

**THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF  
INDIANAPOLIS**

Revised Constitution 2013

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## Constitution

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# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I

### **Corporate Name**

**Section 1.** This Diocesan Corporation, created and constituted a body corporate and politic for religious, educational and charitable purposes by the laws of the State of Indiana, hereby adopts the official corporate name "Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis" and may be referred to as "The Diocese of Indianapolis" or in this Constitution as "the Diocese".

### **Charter**

**Section 2.** The Charter of said Diocesan Corporation is expressed in the following laws of the State of Indiana: Acts of 1844 (local) page 122; Acts of 1881, page 393; Acts of 1981, page 403; and Chapter XXXI, Acts of 1953, approved February 25, 1953.

### **Jurisdiction**

**Section 3.** The ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Diocese, as granted and established by the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United State of America (General Convention) shall extend to and embrace that part of the State of Indiana lying south of the northern line of the counties of Warren, Tippecanoe, Clinton, Tipton, Madison, Delaware, and Randolph.

### **Property**

**Section 4.** All property and funds of the Diocese shall be held in the name of the corporation, including all property of organized missions of the Diocese.

## ARTICLE II

### **Affiliation With National Church**

**Section 1.** The Diocese of Indianapolis accedes to and adopts the Constitution and Canons of that branch of the Holy Catholic Church known as the Protestant Episcopal Church of America, and acknowledges the authority of the General Convention.

## ARTICLE III

## **Bishop's Authority**

**Section 1.** The Bishop of the Diocese, if there be one, shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. The Bishop becomes, upon election, ordination and consecration, the Chief Pastor, and may officiate in the Offices of the Church in any Parish or Mission in accordance with the customs and practices of the Church. The Bishop is the Ordinary of all religious or benevolent organizations of the Church within the Diocese, and as such may attend and preside at any of their meetings, and may be appealed to for the settlement of any problem or dispute in the administration of the ecclesiastical or lay affairs of any Parish or Mission in the Diocese. All controversies between the Rectors of two or more parishes, or between any Parish or vestry thereof and its Rector, shall be referred to the Bishop for settlement and determination, or in the event that such controversies are not so referred, the Bishop may take cognizance of the same, require the parties to appear before the Bishop and the Standing Committee, and take action with respect thereto as provided in the Canons of the Diocese.

## **Tenure, Devolution of Authority**

**Section 2.** The Bishop, upon election and ordination shall hold office until retirement or resignation, and shall not exercise jurisdiction beyond the age of 72. In case of the Bishop's removal from office in accordance with the Canons of the Church, or of the Bishop's resignation or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the office, the office of Bishop of the Diocese shall devolve upon the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one. If there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the duties of the Bishop shall devolve upon the Suffragan Bishop, if there be one, but the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall devolve upon the Standing Committee in either event, until a Bishop be duly elected and ordained.

## **Executive Officer**

**Section 3.** The Bishop of the Diocese shall be the chief executive officer of the Diocese and shall act for and on behalf of the Diocese pursuant to the authority vested in that office by the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention, by this Constitution, the Canons of the Diocese and by action of the Diocesan Convention. The Bishop shall preside at all meetings of the Convention of the Diocese or may delegate this responsibility to some other officer of the Diocese. The Bishop shall be a member ex officio of all Diocesan Committees (other than the Standing Committee), Commissions or other organized groups, and may at any time act as chair of any such committee, commission or organized group.

## **Bishop's Cabinet**

**Section 4.** The Bishop may appoint a Bishop's Cabinet to assist in the unification, development and prosecution of the work of the Church and may delegate to the members of the Bishop's Cabinet such parts of the Bishop's authority and duties as shall be deemed appropriate and as shall not be required by the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and this Constitution to be performed solely by the Bishop. The composition

and duties of the Bishop's Cabinet shall be provided in the Canons of the Diocese.

### **Time of Election of Bishop**

**Section 5.** If the office of the Bishop of the Diocese shall fall vacant, because of the death or resignation of the Bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority, within fourteen days after such vacancy has occurred, shall call for a Special Convention for the election of a Bishop.

### **Election of Bishop Coadjutor**

**Section 6.** Subject to obtaining any consents required by the Constitution or Canons of the General Convention a Bishop Coadjutor may be elected at either an Annual or Special Convention, on condition that written notice of such election be included in the call of such Convention. Before any election of a Bishop Coadjutor, the Bishop of the Diocese shall read, or cause to be read, the Bishop's written consent to such election, and in such consent shall state the duties which shall be thereby assigned the Bishop Coadjutor when duly ordained, and such consent shall form part of the proceedings of the Convention. In case of the inability of the Bishop of the Diocese to issue the aforesaid consent, the Standing Committee of the Diocese may request the Convention to act without such consent, and such request shall be accompanied by certificates of at least two reputable physicians who shall have examined the case, as to the inability of the Bishop of the Diocese to issue written consent.

### **Election of Suffragan Bishop**

**Section 7.** If the Bishop shall request in writing the assistance of a Suffragan Bishop, then, subject to obtaining the consent of the General Convention or of a majority of the Bishops and the several Standing Committees, as provided in the Canons of the General Convention, a Suffragan Bishop may be elected at either an Annual or a Special Convention provided that written notice of such election, together with a copy of the written request of the Bishop, be included in the call of such Convention.

### **Manner of Election of Bishops**

**Section 8.** The election of a Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, or Suffragan Bishop shall be made in the following manner: The Diocesan Convention shall go into Committee of the Whole and sit with closed doors to receive and consider nominations. Any member of either Order may nominate some fit and qualified member of the clergy duly ordained in or received into the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, for the office. The name or names thus presented shall be balloted upon by both Orders voting separately, and the person receiving a concurrent majority of the votes cast in each Order shall be declared duly elected.

### **Quorum for Election of Bishops**

**Section 9.** A quorum for election of a Bishop, a Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan

Bishop shall consist of two-thirds of the clergy and two-thirds of the lay delegates entitled to seats in the Diocesan Convention, provided that at least two-thirds of the Parishes and Organized Missions in union with the Diocesan Convention shall be presented by lay delegates.

### **Salary of Bishops**

**Section 10.** The salary of a Bishop, of a Bishop Coadjutor or of a Suffragan Bishop shall be fixed at the time of this election, to take effect at the time of the ordination, and shall not be diminished thereafter without the consent of the Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop as may be the case. If there be a deficit in the funds for the salary of the Bishop or Bishops, it shall be the duty of the Diocese to borrow such money as may be necessary for the prompt payment of the said salary or salaries. Should the Bishop, by reason of age, or other permanent cause of infirmity, or by reason of the extent of Diocesan work, request the election of a Bishop Coadjutor, and should the Diocesan Convention accede to the request, then on or before the electing Convention, provision shall be made for an appropriate salary for the Bishop Coadjutor.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Legislative Powers of Convention**

**Section 1.** All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Diocesan Convention which shall be composed of members of the clergy and lay persons chosen as follows:

### **Clergy List**

(a) At least one week prior to any meeting of the Diocesan Convention it shall be the duty of the Ecclesiastical Authority to certify to the Secretary the names of all members of the clergy canonically resident in the Diocese, designating those who are eligible under Section 5 to vote and take part in the proceedings of any such convention.

### **Lay Delegates**

(b) Each Parish and Organized Mission shall be entitled to representation by lay delegates at any such Convention, the number to be based on communicant strength as defined in the current parochial report in accordance with the following table:

Any number not to exceed 150	2 delegates
151-300	3 delegates

301-450	4 delegates
451-600	5 delegates
over 600	6 delegates
plus one delegate for each 200 communicants in excess of 600.	

Such delegates shall be elected by the several Parishes and Organized Missions of the Diocese in accordance with such method of selection as the by-laws or custom of such Parishes and Organized Missions shall provide.

### **Certification of Election**

(c) The election or appointment of such lay delegates and their respective alternates shall be certified by the Rector or Clerk of the Vestry, in the case of a Parish, or by the Priest-in-Charge or Clerk of the Bishop's Committee, in the case of the Organized Mission, to the Secretary of the Diocese at least one week prior to the meeting of the Diocesan Convention. Such delegates and alternates shall serve until their successors be duly selected and qualified.

(d) The Diocesan Convention shall be the judge of the election returns and qualification of its own members.

### **Rules**

(e) The Diocesan Convention may determine the rules for its proceedings to the extent that such rules shall not be in conflict with this Constitution or the Canons of the Diocese.

### **Journal**

(f) The Diocesan Convention shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and shall publish the same promptly following each annual meeting.

### **Annual & Special Meetings**

**Section 2.** An annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention shall be held each year, the date and place to be determined by the Ecclesiastical Authority, with the approval of the Standing Committee. Special meetings of the Diocesan Convention may be called by the Ecclesiastical Authority on condition that the time, place and purpose of any such special meeting shall be designated, and no business shall be transacted at any special meeting other than that stated in the call, except upon unanimous consent of the Diocesan Convention at any such special meeting.

### **Notice**

**Section 3.** Thirty days prior written notice shall be given by the Secretary of the Diocese of every annual or special meeting of the Diocesan Convention, and a copy of such written notice shall be mailed or delivered to each Rector, Priest-in-Charge and Clerk of the

Vestry or Bishop's Committee in the Diocese.

## **Special Powers**

**Section 4.** In addition to the General and inherent powers of the Diocesan Convention according to the customs and usages of the Church, the Diocesan Convention shall be empowered:

## **Legislate**

(a) To legislate for the continuance and welfare of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this Diocese.

## **Canons**

(b) To adopt Canons of the Diocese and to alter and amend the same from time to time at any annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention.

## **Committees & Officers**

(c) To authorize, create, and appoint such committees, bodies or officers, in addition to those designated in the Constitution or the Canons of the Diocese, as the Diocesan Convention may deem necessary from time to time in order to carry on the work of the church, and to define the powers and duties of all such committees, bodies or officers.

## **Assessments Apportionment**

(d.) To apportion to the several Parishes and Organized Missions in union with the Convention responsibility for payment of the funds needed to carry on the work of the Church in the Diocese. Such apportionments shall be determined by canon or by special resolutions.

## **Budget**

(e) To adopt a budget, to appropriate funds there under and provide for the expenditure of funds so appropriated.

(f) To provide ways and means for raising funds to carry on the work of the Church.

## **Presiding Officer**

(g) If there be no Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, nor Suffragan Bishop, or if neither is present, the Diocesan Convention shall elect a Presiding Officer.

## **Clerical Members**

**Section 5.** The Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, and any Suffragan Bishop shall have a seat and right to vote in all meetings of the Diocesan Convention. Any member of the

clergy, who shall be canonically resident within the Diocese for three calendar months before any meeting of the Diocesan Convention and shall not be under ecclesiastical discipline, shall be entitled to a seat and right to vote at any meeting of the Diocesan Convention.

### **Quorum**

**Section 6.** A quorum for the transaction of business, except for the election of a Bishop, shall consist of one-half of the clergy entitled to seats in the meeting of the Diocesan Convention, exclusive of those who have resigned their positions, and whose actual residence is within the Diocese of Indianapolis and one-half of the lay delegates entitled to seats in the meeting of the Diocesan Convention, provided that at least one-half of the Parishes and Organized Missions in union with the Diocesan Convention be represented by lay delegates.

### **Voting**

**Section 7.** In all matters which shall come before the Diocesan Convention the clergy and the lay delegates shall deliberate in one body. Except where a vote by Orders is required under provisions of this Constitution or a Canon of the Diocese, all votes of the Diocesan Convention shall be by the entire membership, and a majority vote of all members present shall be decisive.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Standing Committee Appointment & Powers**

**Section 1.** The Diocesan Convention shall elect a Standing Committee of the Diocese which shall act as the Council of Advice to the Bishop, and shall perform such other duties and exercise such other authority as provided for in the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and in the Canons of the Diocese.

### **Members & Terms**

**Section 2.** The number of members of the Standing Committee, their qualifications, the manner of their nomination and appointment and their terms of office shall be provided in the Canons of the Diocese.

### **Executive Committee**

**Section 3.** The Standing Committee may select from among its members an Executive Committee and may delegate to the Executive Committee such of its authority and duties as shall be provided in the Canons of the Diocese and in resolutions of the Standing Committee.

### **Ecclesiastical Authority**

**Section 4.** If there be no Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese canonically authorized to act, the Standing Committee shall constitute the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese for the time being.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Officers of the Diocese**

**Section 1.** At each annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention the following officers of the Diocese shall be elected by the Diocesan Convention for one year, or until their successors be elected and qualified:

#### **Secretary of the Diocese**

(a) A Secretary of the Diocese who shall have custody of the Diocesan Corporation seal and its records, which shall be kept in the diocesan office, and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Diocesan Convention or the Bishop or Standing Committee, and as may be further defined by the Canons. The title of this officer shall be "Secretary of the Diocese."

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

(b) A Secretary of the Diocesan Convention who shall keep a journal and the records of the Convention, which shall be kept in the Diocesan office.

#### **Treasurer**

(c) A Treasurer, who shall have custody of the funds of the Diocese, and perform such other duties as may be assigned the Treasurer by the Diocesan Convention or the Bishop and as may be further defined by the Canons of the Diocese. The Treasurer shall have the title "Treasurer of the Diocese" and shall have supervisory authority over the financial business of the Diocese.

(d) The Secretary of the Diocese, the Secretary of the Diocesan Convention, and the Treasurer, if not otherwise members of the Diocesan Convention, shall be entitled, ex officio, to the privileges of a member except the right to vote.

(e) The same person may hold any two or more of the offices of the Secretary of the Diocese, Secretary of the Diocesan Convention, and Treasurer of the Diocese, if so elected by the Diocesan Convention.

#### **Assistants**

(f) The Bishop may appoint one or more Assistant Treasurers and Assistant Secretaries, if the business of the Diocese shall, in the Bishop's judgement, require

it.

### **Registrar**

(g) A Registrar and Historiographer of the Diocese, who shall have custody of the archives of the Diocese.

### **Chancellor**

**Section 2.** At the Annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention the Bishop, or in the Bishop's absence, or if there be no Bishop, the Presiding Officer elected by the Diocesan Convention, subject to the approval of the Diocesan Convention, shall appoint a Chancellor of the Diocese, who shall be a lay person and communicant of the Church and admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of the State of Indiana. The Chancellor shall hold office for one year, or until a successor is duly appointed. The Chancellor, if not an elected delegate, shall have all the privileges of a member at any meeting of the Diocesan Convention except the right to vote. The Bishop or if there be no Bishop, the Presiding Officer elected by the Diocesan Convention, may, subject to the same conditions, appoint one or more Vice Chancellors of the Diocese.

### **Vacancy**

**Section 3.** In the event a vacancy shall occur in any of the above offices, the Bishop shall appoint, subject to the approval of the Standing Committee, a successor to fill such vacancy, who shall hold such office until the next annual meeting of the Convention.

### **Compensation**

**Section 4.** Except as otherwise provided in the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese, the compensation of all officers of the Diocese shall be fixed by the Bishop and Standing Committee, but no funds of the Diocese shall be disbursed for the payment of such compensation if such funds shall not have been appropriated and authorized by the Diocesan Convention to be expended for such purposes.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Deputies to General Convention**

**Section 1.** Deputies to the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church shall be elected by the Diocesan Convention voting by Orders. A concurrent majority vote in each Order shall be required. The Clerical Deputies elected shall be Presbyters or Deacons canonically resident in the Diocese, and the Lay Deputies shall be domiciled in and communicants of a Parish or Organized Mission in union with the Convention.

### **Alternates**

**Section 2.** At the same time there shall be elected in the same manner and with like qualifications the alternate Clerical Deputies and alternate Lay Deputies to General Convention.

**Section 3.** In the case of vacancies the Bishop or other Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint, in the order of their election, one or more of the alternates to serve as Deputies.

### **Vacancies**

**Section 4.** In the case of the inability of any Deputy or alternate to attend the General Convention the Bishop or other Ecclesiastical Authority shall have the right to appoint one or more Deputies to fill such vacancies in order that the Diocese may be fully represented at all General Conventions.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Representatives to Province**

The Diocesan Canons shall provide for the selection of such clerical and lay representatives to the Synod or other representative body of the Province of which this Diocese is a member.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Admission of New Parish**

**Section 1.** An Organized Mission may be admitted into union with the Diocesan Convention as a Parish by a majority of votes; provided that at least one month before the annual meeting of the Convention such Organized Mission shall have filed with the Secretary of the Convention, through its Secretary, those papers and other evidence required by the Canons of the Diocese.

### **Admission of Mission**

**Section 2.** A congregation may be admitted into union with the Diocesan Convention as an Organized Mission by a majority of votes, provided such congregation shall have presented to the Diocesan Convention a certificate from the Ecclesiastical Authority stating that such applicant is duly organized.

**Section 3.** No Parish admitted into union with the Diocesan Convention shall thereafter be dissolved or its status otherwise changed except by the Diocesan Convention acting pursuant to the Canons of the Diocese in that regard.

### **Forfeiture of Privilege**

**Section 4.** If, pursuant to the Canon on Dormant Parishes, a Parish is suspended from

the right of representation in the Diocesan Convention, or if its connection with the Diocese is wholly dissolved, then, in either such event, the properties of such Parish shall revert to the Diocese and such other action shall be taken as is permissible under the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Seal**

The Diocese shall adopt an official corporate seal in such form as the Bishop and Standing Committee shall determine.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Certification of Constitution and Canons**

**Section 1.** The Secretary of the Diocese shall procure and keep a suitable book entitled "Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Indianapolis" in which shall be recorded the laws of the State of Indiana constituting the Charter of the Diocese of Indianapolis, the laws of the State of Indiana governing the organization and powers of Parish corporations, this Constitution with the certificate of its adoption and all duly adopted Canons of the Diocese with the certificate of their adoption. All new Canons of the Diocese or amendments thereto or to this Constitution hereafter adopted by the Diocesan Convention shall be certified by the Bishop and Secretary of the Diocese as having been duly adopted, and shall, with the certificate of adoption, be recorded in the same book, and said book, shall be taken and regarded as prima facie evidence of the due adoption and correctness of all documents recorded therein.

### **Copies to Parishes and Missions**

**Section 2.** The Secretary of the Diocese shall furnish each Parish and Mission with two copies of the "Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Indianapolis" and within two months following each annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention shall furnish each Parish and Mission with two copies of any amendments adopted at such meeting.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Amendments**

This Constitution may be altered or amended in the following manner: Any proposal to alter or amend, which shall have been introduced in writing, duly considered and approved by a majority vote at an annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention, shall be referred to the next annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention for final consideration and action and, if approved and adopted at such next annual meeting by two-thirds of each Order, voting separately, and concurred in by the Bishop, such amendment shall become effective at the

time designated in the resolution of adoption.