by the annual Diocesan Council; 16 members elected by the Board, of whom at least 4 shall be from Province VII of the Episcopal Church, and at least 4 shall be bishops; 1 member appointed by the chair, and 1 member who is a graduate of ETSS and is elected by the Alumni/ae Association. All the foregoing trustees shall have seat, voice, and vote. The Dean and President, one faculty representative elected by the regular faculty, one senior student selected by the Student Association, and the Director of the Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southwest, shall have seat and voice, but no vote.

SECTION 3

Trustees shall be elected for a term of three years, with the possibility of being reelected for two additional three-year terms.

SECTION 4

It shall be the duty of the Trustees of the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest to:

(a) share in the Vision statement of the Seminary and be willing to make service as a trustee in high priority by consistent attendance at board meetings, supporting the Seminary as an informed advocate and with personal financial resources as able, and by participating in all fund raising effort when requested;

(b) recruit potential trustees who can serve the identified needs of the Seminary congruent with its Vision Statement;

(c) promote church support of and student enrollment in the Seminary; and

(d) make annual reports to his/her diocesan council on the condition and progress of the Seminary.
CANON 30

AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1

These Canons may be rescinded, changed, altered, added to, or otherwise amended at any Convention; provided that such proposed changes shall be introduced, discussed, and amended if the will of Convention on one day of a Convention session, and presented for consideration and adoption at another session on a subsequent calendar day. Adoption of an amendment or Canon shall be by a majority vote of Convention with a quorum present. Unless the resolution proposing the amendment or Canon provides otherwise, any amendment or Canon adopted shall become effective immediately upon the close of the Convention.

SECTION 2

When any Canon, section or subsection, is added, amended, or repealed, and the numbering of other Canons, sections, subsections, or cross-references within the body thereof is thereby affected, such changes in the numbering and references including references to the General Canons, and/or recompilation as may be required may be made by the Canonist or the Constitution and Canons Commission.

SECTION 3

All proposed changes, alterations and additions to the Constitution and Canons of the Dioceses, except those which may be introduced to the Convention by special request of the Bishop, shall be submitted in writing to the Constitution and Canons Commission no later than sixty days prior to the Convention at which they are intended to be proposed. Proposed changes shall be included in the advance report to delegates to the Convention at least 30 days prior to Convention. At Convention, the Constitution and Canons Commission will report on each proposed change, alteration or addition.