

# The Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska

As adopted and amended in Convention,  
October 1, 2017.



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## **PREFACE TO THE 2017 REVISIONS**

With the encouragement of The Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, Bishop of Alaska, the Committee on the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska began working to rewrite the Canons in 2013. The committee has met a number of times via telephone conference and four times face to face for extended weekends. Our intention was to update the Canons to be more compatible with our current practice, to eliminate redundancy, and to use language that is more accessible to our many members. Care was also taken to avoid gender-specific language. Some Canons were reworked to bring them into alignment with the Canons of The Episcopal Church, and some were removed as being redundant or no longer relevant. In all, the committee strove to be congruent with the intention of the existing Canons and with the current realities of the Diocese of Alaska, reflecting our diversity.

As one example of our work, the material of Canon 11 has been revised extensively. In the previous version, small and/or rural churches were designated “mission churches.” They are now simply called “congregations.” The committee recognized a necessity to change the emphasis of the Canon from the presumption that a parish starts in a dependent, or ‘missional’ state and inevitably must become capable of supporting one or more full-time ordained clergy members. We sought a structure which respects the nature of congregations in rural Alaska as vibrant, life affirming, and worthy members of the body of Christ. These often remain small and without benefit of full-time paid clergy. This change will deliver us from the suggestion of failure embedded in the false presumption of growth, to a new vision of small congregations as the backbone and life of the coming Church in Alaska. In keeping with this vision, the revised Canons embrace the growing importance of the ministries of all baptized members.

Considerable attention to detail, accuracy, and current practice was given by the committee, bishop and the bishop’s staff. These revised Canons are offered to the Convention in the hope that they are more useable, accurate, and appropriate for our ever-evolving Diocese.

Members of the Constitution and Canons Committee, 2013-2017

The Rev. Gordon Blue, Holy Trinity Church, Juneau, Chair

The Rev. Dawn Allen Herron, St. Andrew’s Church, Petersburg

Laura Bender and Allan Hayton, St. Matthew’s Church, Fairbanks

Nancy Burke, The Rev. Kacei Conyers and Rashmika Paton, St. Mary’s Church, Anchorage

The Rev. Mary Norton, St. George’s-in-the Arctic Church, Kotzebue

Amy Pettit-Ruby, St. David’s Church, Wasilla

Nick Ramsey, St. Jude’s Church, North Pole

**CANON 1**

**Officers of the Corporation**

The Episcopal Diocese of Alaska is governed by its annual convention and is in union with the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America otherwise known as The Episcopal Church. The EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALASKA, INCORPORATED is an Alaska Nonprofit Corporation of The Episcopal Diocese of Alaska.

*The Episcopal Church, the Diocese of Alaska, the Corporation, and the Standing Committee*

**Section 1: Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee is the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska and will

manage the affairs of the Corporation.

*Vice President*

- a) The president of the Standing Committee is the vice-president of the corporation.
- b) The vice-president of the Standing Committee is the vice-president of the corporation when the president of the standing committee is acting as president of the corporation.
- c) The secretary of the Standing Committee is the secretary of the corporation.

*Second Vice-President*

*Secretary*

**Section 2: Bishop**

The bishop is the chief pastor, executive director of the corporation, president of the corporation, and ecclesiastical authority of the diocese and convention of the Diocese of Alaska.

*Executive Director  
President*

- a) The bishop will maintain an office and employ all people needed to assist in the administration of the affairs of the diocese.
- b) In the absence of a bishop, the president of the standing committee will serve as president of the corporation.

**Section 3: Treasurer**

The treasurer is the treasurer of the corporation and the treasurer of the diocese.

*Treasurer*

**Section 4 Chancellor**

*Chancellors*

A [chancellor](#) and one or more [vice-chancellors](#) will be the legal advisors of the bishop, the [convention](#), and of all officers, committees, and organizations of the convention and the Diocese of Alaska.

**Section 5 Historiographer**

*Historiographer*

An [historiographer](#) may be nominated by the bishop and elected by the convention.

**CANON 2**

**Election of a bishop**

**Section 1 Electing convention**

The election of a bishop for the Diocese of Alaska will be made at a regular convention or at a special convention called for that purpose

- a) At least sixty (60) days before the time of the electing convention, a notice will be sent in writing by the Standing Committee to all clergy, the senior warden (or lay person in charge) of every parish, and the minister-in-charge of every congregation in the diocese.
- b) This notice will state the time and place of the proposed election.

*Notification of  
Electing  
Convention*

**Section 2 Nominations**

Prior to the meeting of such convention, the standing committee will receive and make nominations to the convention.

- a) The standing committee will furnish to the delegates, prior to the convention, adequate information on all candidates nominated.
- b) Nominations may also be made from the floor in open convention with provision for adequate background checks, as required under Title III, Canon 11 of The Episcopal Church.

*Nomination of  
Candidates  
  
Candidate  
Information  
  
Nominations  
from Floor*

**Section 3 Voting**

The clergy and lay members present will vote by orders to choose a qualified priest or bishop for the office.

- a) The quorum required for the election of a bishop is a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members in each order (clergy and lay) present and entitled to seat and vote as described in Canon 3 of the Diocese of Alaska.
- b) A majority vote of delegates in each order is necessary for election.

*Voting by Orders  
  
Quorum  
  
Majority in Each  
Order*

**CANON 3**

**Diocesan Convention**

Meetings of the Diocese of Alaska are held by convention.

**Section 1: Representation at convention**

*Members of  
Convention*

a) The convention is to be composed of the bishop, clergy delegates, lay delegates, and members ex-officio. The treasurer, chancellor, and historiographer of the diocese, if present, and the officers of the convention are members ex-officio and without vote unless they are delegates to the Convention.

*Delegates*

b) Each congregation of the Diocese of Alaska is represented by its rector or clergy in charge and by one or more additional delegates.

*Additional  
Delegates*

i) One additional delegate is allowed for each one hundred communicant members or members in good standing of the congregation.

ii) One delegate is allowed for a fraction of one hundred members remaining after this division by one hundred.

iii) If the congregation has no rector or clergy-in-charge, the congregation is entitled to send another delegate in place of the rector or clergy-in-charge.

iv) This will also apply in cases of absence or illness of the rector or clergy-in-charge, or for other cause approved by the bishop.

*Communicants in  
Good Standing*

c) Elected delegates, lay or ordained, are to be communicants in good standing of the congregation that they represent.

*Ecumenical  
Congregations*

i) In an ecumenical congregation of the Diocese of Alaska, a member of another Christian denomination may be a lay delegate.

ii) Such a delegate will be a regular attendant of its services and a contributor to its support.

*Standing  
Committee*

d) Members of the Standing Committee are members with seat and voice. They are without vote, unless they are entitled to vote by being delegates to the convention.

*Election of  
Delegates*

e) Each congregation of the Diocese of Alaska elects delegates to the regular convention according to the bylaws of the congregation or other method chosen by the congregation.



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| i) If an election has not been held, the <u>governing committee</u> appoints delegates.  | <i>Appointed Delegates</i>                     |
| ii) If no delegates are selected by a congregation, the bishop may appoint.  |  |
| iii) The names and addresses of delegates and alternates should be sent to the diocesan office at least sixty (60) days in advance of the regular convention. The diocesan office will forward these names to the <u>secretary of the convention</u> . | <i>Delegates Must Be Identified to Diocese</i> |
| iv) A cost assessment for the convention is to be paid to the diocesan office at the time of registration.   | <i>Convention Assessments Due</i>              |
| v) When there is a <u>special convention</u> , each congregation will be represented by its elected delegates of the prior regular convention.   | <i>Delegates at Special Convention</i>         |
| vi) If such delegates are unable to attend the special convention, the <u>governing committee</u> of the congregation appoints delegates.  |  |
| f) A delegate to convention is entitled to seat and vote when the delegate is both registered and certified.   | <i>Certification of Delegates</i>              |
| i) Registration is completed when the delegate has been made known to the diocesan office as required in <u>Canon 3.1.e</u> , above.   |  |
| ii) Registration is disallowed when there is a suspension of the parish under <u>Canon 9.2</u> in effect.  |  |
| iii) A delegate is certified when the delegate completes registration in person at the convention.   |  |
| g) A majority of delegates certified at the convention constitutes a <u>quorum</u> , but a lesser number may adjourn from day to day.  | <i>Quorum at Convention</i>                    |
| h) It is the duty of each parish, ecumenical congregation, and diocesan congregation to send its delegates, as provided by Canon, to convention.   | <i>Duty to Send Delegates</i>                  |

### **Section 2: Officers of convention**

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| a) The president of the convention is the bishop of the diocese.   |                                |
| i) In the absence of the bishop, the convention is called to order by the senior priest (active and canonically resident in the Diocese of Alaska) who is present. | <i>President of Convention</i> |

*Secretary of  
Convention*

*Assistants to  
Secretary*

*Duties of Secretary*

*Notify Convention  
Hosts*

*Roll Call*

*Minutes*

*Distribution of  
Journal*

- ii) This priest will preside until the convention is organized and ready for business, when a president will be elected from among the priests of the convention.
- b) The secretary of the convention is nominated by the president of the convention for election by the convention.
  - i) The secretary of the convention holds office until a secretary is chosen by the next regular convention. Should a vacancy occur in the office of secretary, the unexpired term is filled by appointment of the ecclesiastical authority.
  - ii) The secretary of the convention may or may not be the same person serving as the secretary of the standing committee.
  - iii) With the approval of the convention, the secretary may appoint one or more assistants.
  - iv) The duties of the secretary of the convention are those prescribed by the Canons of The Episcopal Church and such other services as may be required by the president of the convention:
    - (1) Compile and send to convention host parishes and congregations a list of delegates and alternates at least 30 days in advance of convention.
    - (2) Call the roll of delegates to establish a quorum in accordance with Diocese of Alaska [Canon 3.1.f](#) and [g](#).
    - (3) Record minutes with all reports to the convention as the Journal of the Proceedings of the Convention (hereafter, "[Journal](#)").
    - (4) Distribute copies of the Journal as soon as approved by the standing committee and printed or otherwise published.
      - (a) One (1) to every rector or clergy member in charge of an Episcopal congregation in Alaska.
      - (b) One (1) to each congregation of the diocese.
      - (c) One (1) to each officer of the corporation, as described in [Canon I](#).
      - (d) One (1) each to the presiding bishop and the secretary of the House of Deputies of The Episcopal Church and to such others as the [General Convention](#) or the ecclesiastical authority may direct.

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- (e) One (1) electronic copy (or notification of electronic publication) sent to each delegate, to the email address provided with the delegate registration. Delegates who do not provide an email address may request a printed copy.
- (f) One (1) to any canonically resident clergy member who requests it.
- (5) Furnish the treasurer of the diocese (Canon 1.6) with a copy of the budget as passed by the Diocesan Convention, within thirty (30) days after the adjournment of the convention. *Copy Budget to Treasurer*
- (6) Send certificates of the election of deputies to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church to the secretary of the General Convention and to the standing committee of the host diocese of the next General Convention. *Certify Deputies*
- (7) Perform such other duties pertaining to the office as the Canons of The Episcopal Church describe, including:
  - (a) Deposit Journals in Episcopal Church Archives.....I.6.5(a)
  - (b) Give notice of election of a bishop.....III.11.1(c)
  - (c) Receive notice of Accords and Orders.....IV.14.12(a)
  - (d) Receive notice of proposed Constitutional amendments by General Convention.....Art. XII
  - (e) Record dissolution of pastoral relation.....III.9.13(d)(7)
  - (f) Send Deputies' testimonials.....I.1.1(c).
- v) Forward Pre-filed Resolutions (Canon 4.3): The secretary is to forward each resolution referred to the Diocesan Convention to each congregation within fifteen (15) days after receipt. *Pre-filed Resolutions*
- vi) Perform such other duties as the president of the Diocesan Convention and the Convention itself may direct. *Other Duties*

**Section 3: Voting at convention**

- a) The delegates deliberate in one (1) body, and each delegate has one (1) vote. *One Vote Rule*
  - i) A majority vote is decisive.
  - ii) Any ten (10) delegates may call for a vote by ballot. *Call for Ballots*
  - iii) There will be no vote by orders for any question other than the election of a bishop. *Vote by Orders Restricted*

*Election by  
Majority*

- b) Majority Election: Election to an office or position is by a majority vote of the voting delegates when only one ballot position is to be filled by a vote.
  - i) If no person receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, the candidate with the fewest votes will be eliminated from the ballot and another vote taken.
  - ii) This process will be repeated for as many ballots as necessary until a person receives a majority of the votes cast.

*Election by  
Plurality*

- c) Plurality Election: When there are multiple seats for office (not distinguished by deanery or order) to be filled by election:
  - i) Each delegate may vote for as many positions as are to be filled, on a single ballot.
  - ii) The first position will be filled by the person receiving the most votes, the second position by the person receiving the next-most votes, and so on, until all positions are filled.
  - iii) In the event of a tie for the last-filled position, a run-off ballot will be held as a majority election between the nominees tied for the position.

*Selection of  
Alternates*

- iv) Where alternates for positions are required, alternates are selected from those nominated but not elected in the order of the highest number of votes received on the last ballot.

**CANON 4**

**Business of the Convention**

**Section 1: Order of business**

- |   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| a) The bishop, or in the absence of a bishop, the president of convention ( <a href="#">Canon 3.2.a</a> ) will call the convention to order. The bishop may use this as the occasion of the bishop’s address to the Convention.   | <i>Call to Order</i>          |
| b) The secretary of the previous convention or a replacement designated by the ecclesiastical authority ( <a href="#">Canon 3.2.b</a> ) will call the roll of registered and certified delegates ( <a href="#">Canon 3.1.f</a> ). | <i>Roll Call</i>              |
| c) A quorum ( <a href="#">Canon 3.1.g</a> ) being present, the president declares the convention open and ready for business.   |                               |
| i) The first order of business is the election of a secretary of the convention chosen in accordance with <a href="#">Canon 3.2.b</a> .   | <i>Election of Secretary</i>  |
| ii) The second order of business is the adoption of the Rules of Order designated by the president of the convention.   | <i>Rules</i>                  |
| iii) The next order of business is the election of convention committees. (See Section 2.)  | <i>Election of Committees</i> |
| iv) At the first business meeting of the convention, resolutions will be heard.   | <i>Resolutions</i>            |
| v) The convention will review and approve the budget of the diocese.  | <i>Budget</i>                 |
| vi) <a href="#">Diocesan convention bodies</a> and <a href="#">diocesan offices</a> will be filled by nomination and election as specified in such procedures as are established for the Diocesan Convention.                     | <i>Filling Offices</i>        |
| vii) Before adjourning, the convention will designate the time and place of the next convention, subject to adjustment by the Standing Committee if circumstances require.  | <i>Next Convention</i>        |

**Section 2: Committees of the convention**

*Selection of  
Committee  
Members*

a) Members of committees of the convention will be delegates nominated by the bishop, or in the bishop’s absence, the president, and elected by the convention.

*Procedures of  
Committees*

i) Committees may adopt procedures for their operations.

(1) Procedures must be consistent with the Canons of The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Alaska.

(2) Procedures are subject to review and appeal to the bishop.

*Duration and Term  
of Service*

ii) Committees of the convention include enduring committees and committees for the duration of convention.

(1) Members of enduring committees will serve from the time of election at the beginning of one convention until the election of members at the beginning of the following convention.

*Vacancies*

(2) Vacancies which occur will be filled by appointment of the bishop or ecclesiastical authority.

b) Enduring Committees

*Constitution and  
Canons*

i) Committee on Constitution and Canons:

(1) Reviews and reports on any recommended amendments to the Constitution or the Canons of the diocese.

(2) Ensures that the Constitution and the Canons of the Diocese conform to the requirements of state law and the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

(3) Committee membership will include two (2) members of the clergy and two (2) lay persons. The chancellor of the diocese will be an ex-officio member of the committee.

*Review of  
Minutes*

ii) Minutes Review Committee: Works with the secretary of the convention to provide accurate minutes of the convention to the standing committee for their review and acceptance.

c) Committees for the Duration of Convention.

*Dispatch of  
Business*

i) Committee on Dispatch of Business: Consults with the president of the convention, the secretary, and various committee heads, to establish the order of business for each business session.

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ii) Committee on the Bishop's Address: Reviews, prayerfully reflects on, and interprets the bishop's address for the body. If appropriate, prepares and moves any resolutions in response to the bishop's address.

*Bishop's Address*

iii) Committee on Resolutions: Receives resolutions referred by the convention and reviews them. If the committee suggests changes, they will confer with the authors of the resolution and report to convention in one of the following forms.

*Resolutions*

- (1) Recommend adoption, with or without amendments. The question will be on the adoption of the resolution or the resolution as amended.
- (2) Recommend rejection, with or without reasons. The question will be on the adoption of the resolution.
- (3) Make no recommendation. The question will be on the adoption of the resolution.
- (4) Recommend that the resolution be discharged from further consideration:
  - (a) If the matter is not within the scope of the committee's function, in which case it may recommend referral to another committee.
  - (b) If the matter has already been dealt with by action of the convention.
  - (c) For other stated reasons.

iv) Committee on Budget Review

- (1) Receives the budget as presented by the Standing Committee.
- (2) Studies it carefully.
- (3) Holds a budget hearing at a time set by the convention agenda.
- (4) Presents the budget, with any committee revisions, to the convention for action.

*Budget Review*

v) Committee on Next Convention: Has responsibility for arranging the location and dates of the next convention.

*Next Convention*

*Nominations and Elections*

vi) Committee on Nominations and Elections

- (1) Receives nominations to be filled by vote of the convention.
- (2) Prepares a slate of nominees and presents it to convention.
- (3) Tabulates votes and brings results of elections before the convention.
- (4) Conducts other business as is necessary to accomplish designated tasks.

*Courtesy*

vii) Courtesy Committee

- (1) Prepares appropriate resolutions of courtesy and appreciation and presents them to the convention at the last business session.
- (2) Has responsibility for conveying the convention’s resolutions for courtesy, appreciation, condolences, greetings, etc. to the appropriate parties, in writing.

*Prayer*

viii) Prayer Committee

- (1) Meets together to pray for the convention, its business, and other concerns.
- (2) Remains available for private, intercessory, or pastoral prayer during the convention.
- (3) Other duties as may be necessary.

**Section 3: Resolutions**

*Pre-filed Resolutions*

a) Resolutions to be presented to the convention are to be submitted in written form to the secretary of the last regular convention at least sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the convention (Canon 3.2.b.v).

*Resolutions Brought to Convention*

b) Any resolution not presented in advance may be introduced to the convention by a reading at the first business meeting, at which time it may be accepted for further consideration by a majority vote of the delegates. This vote is taken without discussion.

*Referral of Resolutions to Committee*

c) During the first business meeting the substance of each resolution (pre-filed and other) will be made known to the convention together with any assignment of the resolution to committees. The resolution may be read at length at that time if it is requested.



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- d) Nothing in this rule prevents the bishop from introducing new matters to the convention for consideration or action through the bishop's address to convention. The bishop may refer any resolution to a committee for such action as it deems proper.
- e) Nothing in this rule prevents a committee from introducing new matters to the convention through its majority report.
- f) All resolutions will be reported back by the referral committees, together with the recommendation of the committee.
- g) The convention may decline to put a resolution to the vote once it has been reported back from committee.
- h) All resolutions must pass by a majority.

*Resolutions from  
the Bishop*

*Resolutions from  
Committees*

*Majority Passage*

**CANON 5**

**Standing Committee**

**Section 1: Responsibilities**

*Responsibility  
and Authority of  
the Standing  
Committee*

In the Diocese of Alaska, the Standing Committee performs the functions required by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church (especially Title I, Canon 12), the diocese, Diocesan Convention (Canon 3), and the laws of the State of Alaska. Furthermore, the Standing Committee serves as the Diocesan Council, Council of Advice to the Bishop, and the Diocesan Review Committee. The Standing Committee will act as ecclesiastical authority if there is no bishop.

*Diocesan Council*

- a) Between meetings of the Diocesan Convention, the Standing Committee will act as Diocesan Council.
  - i) Implement actions assigned by the Diocesan Convention.
  - ii) Establish a planning committee, when appropriate, to ensure that the diocese continues its long-range planning process.
  - iii) Supervise legal matters not arising under Title IV (Ecclesiastical Discipline) of the Canons of the Episcopal Church.
  - iv) Establish a finance committee which will give effect to the standard business methods in church affairs as prescribed by the Canons of The Episcopal Church and which will fulfill such other duties as will be given to it from time to time by the Standing Committee.
  - v) Determine budget policy and present a recommended budget to the Diocesan Convention.
  - vi) Adopt rules and operating procedures for conduct of diocesan business.
    - (1) Procedures should be accessible and clear.
    - (2) Procedures should provide for input from staff and others affected by them in their adoption and implementation.

*Council of Advice*

- b) The Standing Committee will act as the Council of Advice to the diocesan bishop under the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.
  - i) Provide the review and consultation required in the canonical selection

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examination and ordination processes for persons seeking Holy Orders

(Canon 6).

- ii) Advise the bishop on diocesan staff positions.
- iii) Appoint additional advisory committees as necessary.
- iv) Advise and consent to the purchase, construction, encumbrance, and disposition of real property in the diocese.

c) The Standing Committee will serve as the Diocesan Review Committee for proceedings arising under Title IV (Ecclesiastical Discipline) of the Canons of The Episcopal Church and Canon 15 of the Diocese of Alaska.

*Diocesan Review  
Committee*

**Section 2: Membership**

- a) The Standing Committee has nine (9) members.
- b) One lay and one clergy member from each deanery are elected to serve the diocese in the areas of responsibility described in Section 1 to provide for a diversity of experience and viewpoint.

*Number of  
Members*

*Composition*

c) Seats are designated as follows:

- Seat #1 Arctic Coast, Lay
- Seat #2 Interior, Clergy
- Seat #3 South East, Clergy
- Seat #4 South Central, Lay
- Seat #5 At Large, Lay or Clergy
- Seat #6, South East, Lay
- Seat #7 Arctic Coast, Clergy
- Seat #8 South Central, Clergy
- Seat #9 Interior, Lay

*Designation of  
Seats*

d) Members are elected by the convention.

*Election*

- i) The At- Large seat is nominated by the bishop.

*Bishop's Nominee*

*Deanery Nominees*

ii) Any other seat will have a nominee selected at the deanery meeting immediately preceding the convention at which the seat will become vacant (Canon 7.5).

*Nominees at Convention*

iii) Nominations may also be made from the floor according to procedures of the convention.

*Election by Liturgical Year*

e) Rotation of Terms.

i) Three seats will be filled at each regular convention to succeed those terms that will have expired at convention.

ii) Each seat is designated with a number between one and nine (Canon 5.2).

iii) Seats one, two, and three will be elected at convention held during year A of the liturgical calendar.

iv) Seats four, five, and six will be elected at the convention held during year B.

v) Seats seven, eight, and nine will be elected at the convention held during year C.

f) Tenure of Office.

*Terms and Limits*

i) The term of each person elected to a seat begins at the end of the convention elected.

ii) The term ends at conclusion of the third regular convention following.

iii) A person may serve no more than two consecutive full terms without a break of at least 12 months.

*Required to Attend*

g) If a member is absent for two consecutive meetings without being excused by the president, the absences will be interpreted as a resignation.

*Vacancy*

h) Vacancy occurring between regular conventions.

i) The vacated seat must be filled from the same order and deanery.

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- ii) The remaining members of the Standing Committee will appoint a replacement to serve until the following convention.
- iii) If the vacancy is a bishop's appointed position, the bishop will appoint the replacement.
- iv) A replacement will then be elected to complete the term, maintaining the same constituency and rotation of seats described above.

### **Section 3: Reporting requirements**

- a) The Standing Committee will annually elect a president, vice-president, and secretary from its members.
- b) These are the Officers of the Corporation as defined in Canon 1 and are reported as such to the State of Alaska Division of Corporations.
- c) The Standing Committee will keep a record of its proceedings (minutes) and report its actions to each congregation of the diocese after each meeting.
- d) The Standing Committee will make an annual report of its proceedings to the convention, except such as pertain to the exercise of its function as a council of advice to the bishop.

*Officers, Records  
and Reports*

### **Section 4: Requirements for a meeting**

- a) The Standing Committee will hold regular meetings not less than three times each year.
- b) Meetings are at a time and place the Standing Committee selects.
- c) Special meetings may be called into session by the president, the bishop, or any three of its members.
- d) A majority of the members will constitute a quorum.

*Meetings*

*Quorum*

**Section 5: Exclusion from other offices**

*Conflict of  
Interest*

- a) No member of the Standing Committee may at the same time be a member of the Commission on Ministry (Canon 6.2) or Disciplinary Board (Canon 15).
- b) No person employed by or on contract to the diocese, a deanery, or The Episcopal Church may be a member of the Standing Committee. For the purposes of this canon, a bishop's representative in a diocesan congregation is not an employee of the diocese.

**CANON 6**

**Ministry**

**Section 1: Ministry of all baptized persons**

- a) The Diocese of Alaska affirms and supports the development of the ministry of all baptized persons.
- b) The Diocese of Alaska promotes understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church, and to serve Christ's Church at all times and in all places.
- c) The Diocese of Alaska promotes understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation.
- d) In this Church, no person will be denied, because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities, or age:
  - i) Admission to membership
  - ii) Access to the discernment process for any ministry
  - iii) Admission to any ministry, lay or ordained, except as otherwise provided by these Canons.
  - iv) No right to licensing, ordination, or election is hereby established.

*Support and  
Formation for  
Ministry of All  
Baptized Persons*

**Section 2: Commission on Ministry**

- a) Composition
  - i) The Commission on Ministry is composed of nine (9) persons.
  - ii) Five (5) are ordained persons who are canonically resident within the diocese.
  - iii) Four (4) are lay persons who are confirmed communicants in good standing in the diocese.
- b) Selection
  - i) Each deanery has one (1) clergy member and one (1) lay member, either elected at the Diocesan Convention or appointed by the bishop.

*Membership of  
Commission on  
Ministry*

*Appointed  
Members*

- ii) The bishop appoints five members.
  - (1) Three of the bishop’s appointees are clergy, at least one of whom is a deacon.
  - (2) Two of the bishop’s appointees are lay.
  - (3) The bishop will not appoint in the same order (clergy or lay) in the same deanery in successive conventions. This provides for rotation of the bishop’s clergy and lay appointments between deaneries.

*Elected Members*

- iii) The Diocesan Convention elects one member of the Commission on Ministry from each deanery.
  - (1) Two of these members are clergy.
  - (2) Two are from the laity.
  - (3) Whether a clergy or lay member is elected by a convention depends on the rotation of the bishop’s appointments.

*Chairperson*

- iv) The bishop, in consultation with the Commission on Ministry, will appoint a chair from among the Commission members annually after each convention and before the first Commission meeting.

c) Tenure

*Terms of Service*

- i) The term of office of members is three years, from the convention at which elected or appointed through the third (3rd) regular convention following.
- ii) The convention elects or the bishop appoints persons to succeed those whose terms have expired at that convention.
- iii) Clergy and lay representation from the same deanery will not be elected or appointed to serve identical terms.
- iv) A member may serve no more than two (2) consecutive full terms without a break of at least twelve months.

*Vacancy*

- v) Any vacancy occurring between regular conventions may be filled until the next regular convention.
  - (1) If the vacancy is with an elected position, the remaining members of the Commission on Ministry will provide for the replacement.
  - (2) If the vacancy is an appointed position, the replacement is by appointment of the bishop.
  - (3) Vacancies so filled are for the balance of the term of the member



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being replaced.

- vi) If a member is absent for two (2) consecutive meetings without being excused by the chair, the absences will be interpreted as a resignation.

*Required to Attend*

d) Conflict of Interest

- i) No member of the Commission on Ministry may at the same time be a member of the Standing Committee ([Canon 5.5](#)).
- ii) No person employed by the diocese, a deanery, or The Episcopal Church may be a member of the Commission on Ministry. For the purposes of this canon, a bishop's representative in a diocesan congregation is not an employee of the diocese.

*Conflict of Interest*

e) Work of the Commission

- i) The Commission advises and assists the bishop with:
  - (1) The implementation of [Title III](#) of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.
  - (2) The determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons.
  - (3) The design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry, and assessment of readiness for ministry.
  - (4) In matters pertaining to the needs for the ordained ministry within the diocese.
  - (5) In enlistment and selection of persons for the ministry.
  - (6) The guidance and pastoral care of all postulants and candidates for holy orders, deacons, and priests.

*Advice and Assistance to Bishop*

- ii) The Commission may adopt rules for its work, subject to the approval of the bishop.

*Adoption of Rules*

- (1) Rules must be consistent with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of the Diocese of Alaska.
- (2) The Commission may establish committees consisting of members and other persons to report to the Commission or to act on its behalf.

*Training of  
Commission*

iii) The bishop and Commission will ensure that the members of the Commission and its committees receive ongoing education and training for their work.

*Report to Convention*

iv) The Commission will make an annual report on their work to the convention.

**Section 3. Discernment**

*Community  
Discernment of Call  
to Ministry*

- a) The bishop and Commission on Ministry will provide encouragement, training, and necessary resources to assist each congregation in developing an ongoing process of community discernment appropriate to the cultural background, age, and life experiences of all persons seeking direction in their call to ministry.
- b) The bishop and Commission on Ministry will actively solicit from congregations and other communities of faith, names of persons whose demonstrated qualities of Christian commitment and potential for leadership and vision mark them as desirable candidates for positions of leadership in the Church.
- c) The bishop, Commission on Ministry, and the community will assist persons engaged in a process of ministry discernment to determine appropriate avenues for the expression and support of ministries.

**Section 4: Licensed ministries**

*Licensed Ministries*

a) A communicant in good standing may be licensed by the ecclesiastical authority to serve as Pastoral Administrator, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist, or Catechist, as these licensed ministries are described in Title III, Canon 4, Section 3 of The Episcopal Church.

*Licensing Process*

b) Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration and renewal of licenses, will be established by the bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry and published in the Procedures of the Convention of the Diocese of Alaska.

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- c) The member of the clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith may request the ecclesiastical authority with jurisdiction to license persons within that congregation or other community of faith to exercise such ministries.
- d) The license may be revoked by the ecclesiastical authority upon request of or upon notice to the member of the clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

### **Section 5: Ordained ministries**

- a) Selection

The bishop, in consultation with the Commission, will establish procedures to identify and to select persons with evident gifts and fitness for ordained ministry as a deacon or as a priest.

<i>Ordination Process</i>
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- b) Nomination

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing may be nominated for ordination as a deacon or as a priest by the person's congregation or other community of faith, as established by Title III, Canon 6 of The Episcopal Church.

- c) Roadmap

The Commission will establish and maintain in the Procedures of the Diocesan Convention a roadmap of the process for the selection, preparation, and formation of a person to be ordained to the diaconate or priesthood and the role of the Commission in this process. The Commission will publish this roadmap and make it widely available.

**CANON 7**

**Deaneries**

**Section 1: Abundance of cultures**

*Purpose*

a) The diversity of cultures, peoples, and languages in the Diocese of Alaska is a spiritual strength and resource unmatched in any other diocese.

i) The manner in which the faith has become incorporated within the deep traditions, languages, and cultures of the People of the Land is an attribute of strength and a light within the Church which manifests in unique ways within the deaneries.

ii) For the more effective pursuit of the work of the Church within the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska four deaneries were created.

iii) The boundaries of the deaneries were determined by the bishop along geographic lines with the approval of the convention.

(1) Arctic Coast Deanery.

(2) Interior Deanery.

(3) South Central Deanery.

(4) South East Deanery.

b) The institution of the deaneries also provides for

i) An increase in the appreciation of diversity among the residents of the diocese.

ii) Opportunities for greater cooperation and innovation between the congregations of the deanery.

iii) Advocacy for social justice for Alaska Native people and for all people by the Church.

*Regional  
Deaneries*

**Section 2: Election of leaders**

*Governance*

Each deanery has a governing body which is elected in a manner specified by the deanery and which meets at least once a year.

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### Section 3: The Dean

Each deanery will elect a dean and will communicate the name of the person elected to the bishop for approval. The dean reports at least annually to the bishop.

*Election of Dean*

### Section 4: Officers

The deanery specifies additional officers as it requires along with their qualifications, duties, method of selection, terms, and such other matters as are necessary for the ministry of the deanery.

*Other Officers*

### Section 5: Nominations

Each deanery may nominate persons as allowed in these canons (cf. [Canon 3](#) and [Canon 4](#)) to serve at conventions and on committees of the Diocese of Alaska.

- a) The deanery may choose to nominate persons who live outside the deanery.
- b) In every case, nominees must be either a communicant in good standing of a congregation of the diocese or member of the clergy of the Diocese of Alaska.

*Diocesan  
Nominations*

### Section 6: Reporting

Each deanery reports annually on its activities and budget to the convention. Any request for diocesan support of the deanery budget is subject to the diocesan budget process and must be approved by convention.

*Reports to Diocese*

**CANON 8**

**Deputies to General Convention**

**Section 1: Participation in the General Convention of The Episcopal Church**

*Time of Selection  
at a Diocesan  
Convention*

Clerical and lay deputies and their alternates representing the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska at [General Convention](#) will be elected in accordance with provisions of the Canons of The Episcopal Church at a diocesan convention held at least 12 months prior to the regular meeting of the General Convention.

**Section 2: Nomination of deputies**

*Prior Deanery  
Nomination*

Each deanery, at the meeting before this diocesan convention, will nominate two (2) clergy and two (2) lay persons as deputies and will send these names to the diocesan convention. The diocesan convention will strive to elect a deputation to general convention consisting of two (2) deputies chosen by each deanery, one clergy and one lay.

**Section 3: Election**

*Deputies and  
Alternates*

Clergy and lay deputies will be elected by ballot at the diocesan convention from among the nominees (see [Canon 3.3.b.ii](#)). Nominees not elected will remain as a list of alternates.

**Section 4: Appointments from alternates**

*Appointment of  
Alternates*

In the case of the inability of any deputy to attend the General Convention, the ecclesiastical authority will appoint an alternate from the list made at the election of deputies.

**Section 5: Duty to report**

*Reports*

Upon the conclusion of a General Convention the deputies, together with the bishop, will plan and deliver one (1) or more reports, in ways most likely to reach the largest number of communicant members of the diocese. The report will include the selection and composition of the deputation and the actions and positions established during the General Convention.

**CANON 9**

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**Assessments**

**Section 1: Authority**

The Diocesan Convention has authority to raise money by assessments on the parishes and congregations of the diocese, by canon or by vote, for the necessary and proper expenses of the diocese or any other purpose which the convention may approve and direct.

*Convention Approval*

**Section 2: Enforcement**

The convention also has authority to impose penalties, within its lawful limits, for neglect to pay assessments when imposed. Such penalty may include suspension of the right to representation in convention (See [Canon 3.1.f.ii](#)).

*Suspension*

**CANON 10**

**Congregational Leadership and Administration**

**Section 1: Congregational administration**

*Congregations of  
Alaska*

a) Congregations in the Diocese of Alaska include parishes and ecumenical congregations (Canon 11.1 and 11.2); diocesan congregations and parochial congregations (Canon 12). Parishes and ecumenical congregations have installed a rector or priest-in-charge.

*Governing  
Committee*

b) The administration and governance of all congregations in the Diocese of Alaska will be by a committee of members of the congregation elected or appointed to serve.

c) Governing committees in the Diocese of Alaska are known by various titles: Vestry, Parish Council, Mission Committee, Church Committee.

d) Regardless of title, the governing committee is the agent and legal representative of the congregation in all matters concerning its corporate property, finances, and the relations of the congregation to its clergy or ministers-in-charge.

e) Election of members of the governing committee is according to the bylaws of the congregation.

**Section 2: Bylaws**

*Provision of Bylaws*

Every congregation will have bylaws as necessary to provide for the orderly administration of congregational ministry.

a) Bylaws must be consistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and with the Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska.

b) Bylaws must conform to any relevant laws of the State of Alaska and be in accord, if applicable, with the congregation's articles of incorporation.

c) Bylaws may be changed by a majority of the qualified voters of the congregation voting at an annual meeting of the congregation. In certain instances, changes in articles or bylaws require the consent of the Standing Committee (Canon 14).

d) The qualified voters of each congregation are defined by the bylaws of the congregation. In any case, qualified voters must be communicants in good standing in that congregation or ordained members canonically resident in the Diocese of Alaska.



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### Section 3: Governing Committee

- a) Election occurs at an annual meeting held according to the bylaws of the congregation.
- b) Qualifications of persons for election to the governing committee of a congregation are described in the bylaws of the congregation.
- c) The number of members of the governing committee will be three (3), six (6), nine (9), or twelve (12).
- d) Tenure of service, limits of service, and the method for filling unexpired terms of service on congregational governing committees are determined by the congregation's bylaws or, if applicable, the articles of incorporation of the congregation.
- e) The officers of the governing committee:
  - i) The Senior Warden
  - ii) The Junior Warden, if applicable
  - iii) The Clerk
  - iv) The Treasurer.
- f) Officers are elected or appointed as the bylaws of the congregation specify.
- g) The bylaws must require that the wardens and clerk are members of the governing committee.
- h) The Treasurer may or may not be a member of the governing committee and is elected annually.

*Election,  
Composition,  
Qualification and  
Terms of Governing  
Committee*

*Officers of the  
Governing  
Committee*

### Section 4: Core duties

The governing committee will:

- a) Administer the business of the congregation.
- b) Manage and provide oversight of the congregation's finances, pledges, and contributions.
- c) Assure that the finances of the congregation are managed according to the Manual of Business Methods of The Episcopal Church. (See <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/manual-business-methods>)
- d) Provide for the maintenance of the congregation's property.
- e) Provide for prompt payment of all liabilities incurred.
- f) Provide payment of assessments levied by the Diocesan Convention.

*Responsibilities of  
the Governing  
Committee*

- g) Take a part in special offerings of The Episcopal Church.
- h) With the rector or minister-in-charge, carry on the work of the congregation.
- i) Provide for the salary and living of the clergy as established by the administrative policies of the diocese.
- j) In the case of a congregation which is operating without a rector or minister-in-charge, the governing committee, with guidance from the bishop, will assume the duties of the administration of the spiritual concerns of the congregation and carry on in general the work of the congregation.

### Section 5: Meetings

*Calling Meetings*

a) A congregation's governing committee will meet as required by the bylaws of the congregation and its own rules.

i) The rector or minister-in-charge may call a meeting.

ii) In case of absence or disability of a rector or minister-in-charge, a meeting may be called by a warden, or by a majority of its members.

iii) The rector or minister-in-charge may preside at meetings of the governing committee and congregation and will have all the rights of a member.

b) The presiding officer may only vote when it would matter.

c) In the absence of the rector or minister-in-charge, the senior warden or junior warden or a member of the governing committee in an order previously established by the governing committee will preside.

d) The governing committee, by any title, must make a record of meetings (take minutes), and keep a copy available to the members of the congregation.

*Presiding at Meetings*

*Requirement of Minutes*

### Section 6. Parochial Congregations

*Leadership of Parochial Congregations*

The governance and administration of parochial congregations rests with the governing committee of the sponsoring parish or deanery. Nevertheless, a parochial congregation may form a leadership committee to work with and share administrative responsibility with the sponsoring parish or deanery.

## Canons of the Diocese of Alaska

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### **Section 7: Disagreements**

Cases of disagreement between the rector, priest-in-charge, minister-in-charge, or bishop's representative and the governing committee or congregation will be resolved according to the Canons of The Episcopal Church. ([Title III Canon 9.13](#)).

*Cases of  
Disagreement*

### **Section 8: Extinction**

A congregation which for the three years preceding has failed to elect a governing committee, or to submit reports as required by canon, or to provide appropriate liturgical and non-liturgical ministries may, upon recommendation of the deanery, the bishop, and the Standing Committee, be declared extinct and dissolved.

*Extinction of a  
Congregation*

**CANON 11**

**Calling an Ordained Minister**

**Section 1: Ability to call**

*Parishes May Call  
an Ordained  
Minister*

a) Any parish or ecumenical congregation (Canon 10) may call an ordained minister. There are a number of titles in use in The Episcopal Church for the work of ordained ministers of the church, depending on the duties and agreements in place.

*Calling a Rector*

b) A rector is a priest with a permanent agreement for the charge of a congregation. A congregation may call a rector if it can provide maintenance and support, as established by the administrative policies of the Diocese of Alaska.

*Operation Without a  
Rector*

c) In any congregation that cannot provide for a rector or that relies on the occasional supply of the sacraments by ordained clergy, the governing committee (Canon 10) must carry out the administrative responsibilities of a rector.

**Section 2: Special supervision by bishop**

*Special Supervision*

a) Every parish is under special supervision of the bishop unless a rector or priest-in-charge is duly chosen and installed.

*Departure of Rector*

b) In the event of a congregation which has a rector, the wardens (Canon 10) are directed to contact the bishop when it is learned that a vacancy in the rector's position has occurred or will soon occur.

c) This notice is to be given 'immediately in writing.'

**Section 3: Development of congregational capacities**

It is not to be inferred that an inevitable result of a healthy spiritual life in a congregation of the Diocese of Alaska will be the calling of a rector.

*Congregational  
Provision of  
Sacraments,  
Worship and  
Pastoral Care*

a) In every case, a congregation is to extend itself in the provision of the sacraments and ministries of the church.

b) Acting under the guidance of the bishop, the governing committee of the congregation must find or develop the capacity to maintain divine worship in the Church, and for the pastoral care of the congregation.

c) The congregation may need to rely upon occasional sacramental visits arranged in cooperation with the bishop.

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- d) The congregation may be able to assist in the identification, formation, and calling of a local person to orders. (See [Canon 6](#))
- e) The congregation and bishop may determine another course of action to nurture and sustain the sacramental, pastoral, and administrative needs of the congregation.

### **Section 4: Guidance by the bishop**

It is the duty of the Church to assist congregations, even in small and remote places, to flourish in the life of Christ. The bishop will offer guidance to the congregation in achieving this.

- a) When economic and other factors of size and location allow the calling of a priest, it is the duty of the parish to do so. The parish is expected to make provision out of the revenues of the parish for the support and living of this person.
- b) The bishop may appoint a priest to be minister-in-charge or [interim priest](#), paid by the congregation, until a priest is called. Such minister-in-charge or interim priest is to be subject to the bishop's direction, control, and removal.
- c) Whether or not the calling of an interim priest, priest-in-charge, or rector is possible, every parish is to make provision out of the revenues of the parish for the support of sacramental services in accordance with the administrative policies of the diocese. (<http://www.episcopalak.org/>)

*Duty to Call a Priest*

*Bishop May Appoint  
a Priest*

*Parish Revenues to  
Support Sacramental  
Services*

### **Section 5: The call process**

If the governing committee of a parish has determined that the parish is capable of supporting and calling a rector, the wardens should contact the bishop for guidance in the call process.

- a) The process for the call of a rector in the Diocese of Alaska is described in the procedures of the Diocese of Alaska and is subject to the Canons of the Episcopal Church (See [Canon 6](#)). In every case:
- b) Each nomination will have been made known to the bishop.
- c) The bishop is to be given up to 30 days to communicate with the governing committee about the nomination.
- d) The governing committee must consider the communication of the bishop at a meeting duly called.

*Bishop Participates  
in Call Process*

- e) A rector is elected by the votes of a majority of the governing committee, given by ballot, at a meeting held for the specific purpose of electing a rector.

### **Section 6: Accomplishment of call**

*Call of Rector Requires Written Agreement Between Parish Governing Committee and Rector, Affirmed by Bishop*

- a) The call of a rector-elect is accomplished through an agreement between the rector and the governing committee of the congregation and is affirmed by the bishop.
- b) The agreement is made in writing and will express distinctly any special conditions, together with the stipulation as to salary and support.
- c) When the agreement has been signed, it is forwarded to the bishop.
- d) No priest will be recognized as rector of a parish until canonically transferred to the diocese.
- e) When the bishop institutes (installs) the rector, the contract is complete.
- f) The stipend named in the contract may be increased or diminished from time to time by agreement in writing, signed by the parties.
- g) Either party may appeal to the bishop for a final judgment.

### **Section 7: Assistant priests**

*Call of Assistant Priest Requires Written Agreement Between Rector, Governing Committee, and Member of Clergy; with Notification of Bishop*

- a) The rector of a parish may select an assistant priest who serves under the authority and direction of the rector.
- b) A written agreement between the rector and the governing committee and the member of the clergy concerned is required.
- c) The advice and consent of the bishop to the agreement is sought. The bishop may have up to thirty (30) days to communicate with the rector and the governing committee on the proposed appointment.
- d) If the rector resigns, dies, or the pastoral relationship between the rector and the governing committee is otherwise dissolved, an assistant priest may continue, if requested by the governing committee, under conditions established by the bishop and governing committee.
- e) An assistant priest may continue if requested by a new rector.

**CANON 12**

**Diocesan Congregations and Parochial Congregations**

**Section 1: New congregations**

- a) Diocesan Congregations may be organized in the Diocese of Alaska by the bishop and the Standing Committee of the diocese.
- b) Parochial Congregations may be organized by existing parishes (Canon 10) or by deaneries (Canon 7).

<i>Diocesan Congregations</i>
<i>Parochial Congregations</i>

**Section 2: Application**

- a) Any ten (10) or more confirmed Episcopalians may make application in writing, signed by each of them, requesting recognition of a congregation in their community.
- b) The application should include:
  - i) Their reasons for making the request.
  - ii) Their intention to conform to the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Alaska, and the openness, doctrine, and traditions of The Episcopal Church.
  - iii) The amount of money they are prepared to contribute toward their self-support.
  - iv) Their willingness to assume a fair share of the work of the Episcopal Church and this diocese.
  - v) In the case of a parochial congregation, the name of the parish or deanery accepting responsibility for their representation and cure of souls.

<i>Initial Requirement</i>
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**Section 3: Location**

The central properties, if any, of a new congregation may not be located within two (2) miles of the central properties of an existing parish without the consent of the governing committee of the existing parish.

<i>Condition on Location</i>
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**Section 4: Organization**

- a) Parochial Congregations may be organized by an existing parish, within the limits of the parish, or by a deanery.

*Consent*

i) The consent of the bishop, Standing Committee (Canon 5), and the governing committee (Canon 10) of the sponsoring parish are needed. A sponsoring parish or parishes will be named, if organized by a deanery, and the additional consent of the deanery is required also.

*Supervision*

ii) The rector of the parish, or parishes, or deanery will supply supervision by arrangements made within the deanery.

*Governance*

iii) Parochial congregations will be governed by the governing committee of the sponsoring parish(es), under rules and regulations satisfactory to the bishop and to the rector of the sponsoring parish.

*Representation at Convention*

iv) A parochial congregation is represented at Diocesan Convention through the sponsoring parish. A parochial congregation is not entitled to send delegates independent of the delegates representing the sponsoring parish.

*Independence*

v) Parochial congregations organized by a parish or deanery may apply to the bishop for diocesan congregation or parish status at any time.

With the mutual consent of the governing committee of the creating parish(es) (or deanery, when organized by a deanery) and of the members of the congregation.

(1) With the recommendation of the bishop and Standing Committee.

(2) With acceptance by vote of the Diocesan Convention (Canon 3).

*Organizing  
Diocesan  
Congregations*

b) Diocesan Congregations are organized under the authority of the bishop.

i) The bishop will appoint a minister-in-charge.

(1) A minister-in-charge may be a licensed lay person (Canon 6.4).

(2) Deacons are prohibited by the Canons of The Episcopal Church to be minister-in-charge of a congregation.

(3) A deacon may be appointed by the bishop to serve as the bishop's representative (liaison) on a diocesan congregation's governing committee.

*Supervision*

ii) In consultation with the bishop, the new diocesan congregation will form a governing committee (church committee, or leadership team by another title).

(1) The governing committee will establish bylaws to guide the administration and ministry of the congregation.

(2) Set a budget.

(3) Organize an annual meeting of the congregation.

(4) Elect its officers.

*Governance*



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- (5) Establish a process for future election of its governing committee.
- iii) Once organized and having satisfied the preceding requirements of Sec.4, the diocesan congregation will request that the bishop present the congregation to the diocesan convention for official recognition.
- iv) Diocesan congregations recognized by diocesan convention are entitled to send delegates to convention according to the same rules established in [Canon 3.1](#) of the Diocese of Alaska.
- v) Ten (10) or more communicants of a diocesan congregation may petition their governing committee to take steps to obtain parish status.
- (1) Within two (2) months, the governing committee will prepare a parish budget and bylaws and present them to the whole congregation at a meeting called for the purpose.
- (2) Upon adoption, these documents and a report will be submitted to the Standing Committee for review.
- (a) The report must show that the congregation has provided appropriate liturgical and non-liturgical ministries for at least the year preceding the date of application.
- (b) The report will show continued ability to do so.
- (3) The Standing Committee, with the approval of the bishop, will present the application to the next regular diocesan convention with its recommendations.
- (4) Upon approval by the convention, the diocesan congregation will become a parish.

*Recognition*

*Representation*

*Independence*

### **Section 5: Dissolution**

- a) Parochial congregations may be dissolved by action of the governing committee of the sponsoring parish in consultation with the parochial congregation.
- i) The sponsoring parish will plan for the disposition of the records, assets, and property of the parochial parish.
- ii) The sponsoring parish will submit the plan for the disposition of records, assets, and property to the Standing Committee and bishop for approval.

*Dissolving  
Parochial  
Congregations*

*Dissolving Diocesan  
Congregations*

- iii) No records, assets, or property may be disposed of or encumbered before the plan has received the approval of the Standing Committee and bishop.
  - iv) The sponsoring parish will report to the bishop and Standing Committee once the parochial congregation has been closed and the approved plan for the disposition of records, assets, and property has been completed or enacted.
- b) Diocesan congregations, having been once recognized by diocesan convention, may be dissolved by recommendation of the bishop in consultation with the Standing Committee and by consent of the diocesan convention.
- i) A petition for dissolution of a diocesan congregation must be presented as a pre-filed resolution to the diocesan convention that will consider the dissolution.
  - ii) The petition must provide a plan for the disposition all records, assets, and property of the congregation to be dissolved.
  - iii) The petition must be approved by the Standing Committee prior to consideration at diocesan convention.

**CANON 13**

**Business Methods in Church Affairs**

**Section 1: Parochial report**

- a) The person in charge of a parish or congregation (rector, minister-in-charge or church warden, Canon 10) is required to prepare and submit the parochial report. (<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/parochial-report>)
- b) The report is made on the form adopted by The Episcopal Church.
- c) The reporting period is for the previous calendar year (ending Dec. 31).
- d) The completed report is to be approved at a meeting of the governing committee.
- e) The report is due on the date stated in the official parochial report instructions.
- f) The report may be mailed to the Diocese of Alaska or submitted online to the secretary of the convention.

*Required Annual  
Report*

**Section 2: Bonding and financial responsibility**

- a) Treasurers (Canon 10) and custodians of funds, other than banking institutions and those exempted by the bishop, be adequately bonded. Treasurers are not required to be bonded if funds never exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00) at any one time during the fiscal year.
- b) Accounting records must be kept according to the procedures of the Diocese of Alaska. (<http://www.episcopal.org/>)
- c) All accounts having to do with receipts and expenditures of money of each parish, congregation, and organization are to be audited at the close of each year by the governing committee or someone appointed for the task, other than the treasurer, according to the Manual of Business Methods of The Episcopal Church. (<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/manual-business-methods>)

*Required Bond,  
Financial Records,  
and Audit*

**Section 3: Insurance**

Buildings and their contents belonging to the diocese or to any parish or congregation are to be kept adequately insured. The Standing Committee (Canon 5) may review the amounts of insurance carried and, if it finds the same to be

*Required Insurance*

inadequate, may call upon the owners or users of the property to increase the coverage.

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**CANON 14**

**Title to property**

**Section 1: Incorporation of parishes**

A parish (Canon 10) may incorporate under the non-profit corporation law of the State of Alaska.

*Optional  
Incorporation*

- a) A parish desiring to incorporate must notify the Standing Committee (Canon 5) in writing and submit a copy of the proposed articles of incorporation to the Standing Committee for approval.
- b) A parish must have the consent of the Standing Committee and approval of the proposed articles of incorporation before proceeding to file the same with the State of Alaska.
- c) Subsequent amendments to the articles of incorporation must be approved by the Standing Committee.

*Standing Committee  
Review and  
Approval Required*

**Section 2: Title to property**

An incorporated parish may hold title to real or personal property.

*Required Forms for  
Holding Title*

- a) The property will be held in the name of the *N.N. Episcopal Church* (where *N.N.* is the incorporated name of the parish) in trust for the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska.
- b) Once incorporated, the parish may request of the bishop (Canon 1) and the Standing Committee conveyance of any property held by the Diocese for, or used by, the incorporated parish.
- c) Title to real or personal property used or occupied by any unincorporated congregation (Canon 10) of the Diocese will be held by the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska.

**Section 3: Legal review**

All legal instruments and papers relating to title must be submitted to the chancellor (Canon 1) for examination and approval prior to conveyance of title to such properties.

*Requirement of  
Review by  
Chancellor*

**Section 4: Encumbrance**

*Consents Required  
Prior to  
Encumbrance of  
Real Property*

No real property of any parish or congregation, regardless of corporate status, may be subject to encumbrance or alienation,

- a) Without the written consent of the rector or minister-in-charge, the governing committee (Canon 10), the bishop and the Standing Committee.
- b) A lease or lease option for a period of more than one (1) year is considered to be a form of encumbrance.

**Section 5: Consecration of church**

*Consecration  
Requires Freedom  
from Debt*

No church may be consecrated until the building and the ground on which the same is erected have been fully paid for and are free from lien or other encumbrance.

**CANON 15**

**Disciplinary Board**

**Section 1: Purpose**

In Baptism, all members of the Church are called to holiness of life and accountability to one another.

- a) The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Alaska support their members in their life in Christ. They seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life, and reconciliation among all involved or affected.
- b) [Title IV](#) of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, and this Canon of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska, apply to members of the [clergy](#), who have by their vows at ordination accepted additional responsibilities and accountabilities for doctrine, discipline, worship, and obedience.
- c) The [Disciplinary Board of the Diocese of Alaska](#) provides for the hearings required when an offense complained of violates applicable provisions of [Title IV, Canon 3](#) (Of Accountability) or [Canon 4](#) (Of Standards of Conduct) of the Canons of The Episcopal Church and is of material and substantial or of clear and weighty importance to the ministry of the Church.

<p><i>The Disciplinary Board of the Diocese of Alaska Provides for Accountability of Members of the Clergy</i></p>
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**Section 2: Definitions**

- a) The Diocese of Alaska will adopt and publish a written guideline and procedure to clarify and make accessible the resources of the diocese, including the Disciplinary Board, which are devoted to the resolution of conflicts.
- b) The definition of terms and prescription of roles, duties, and responsibilities of the Disciplinary Board is as provided by Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.
- c) Additional necessary description and definition not given by Title IV is provided in this Canon of the Diocese of Alaska.

<p><i>Diocesan Guidelines</i></p>
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**Section 3: Membership**

The Disciplinary Board of the Diocese has seven (7) seats, filled by members elected by the Diocesan convention.

- a) At least one seat will be filled by a member who is learned in the law.
- b) The seats are designated as Seats A through G. Of these:

<p><i>Members</i></p>
<p><i>Expertise</i></p>

<i>Designation of Seats</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Seats A, C, E and G will be filled by <u>priests</u> or <u>deacons canonically resident in the diocese</u>.</li><li>ii) Seats B D and F will be filled by lay <u>confirmed communicants in good standing</u>.</li><li>iii) No more than three (3) seats may be filled by people who live in the same Deanery.</li></ul>
<i>Election</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>c) Members will be elected at the annual <u>Diocesan Convention: (Canon 3)</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) To replace those whose terms have expired.</li><li>ii) To fill vacated seats, opened by resignation, removal, or death of a member.</li></ul></li></ul>
<i>Vacancy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>d) Between conventions, vacated seats will be filled until the next convention, through appointment by the diocesan bishop.</li><li>e) Tenure of office</li></ul>
<i>Terms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) A full term is for five (5) years following election.</li><li>ii) A member elected to fill a vacated seat will complete the term remaining at the time the seat became vacant.</li><li>iii) No member may serve more than two consecutive full terms without a break of at least twelve months.</li></ul>
<i>Officers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>f) The Disciplinary Board will elect a president annually, within sixty days following the convention.</li></ul>
<i>Persons Excluded from Service</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>g) No one serving the diocese as chancellor, vice- chancellor, advisor, conciliator, church attorney, intake officer or investigator, or member of Standing Committee may serve on the Disciplinary Board of the diocese, and no member of the Disciplinary Board may at the same time serve in one of these positions in the diocese.</li></ul>

**Section 4: Function of the Board**

The Disciplinary Board will function as prescribed in Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

<i>Conference Panel</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Members may serve in one of three panels as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Conference Panel<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) An informal conference, as described in <u>Title IV, Canon 12</u> of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, will be held before the conference panel.</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul>
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- (2) The president of the Disciplinary Board will select one, two, or three members of the Disciplinary Board to serve on the conference panel.
- (3) The president may not serve on the conference panel.
- (4) A member of the conference panel may not also serve on the hearing panel in the same case.

### ii) Hearing Panel

*Hearing Panel*

- (1) A hearing, as described in Title IV, Canon 12 of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, will be held before the hearing panel.
- (2) The president of the Disciplinary Board will select three members of the Disciplinary Board to serve on the hearing panel.
- (3) The president may not serve on the hearing panel.
- (4) A member of the hearing panel may not also serve on the conference panel in the same case.

### iii) Reference Panel

*Reference Panel*

- (1) The Reference Panel is composed of an intake officer, the diocesan bishop, and the president of the Disciplinary Board to serve as the body which performs the duties described in Title IV, Canon 6 and Canon 15 of The Episcopal Church.
- (2) The intake officer is one or more persons designated by the diocesan bishop, after consultation with the Disciplinary Board to receive the report of information regarding offenses.

### b) Investigator

*Investigators*

- i) The diocesan bishop will appoint investigators in consultation with the president of the Disciplinary Board.
- ii) An investigator must have sufficient knowledge, skill, experience, and training to conduct investigations under Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.
- iii) An investigator must have familiarity with the Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

## **Section 5: Conflict of interest**

Any member of a conference panel or a hearing panel appointed for a proceeding may be challenged by the church attorney or the respondent on grounds of conflict of interest or undue bias.

*Challenge for Bias*

- a) The remaining members of the board will determine whether the challenge is relevant and factually supported and will determine whether the challenged member will be excused from that proceeding.
- b) If the member is excused, another member of the board may be appointed to the panel to fill the vacancy created by the challenge, maintaining an appropriate balance of lay and ordained members.

**CANON 16**

**Amendments and Additions**

**Section 1: Amending body**

These Canons may be amended or added to by the Diocesan Convention ([Canon 3](#)).

*The Canon may be Amended by the Convention*

**Section 2: Referral**

All proposed amendments or additions to the Canons will be referred to the Committee on Constitution and Canons ([Canon 4](#)) at least thirty (30) days before the convention.

*Committee Referral*

- a) A majority vote of the delegates entitled to vote will be required for enactment.
- b) Such amendments and additions become effective at the close of the convention.

*Majority Suffices*

*Effective Date*

**CANON 17**

**Interpretation of the Canons**

These Canons shall be interpreted in their plain and literal sense.

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[This is eventually to utilize live links from the document, in electronic versions of the document. There are also to be live links to related sites (for instance, the online locations of procedures of the Diocese of Alaska, or Canons of The Episcopal Church) which are referred to in the Canons.]

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