

**The Constitution  
of the  
Diocese of Iowa**

# THE CONSTITUTION

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## ARTICLE I

### Of the Authority of the General Convention

The Church in the Diocese of Iowa, as a constituent part of that branch of the Holy Catholic Church now known as The Episcopal Church, accedes to the Constitution and acknowledges the authority of the General Convention of the same.

## ARTICLE II

### Of Annual and Special Conventions

Sec. 1. The Church in this Diocese shall meet in Convention each year and at such time and place as shall be determined by the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Corporation; but for sufficient cause the Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, may change the time and place of the Convention.

Sec. 2. As necessity may require, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall have power to call special Conventions. In all such cases printed notices shall be sent by the Ecclesiastical Authority to all clergy who have seat and vote in the Convention, and to all the congregations entitled to representation in the Convention at least thirty days in advance of the time appointed for its assembling. These notices shall specify the time and place of meeting, and shall state the business for which the special Convention is called; and no other business shall be transacted unless by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

Sec. 3. No election of a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Suffragan Bishop, shall take place at an Annual Convention unless notice of such election shall have been given at least thirty days before the date set for the assembling of such Convention.

## ARTICLE III

### Of Members of the Convention

Sec. 1. The Convention shall be composed of clergy and lay persons. The Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor and the Suffragan Bishop, if there be such, shall each have a seat and vote in the Convention. Each Priest and Deacon canonically resident and who is not under ecclesiastical discipline, shall be entitled to seat and vote in this Convention. A minister ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who, with the permission of the Bishop, serves a congregation in this Diocese, shall have a seat and vote in this Convention.

Sec. 2. The Archdeacon, the Executive Secretary, the Chancellor, the Convention Secretary, the Treasurer, the Historiographer, and the Registrar of the Diocese, each shall be entitled, *ex officio*, to a seat and vote in the Convention.

Sec. 3 (a) Each organized Congregation in union with the Church in this Diocese shall by its Vestry or Bishop's Committee, as the case may be, choose a delegate or delegates to the Diocesan Convention; and only confirmed adult communicants of this Church in good standing and qualified electors of the Congregation shall be eligible to serve as delegates. A vacancy caused by the absence of any delegate from the Convention

may be filled by the Rector or Minister-in-charge together with the delegate or delegates present.

(b) All references to layman, laymen, vestryman, vestrymen and other lay people and ordained ministers in this Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, together with such personal and possessive pronouns which pertain thereto, shall be regarded, understood and interpreted as generic in reference and applicable to both sexes.

Sec. 4 (a) The representation of Congregations in the Convention shall be determined by the number of communicants in good and regular standing in the Congregation. Each Congregation shall be entitled to one delegate for each 75 communicants or fraction thereof.

(b) The number of communicants in a Congregation shall be determined by a certificate of the Rector or Minister-in-charge, or of a Warden, if there be no Rector or Minister-in-charge, certifying the number of persons whose names appear on the Parish Register as communicants in good and regular standing as defined by the Canon Law of the Diocese. This certificate shall be included in the form of credentials of the delegates.

Sec. 5. Before any lay delegate shall be entitled to a seat and a vote in the Convention there shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Convention a certificate of his election according to the form required by the Convention.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

##### **Of the President of the Convention**

Sec. 1. The Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop, in order of precedence, shall preside in the Convention and shall cause it to be opened with such Religious Services as the presiding officer may deem proper.

Sec. 2. In the absence of the Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor and the Suffragan Bishop, the Secretary shall call the Convention to order, and the members thereof shall elect a president from among the Priests present and entitled to a seat in the Convention.

Sec. 3. In the event the Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop finds it necessary to be absent from the Chair after Convention has opened, there being no Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop, the President of the Standing Committee may be appointed to serve as acting-President, or an election may be held from among the priests present and entitled to a seat in the Convention.

#### **ARTICLE V**

##### **Of the Secretary of the Convention**

Sec. 1. A Secretary shall be elected by ballot at each Annual Convention and shall remain in office until a successor is elected. The Secretary shall be either a member of the Clergy or a member of the Laity entitled to membership in the Convention at which elected. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a record of all the proceedings of the Convention; to preserve its records; to attest its public acts; and faithfully to deliver to the successor Secretary all books and papers relating to the business of the Convention. The Secretary shall publish the Convention Journal and shall give due notice of all meetings

of the Convention to each Clergy member, and Congregation entitled to membership in the same.

Sec. 2. The Secretary may, with the approval of the Convention, appoint an Assistant Secretary, or assistant Secretaries, to serve during the Convention.

Sec. 3. If there be any vacancy in the office of Secretary in the interval between Conventions, the Standing Committee shall appoint a Secretary to act until the next Convention.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Of the Treasurer of the Convention**

Sec. 1. A Treasurer shall be elected by ballot at each Annual Convention, who shall remain in office until a successor is elected. The Treasurer shall be either a member of the Clergy or a member of the Laity entitled to membership in the Convention at which elected. The Treasurer's duties shall be to receive and disburse, under the direction of the Convention, all moneys collected by the authority of the Convention, except those moneys for which a special Treasurer is provided by the Convention. The Treasurer shall give bond for the faithful discharge of the duty of the office in such sum and in such Surety Company as shall be approved by the Standing Committee. The Treasurer shall render an account to each Annual Convention of all moneys received and disbursed, which account shall be audited as ordered by the Convention or directed by Canon.

Sec. 2. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Treasurer, the Standing Committee shall appoint a treasurer to act until the next Annual Convention.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Of the Transaction of Business**

Sec. 1. One-third of the Clergy entitled to seats and votes in the Convention and lay delegates representing one-fourth of the Congregations entitled to representation in the Convention, being duly assembled, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time.

Sec. 2. All elections not otherwise provided for in this Constitution or by Canon shall be by joint ballot, unless the same be dispensed with by unanimous consent.

Sec. 3. The Clergy and Laity shall deliberate as one body. Each member shall be entitled to one vote and a majority of all the votes cast shall determine any question submitted unless otherwise provided for in this Constitution, by Canon or by Rule of the Convention.

Sec. 4. If any three members shall call for a vote by yeas and nays, the Secretary shall call the roll of the Convention and each member shall announce a vote as each name is called. The votes so cast shall be recorded in the Journal; and no member shall be excused from voting except by consent of the Convention.

Sec. 5. If any three clerical members, or three lay delegates, being representatives from three different Congregations, shall demand a vote by Orders, the vote shall be taken by a division of each Order, and a majority of the votes of each Order shall be

necessary to an affirmative decision. If those demanding a vote by orders also demand a roll call, the Secretary shall call the roll of the Convention and each member shall thereupon announce a vote. The votes so cast shall be recorded in the Journal. When a vote by Orders is demanded, no member shall be excused from voting except by consent of the Convention. In all voting by Orders provided for in this Constitution the lay delegates shall vote as individuals and not as Congregations.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Of the Chancellor, Historiographer, and Registrar**

At each Annual Convention the President of the Convention, shall nominate to the Convention for confirmation officers to be known respectively as the Chancellor, the Historiographer, and the Registrar of the Diocese. They shall remain in office until their successors are confirmed. They shall be confirmed adult communicants of this Church in good standing in this Diocese and their duties shall be such as usually appertain to the officers so named. If a vacancy occurs before the next Annual Convention, such vacancy shall be filled by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Of the Standing Committee**

Sec. 1. Before the adjournment of each Annual Convention two members of a Standing Committee shall be elected by a ballot of the Clergy and Laity voting by Orders, to consist of one Priest from among those entitled to seats and votes in the Convention and of one lay member who shall be a confirmed adult communicant of this Church in good standing in this Diocese as defined by the Canon Law of the Diocese. The members of the Committee shall serve for three years, or until their successors are elected.

Sec. 2. No member shall be eligible for re-election, or appointment to fill a vacancy, at an earlier time than twelve months following the expiration of the second term of office.

Sec. 3. Vacancies occurring during the recess of the Convention shall be filled from the Order affected, as soon as it is practicable, by the vote of the remaining members, all having been duly notified of the time and place of the meeting and the object thereof; such election subject to the approval of the Bishop.

Sec. 4. At their first meeting, which shall be on the last day of the Convention, or as soon after as is practicable, they shall elect one of their clerical members to be President and another of their members, either clerical or lay, to be Secretary.

Sec. 5. They shall keep complete minutes of their proceedings and shall report all business transacted to the Annual Convention. A majority of the members, all having been duly notified, shall constitute a quorum except for such purposes as agreeable to their own rules or to requirement of Canons, which may demand a larger number.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Of the Election of a Bishop**

Sec. 1. The election of a Bishop, or of a Bishop Coadjutor, or of a Suffragan Bishop, of the Church in this Diocese shall be made in Convention by a concurrent vote of the Clergy and of the Laity, the two Orders voting by ballot, separately, in open Convention;

and when all the votes of both Orders shall have been deposited, the tellers of the Clerical and of the Lay vote, respectively, shall proceed to count the votes, and if, among those voted for, one shall be found to have received upon the same ballot a majority of the votes of the Clergy and a majority of the votes of the Laity, that one shall be declared duly elected.

Sec. 2. If a vacancy in the office of Bishop of the Diocese shall occur more than three calendar months before the time appointed for the meeting of the Annual Convention, the Standing Committee, within fifteen days after the occurrence of the vacancy, may call a special Convention as in the Second Article of this Constitution is provided; and the special Convention so called shall proceed to the election of a Bishop.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Of the Admission of New Parishes and Missions**

Sec. 1. A new Parish or Organized mission may be admitted into union with the Convention, on motion, by a majority of votes, provided, if it is incorporated, it shall have presented to the Bishop, at least one month before the meeting of the Convention, a written instrument containing its Articles of Incorporation; or, if not incorporated, a request for admission into union with the Convention subscribed by the Wardens, or Warden, as the case may be. Such instrument, in either event, must contain a declaration of the parties thereto that they expressly accede to the Constitution, Canons, Discipline, Doctrine and Worship of the Episcopal Church, and to the Constitution and Canons of the Church in this Diocese. A certificate shall be produced from the Bishop of the Diocese also that satisfactory evidence has been presented, not less than one month prior to the meeting of the Convention, that such organization has existed for not less than one year previous, and that during such time regular services of the Church have been maintained, and that approval is given of such authorization. If there be no Bishop, then such certificate shall be made by the Standing Committee. These papers shall be submitted with the formal application for admission into union with the Convention.

Sec. 2. A Parish or Mission may, for good and sufficient cause, be deprived of its right to representation in Convention by a concurrent vote of two-thirds vote of each Order.

Sec. 3. The Church in Convention may prescribe further terms for the admission of Parishes and Missions not in conflict herewith.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Of Assessments**

Sec. 1. The Church in Convention shall have power to raise money by equitable assessment on the Congregations of the Diocese, either by Canon or by special vote, for all necessary expenses of the Diocese.

Sec. 2. The Church in Convention may impose such penalty as it may deem fit in the case of failure to pay such assessment.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **Of Alterations or Amendments**

This Constitution shall not be amended except in the following manner: A proposition for any change shall be introduced in writing and considered in Convention; and, if approved of, the same shall be transmitted to the Vestries and Bishop's Committees of all Congregations of the Diocese. Then, if approved of in the next ensuing Annual Convention by a majority of each Order, the change shall take place and the Constitution so amended shall be valid and obligatory from and after the adjournment of the Convention at which its final ratification was effected.