

**Diocese of New Jersey**  
**Report of the Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons 2023**

**Introduction**

The Committee reviewed requests received from members of the diocese for possible changes in the constitution and canons of the diocese. As provided in Canon 75, Section 1, proposals for amendments must be sent to the Committee by December 1 of the prior year for consideration and report. The following proposals were received prior to such deadline.

**Part I**  
**Changes to Diocesan Canons Resulting from**  
**Episcopal Church Canon Amendments at the 80th General Convention**

Section 4 of Diocesan Canon 75 provides: "Following each meeting of the General Convention, the Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons must (a) review any changes to Canons of The Episcopal Church approved by such meeting and (b) propose to the next diocesan Convention amendments to Diocesan Canons so as to conform them to such changes in Canons of The Episcopal Church."

The Committee has reviewed the Resolutions passed by the General Convention this past summer and in particular those amending the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, and it has concluded that none require conforming amendments to the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese of New Jersey.

**Part II**  
**Constitution Article X**  
**Deputies and Alternates to the General Convention**

Every Diocese is entitled to elect four lay and four clergy Deputies to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church, as well as a like number of Alternate Deputies in each order. Under the first paragraph of Article X of the Diocesan Constitution, those elected as Deputies serve "until their successors are elected." A like provision in the second paragraph applies to Alternate Deputies. These length-of-term provisions, however, don't make sense: Both Deputies and Alternate Deputies serve until the completion of the General Convention for which they were elected; in recent years, they have also served through the following Diocesan Convention so that they can report to the Diocese on that General Convention. Further, there is no reason for Alternate Deputies to continue to serve for an additional year thereafter, since they would have nothing to do. Amending the Constitution requires a majority vote at any Diocesan Convention, to be followed by a vote by orders to confirm the change at the next Diocesan Convention (Art. XIII).

The 2022 Diocesan Convention passed its Implementing Resolution I to provide that both Deputies and Alternate Deputies serve instead through the close of the Diocesan Convention following the General Convention for which they were elected.

The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons has likewise reviewed this proposal and found it to be reasonable.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution:

**Implementing Resolution II:** *Be it resolved*, That Section 1 of Article X of the Constitution of the Diocese of New Jersey be amended (upon a second reading) to read as follows (deletions shown by strikethrough, insertions by double-underline):

SECTION 1. At the annual meeting of the Convention held in the second calendar year preceding the regular meeting of the General Convention, four clerical and four lay Deputies shall be elected to represent the Diocese at the General Convention. They shall be elected by a vote by orders and subject to Article V, Section 3, and shall hold office until ~~their successors are elected~~ the close of the Diocesan Convention following the General Convention for which they were elected.

At the annual meeting of the Convention held in the calendar year next preceding the regular meeting of the General Convention, four clerical and four lay Alternate Deputies shall be elected to represent the Diocese at the General Convention. They shall be elected by a vote by orders and subject to Article V, Section 3, and shall hold office until ~~their successors are elected~~ the close of the Diocesan Convention following the General Convention for which they were elected. If, during the preceding year, any vacancies have occurred in the office of Deputy to the General Convention, the Convention, before proceeding with the election of Alternate Deputies, shall elect from among those persons nominated for the office of Alternate Deputy, a sufficient number of persons to fill the vacancies.

Any vacancies among Alternate Deputies occurring after such election may be filled by appointment by the Ecclesiastical Authority from among qualified persons of the same order, lay or clergy, as the vacancy.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution. The Committee notes that this Implementing Resolution requires a vote by orders.*

### Part III

#### Canon 9 – First Amendments

##### Episcopal Elections — Responsibilities of the Standing Committee and General Changes

Diocesan Canon 9 sets forth the procedure for electing a Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Coadjutor, or Bishop Suffragan for the Diocese. The 2022 Diocesan Convention approved some amendments to this canon based on the Diocese's experience in electing members of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee. Since then, Bishop Stokes and the Standing Committee have requested clarification as to the respective roles of the Bishop Diocesan and the Standing Committee in various aspects of the canonical process. In addition, the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee and the Transition Committee have proposed two further changes to the canon stemming from their experience so far in the current process.

The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons has reviewed such proposals and will present them in three sections: The first (Part III of this Report) dealing with the roles of the Bishop and Standing Committee and general corrections, the second (Part IV) dealing with transfer of responsibility for the meet-and-greet sessions with the candidates from the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee to the Transition Committee, and the third (Part V) dealing with changes to the Independent Nomination process.

The need to elect a new Bishop Diocesan can arise from (a) a call by the current Bishop or (b) to fill a vacancy. In the first case, the Bishop will be around and will want some involvement, including chairing the convention that holds the election. If the office is vacant, under the canons the Standing Committee becomes the "Ecclesiastical Authority" for the Diocese, although it may agree to cede some degrees of authority to an interim Bishop. While Diocesan Canon 70 provides for such a circumstance, it was felt better to specifically clarify roles in Canon 9.

In addition, it has been the long-standing polity of The Episcopal Church that, as a precondition for a Diocese to add a Bishop Suffragan or Bishop Coadjutor, it should first get the approval of a majority of Bishops Diocesan and Standing Committees throughout the Church. (These same bodies will also need to approve a bishop-elect before she or he can be ordained.) Due to some confusion in the past two General Conventions, the canons implementing this polity are now being clarified, but the Committee deems it useful to incorporate this requirement into the diocesan canon, through an addition to Section 1 of Canon 9.

The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons agrees with these changes.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution:

**Implementing Resolution III:** *Resolved*, That Canon 9 of the Diocese of New Jersey be amended to read as follows (deletions shown by strikethrough, insertions by double-underline):

**CANON 9**Episcopal Elections

SECTION 1. Prior Consents for Elections of Bishops Coadjutor or Suffragan. Before an election of a Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan can be authorized, the election process, including a budget provision for the election and the position, must be approved by a regular or special meeting of the Diocesan Convention, and consents from a majority of Standing Committees of The Episcopal Church and of Bishops exercising jurisdiction must be obtained.

(a) Whenever the Bishop of the Diocese wishes to call for the election of a Suffragan Bishop or a Bishop Coadjutor, the Bishop shall give written notice to all members of the Convention not later than sixty days before the annual or special meeting of the Convention at which the request will be considered.

(b) The Diocesan Council, with the assistance of the Finance and Budget Committee, shall prepare and adopt a proposed financial plan to defray all expenses to be incurred in connection with the election, in a manner that incorporates the expenses into the Diocesan Budget over a period not to exceed three years. The plan shall include appropriations for the work of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee and the Transition Committee provided for in this Canon, the cost of the Electing Convention, and the cost of the Consecration Service. The plan shall also set the proposed initial level of compensation for the new bishop and provide for the moving expenses of the new bishop. A copy of the proposed financial plan shall be mailed to all members of the Convention not later than thirty days before the meeting of the Convention referred to in subsection (a) of Section 1 of this canon.

(c) The Convention shall act first on the Bishop's request for the election of a Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan, and if that is approved the Convention shall then consider the financial plan proposed by the Council. The Convention may adopt the plan as proposed, adopt a modified version of the plan, or reject the plan. Only if the Convention approves both the resolution consenting to the election and the financial plan may the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese proceed to seek the consent of a majority of the Bishops exercising jurisdiction and of the Standing Committees of The Episcopal Church for such election to go forward. Upon receipt of such consents, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall promptly begin the process of electing a Bishop Search and Nomination Committee as set forth in Section 4 of this Canon.

SECTION 2. Procedure for Successor to Bishop Diocesan. If the Bishop Diocesan gives notice of resignation, he or she shall promptly begin the process of electing Convocational members of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee as set forth in Section 4 of this Canon. In the event of the death of the Bishop Diocesan, Diocesan or the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between the Diocese and the Bishop Diocesan, ~~or upon the Bishop Diocesan's giving notice of resignation or retirement, the Ecclesiastical Authority~~ the Standing Committee shall promptly begin the process of electing ~~a Bishop Search and Nomination Committee as set forth in Section 4 of this Canon~~ such Convocational members. Simultaneously, the Diocesan Council shall prepare and adopt a financial plan as described in subsection (b) of Section 1 of this Canon for the election of a successor, to be mailed to all members of the Convention not later than thirty days before the next annual or special meeting of the Convention. The Convention may adopt the plan as proposed or adopt a modified version of the plan.

SECTION 3. Composition of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee. When a bishop is to be elected, there shall be a Bishop Search and Nomination Committee consisting of 16 Convocational Members and six Members-At-Large, elected in the following manner:

- (a) One member of the clergy and one lay person shall be elected in each convocation of the Diocese in accordance with the provisions of Section 4 of this Canon.
- (b) Six additional Members-At-Large, either clergy or lay, shall be elected by the Convocational Members. The election shall be by majority vote of all the Convocational Members. In electing the Members-At-Large, the Convocational Members shall be as inclusive as possible to ensure that the Committee is representative of the entire Diocese.
- (c) In addition to the elected members, a Chair shall be appointed by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee. If there is no Bishop, the appointment shall be made by the Standing Committee. The Committee, including all At-Large Members, shall elect a Vice-Chair from the members of the Committee.
- (d) Lay members of the Committee shall be confirmed adult communicants in good standing of a Parish or Mission within the Diocese. Clergy members shall be canonically resident in the Diocese.
- (e) Vacancies among Convocational Members shall be filled by appointment of the Dean of the Convocation. Vacancies among the Members-At-Large shall be filled by the Committee.

SECTION 4. Election of Bishop Search and Nomination Committee Members by Convocations. Convocational Members shall be elected in the following manner:

- (a) When the election of a bishop under Section 1 or 2 of this Canon is called for, the Bishop Diocesan if there be one, or in the absence of a Bishop Diocesan, the Standing Committee, Ecclesiastical Authority announces the call for the election of a bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint a specific Sunday for Special Meetings to be held in each Parish and Mission of the Diocese to elect special delegates to a special meeting in each convocation for the purpose of electing members of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee. On that Sunday, every Parish and Mission in the Diocese shall hold a special meeting of the Congregation, in accordance with the provisions of the Canons of the Diocese and the laws of the State of New Jersey, for the purpose of electing six special delegates to the special meeting of the Convocation. The Chair of the meeting shall forthwith certify to the Dean of the Convocation and to the Ecclesiastical Authority the names and full contact information of the persons elected.
- (b) On the fourth Sunday thereafter, the Dean of each convocation shall convene a Special Meeting to elect members of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee, due notice having been given to each church in the convocation. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall make provisions (i) for preregistration of those clergy and elected special delegates who will be authorized to vote at the Special Meetings and (ii) for nominations of candidates prior to such meeting to be made by those entitled to vote at such meeting or by self-nomination. Those entitled to vote at the meeting shall be the six duly certified Special Delegates from each Parish and Mission in the Convocation and all members of the clergy, canonically resident in the Diocese, who exercise their ministry within the Convocation. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. It shall be the duty of each Dean to certify forthwith to the Ecclesiastical Authority the names and full contact information of the persons elected.

SECTION 5. Self-Study and Diocesan Profile. The Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall be responsible for conducting a Diocesan Self-Study. Using information developed by a Diocesan Self-Study, the Committee shall develop a Diocesan Profile. The Committee may engage such professional assistance as it deems reasonable to complete its task.

SECTION 6. Obtaining Candidates.

(a) The Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall take the steps necessary to encourage the recommendation of qualified candidates and shall circulate the Diocesan Profile and other pertinent information to all clergy, Parishes, and Missions of the Diocese, the Office of Transition Ministry of the Episcopal Church, the Presiding Bishop and all active Bishops of the Episcopal Church notifying them that recommendations are being received, and stating the process for nomination and election.

(b) The Committee shall screen all candidates recommended and shall establish its own procedures for determining which candidates are best suited for nomination. It shall submit a list of no fewer than four nor more than six candidates to be placed in nomination at the Electing Convention.

(c) Not later than one year after it is constituted, the Committee shall report to the members of the Electing Convention and to the Diocese as a whole, the names of the persons to be nominated by it at the Electing Convention, together with a brief biography of each nominee. The committee shall include notice of the Electing Convention with its report. The date of the electing Convention shall not be less than three months nor more than five months after the date the report is issued.

SECTION 7. Independent Nominations. When the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee has announced its list of nominees, there shall be a period of 30 days after the date when its report is issued during which Independent Nominations to the electing Convention may be made. No independent nominations shall be received after that date. The Committee shall provide, upon request, a Nomination Petition Form on which the deadline for submitting independent nominations and the method of submitting them is clearly stated. The Nomination Petition shall require the signatures of at least two persons from at least five Convocations.

SECTION 8. Final Report of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee. After the period for receiving independent nominations has expired, the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall publish an Election Booklet containing the names, photographs, and biographical sketches of all nominees and such other material about the nominees as the Committee shall choose to include. The Election Booklet shall state which nominees were nominated by the Committee and which were nominated independently, but in every other respect all nominees shall be treated equally. The Election Booklet shall include a detailed statement of the election process including the Proposed Rules of Order and Agenda for the Electing Convention. The Election Booklet shall be distributed to each member of the Electing Convention not less than 30 days before the electing Convention and also made available to the Diocese as a whole.

SECTION 9. Introduction of Nominees to the Diocese. After the Election Booklet has been distributed, the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall provide one or more opportunities for members of the Electing Convention to meet and confer with all nominees. Opportunity shall also be afforded all members of the Diocese to meet the nominees. The Committee shall be responsible for establishing the time, place, and format of any pre-Convention meeting of candidates. All such meetings shall be complete at least seven days prior to the Electing Convention.

SECTION 10. Composition and Duties of the Transition Committee. There shall be a Transition Committee consisting of between eight and twelve members. Lay members of the committee shall be confirmed adult

communicants in good standing of a Parish or Mission within the Diocese. Clergy members shall be canonically resident in the Diocese. The composition of the committee and its duties shall be as follows:

- (a) Following the organization of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee by the appointment of its Chair and the election of its Members-At-Large, the Standing Committee shall appoint a Chair for the Transition Committee, and the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall choose one of its members to be a liaison member of the Transition Committee. The Chair and the liaison member shall then consult with the Standing Committee to assist it in appointing the remaining members of the Transition Committee. Members should be considered for their aptitude, experience, and expertise in the tasks required of the committee. The committee members should organize themselves at least six months before the expected date of the Electing Convention.
- (b) The Transition Committee shall be responsible for planning and overseeing the Electing Convention. Subject to the consent of the Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, or if not the Standing Committee, Ecclesiastical Authority, and in consultation with the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee, the Transition Committee shall fix the date, time, and place of the Electing Convention. The committee shall strive to ensure that the entire process of nominating and electing a Bishop is conducted in a pastoral manner. The committee shall confer with the Committee on Rules of Order and Dispatch of Business for the Electing Convention to assist it in developing Rules of Order and an Agenda for the Electing Convention. The committee shall communicate regularly with members of the Electing Convention and with the Diocese at large to ensure an active awareness of the entire election process. The Bishop Diocesan, if there is one, or if not the Standing Committee Ecclesiastical Authority may for good cause adjourn the date of the Electing Convention and reschedule the same with the advice and consent of the Transition Committee.
- (c) The Transition Committee shall provide pastoral and practical assistance to any present bishop, the bishop-elect, and their spouses and families throughout the transition process.
- (d) The Transition Committee shall be responsible for planning and overseeing the leave-taking of an incumbent bishop, the relocation of the family of the bishop-elect, and the services of consecration or induction of the bishop-elect.
- (e) The Transition Committee should coordinate its tasks as necessary with the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee, the Standing Committee, and diocesan staff.

SECTION 11. Placing in Nomination. At the Electing Convention, the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall place in nomination all names listed in the Election Booklet. Nominations from the floor of Convention shall not be permitted. No nominating speeches or laudatory addresses shall be made on behalf of any nominee.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution.*

**Part IV**  
**Canon 9 – Second Amendments**  
**Episcopal Elections — Responsibility for Meeting Candidates**

Section 9 of Canon 9 currently provides:

SECTION 9. Introduction of Nominees to the Diocese. After the Election Booklet has been distributed, the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee shall provide one or more opportunities for members of the Electing Convention to meet and confer with all nominees. Opportunity shall also be afforded all members of

the Diocese to meet the nominees. The Committee shall be responsible for establishing the time, place, and format of any pre-Convention meeting of candidates. All such meetings shall be complete at least seven days prior to the Electing Convention.

The Bishop Search and Nomination Committee and Transition Committee have recommended that this responsibility be transferred from the first committee to the second for future elections. This makes a certain amount of sense, in that the other responsibilities of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee are concluded with the publication of the Election Booklet (Section 8). The means to effect this change would be to delete the foregoing Section 9 and move its substance into a new subsection (b) of Section 10, which sets forth the formation and duties of the Transition Committee.

The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons agrees with these changes.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution:

**Implementing Resolution IV:** *Resolved*, That Section 9 of Canon 9 of the Diocese of New Jersey be deleted and following sections renumbered; and be it further

*Resolved*, That a new subsection (b) be inserted in Section 10 (to be renumbered as 9 under the preceding Resolved) of Canon 9 to read as follows:

(b) After the Election Booklet has been distributed, the Transition Committee shall provide one or more opportunities for members of the Electing Convention to meet and confer with all nominees. Opportunity shall also be afforded all members of the Diocese to meet the nominees. The Committee shall be responsible for establishing the time, place, and format of any pre-Convention meeting of candidates. All such meetings shall be complete at least seven days prior to the Electing Convention.

And be it further

*Resolved*, That the following subsections of such section be renumbered.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution.*

**Part V**  
**Canon 9 – Third Amendments**  
**Episcopal Elections — Procedure for Independent Nominations**

Canon 9, Section 7, provides for the possibility of independent nominations for Bishops beyond any proposed by the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee:

SECTION 7. Independent Nominations. When the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee has announced its list of nominees, there shall be a period of 30 days after the date when its report is issued during which Independent Nominations to the electing Convention may be made. No independent nominations shall be received after that date. The Committee shall provide, upon request, a Nomination Petition Form on which the deadline for submitting independent nominations and the method of submitting them is clearly stated. The Nomination Petition shall require the signatures of at least two persons from at least five Convocations.

The Bishop Search and Nomination Committee and the Transition Committee have proposed to limit this option by (a) transferring responsibility for this process from the 22-member Bishop Search and Nomination Committee to the 8-member Standing Committee, (b) reducing the period to put together independent nominations from 30 days to 14, (c) increasing the number of signatures from two from each of five Convocations to two from each of six Convocations, with the specification that there be one clergy and one lay from each one, and that one of the clergy signators be a Deacon and five be Priests, and (d) disqualifying any person signing the petition from serving

as a reference for the nominee. In addition, the committees have proposed to change the deadline in Section 6(c) for "announcing its list of nominees" (which opens the independent-nomination period) from "not be less than three months nor more than five months" before the date set for the electing convention to "not be less than 90 days nor more than five months" before such date.

The Bishop Search and Nomination Committee has on its own implemented at least some of the foregoing changes in the current search process. Its announcement to the Diocese of its list of nominees was made 90 days prior to the schedule date for the electing convention rather than a full three months. (It had previously been disclosed to the Standing Committee only.) Its announced criteria for nomination petitions required lay and clergy nominators from each Convocation. Other differences from the stated requirements for independent nominees, as compared to those who were nominated to the Committee under the requirements in the Diocesan Profile, are eight non-bishop references rather than three, and inserting short-essay requirements for two of the nominators. Since we don't know what kind of follow-up was done on the Committee's nominees after their initial submission, a full comparison is not possible.

Within the Diocese New Jersey, the Independent Nomination process generated three candidates in the 2003 election for the Bishop Diocesan and also three in the 2013 election. For the 2023 election there were none. Speculation arises as to whether this may have been the result of the restrictions on the process implemented by the two current episcopal election committees, or what the result might be of the further restrictions they now propose. The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons is aware that freely allowing nominations by petition may represent an unstated criticism of the results of the previous work of an electing committee, and that problems can be presented by a shortened period of time to conduct background and reference checking. On the other hand, it is aware that this can be an appropriate way of bringing in previously unconsidered candidates for church leadership. As an example, the current Bishop of New York, the Right Reverend Andrew Dietsche, was elected in 2011 as a nominee by petition following a committee's presentation of a slate of five other candidates.

The Chair of the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee has noted that the changes proposed "aligns with the best practices recommended by the National Church's Office of Pastoral Development". The 2018 General Convention established a Task Force to assist the Office of Pastoral Development that reported to the 2022 General Convention that it was reviewing *The Raising Up of Episcopal Leadership: A Manual for Dioceses in Transition* (2007, last revised 2012) and noted that "Many of these materials are considerably out of date and must be reviewed, revised, and supplemented by relevant and user-friendly search resources" (Reports to the 80th General Convention, p. 1014). The work of this Task Force is ongoing and ought be reviewed by the Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons before it can make a final recommendation to amend the existing provisions of Canon 9 regarding Independent Nominations. While the Committee will propose these changes in this Report, it is recommending that they be referred back to the Committee for further study and report back to the 2024 Convention.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution:

**Implementing Resolution V:** *Resolved*, That Section 6(c) of Canon 9 of the Diocese of New Jersey be amended to read as follows (deletions shown by strikethrough, insertions by double-underline):

(c) Not later than one year after it is constituted, the Committee shall report to the members of the Electing Convention and to the Diocese as a whole, the names of the persons to be nominated by it at the Electing Convention, together with a brief biography of each nominee. The committee shall include notice of the Electing Convention with its report. The date of the electing Convention shall not be less than ~~three months~~ ninety days nor more than five months after the date the report is issued.

And be it further

*Resolved*, That Section 7 of Canon 9 be amended to read as follows (deletions shown by strikethrough, insertions by double-underline):



SECTION 7. Independent Nominations. The independent nomination process shall be handled by the Standing Committee. When the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee has announced its list of nominees, there shall be a period of ~~30~~ fourteen days after the date when its report is issued during which Independent Nominations to the electing Convention may be made. No independent nominations shall be received after that date. The Standing Committee shall provide, ~~upon request,~~ a Nomination Petition Form on which the deadline for submitting independent nominations and the method of submitting them is clearly stated. The Nomination Petition shall require the signatures of at least twelve persons, two persons from at least five six Convocations, one Member of the Clergy and one Lay Person from each Convocation. The clergy signatures should include five priests and one deacon. Persons signing the petition may not subsequently serve as references for the nominee. The Standing Committee shall screen all petition candidates and share with the Bishop Search and Nomination Committee any qualified petition nominees for inclusion in the Election Booklet.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends that this implementing resolution be referred back to the Committee for further study and report to the 240th Diocesan Convention.*

**Part VI**  
**Canon 27 Section 1**  
**Board of Missions – Term of Office**

Canon 27, Section 1 provides:

SECTION 1. There shall be a Board of Missions to which shall be entrusted under the Bishop, the Missionary work of the Diocese. The Bishop or some person designated by the Bishop shall serve as Chair of the Board. Each Convocation shall in an annual meeting elect one clerical member and one lay member at least one of whom will be a vicar or a lay member of a Mission church to serve a three-year term, which shall begin immediately upon election, provided, that if there is no Mission church in a Convocation, or if there is no one who is a member of a Mission church willing to serve, then the member or members elected, clergy or lay, may be from any church of the Convocation. The elections shall be staggered such that no more than one-third of the membership shall end their terms in a given year. In addition, both the Bishop and Diocesan Council may each appoint two members for three-year terms. In the event of an unexpected vacancy, Convocations may elect members for the unexpired terms of members previously elected by its Convocation and the Bishop or Diocesan Council may appoint members to fill the unexpired terms of their appointments.

Canon Paul Wolfgang has noted that prior to 2019, this canon stated that the members of the Board of Missions should be elected at the spring convocation meeting. Since the 2019 canons removed the requirement for both a spring and fall convocation meeting, this canon was changed to remove the specification of spring. During the fall, the Board of Missions evaluates requests for mission grants and makes recommendation to the Diocesan Council. Specifying that a newly elected member assumes office immediately upon election can possibly result in a new member being seated in the middle of this evaluation process. Therefore, having the new member be seated after the completion of the current review process, which under Canon 27 Section 3 is to be concluded by December 31, is appropriate. Since all convocation elections can now take place in the fall, it is reasonable to begin the term at the beginning of the following calendar year.

The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons has reviewed this proposal and found it to be reasonable.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution:

**Implementing Resolution VI:** *Resolved*, That Section 1 of Canon 27 of the Canons of the Diocese of New Jersey be amended to read as follows (deletions shown by strikethrough, insertions by double-underline):

SECTION 1. There shall be a Board of Missions to which shall be entrusted under the Bishop, the Missionary work of the Diocese. The Bishop or some person designated by the Bishop shall serve as Chair of the Board. Each Convocation shall in an annual meeting elect one clerical member and one lay

member at least one of whom will be a vicar or a lay member of a Mission church to serve a three-year term, which shall begin ~~immediately upon election~~ the following January, provided, that if there is no Mission church in a Convocation, or if there is no one who is a member of a Mission church willing to serve, then the member or members elected, clergy or lay, may be from any church of the Convocation. The elections shall be staggered such that no more than one-third of the membership shall end their terms in a given year. In addition, both the Bishop and Diocesan Council may each appoint two members for three-year terms. In the event of an unexpected vacancy, Convocations may elect members for the unexpired terms of members previously elected by its Convocation and the Bishop or Diocesan Council may appoint members to fill the unexpired terms of their appointments.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution.*

**Part VII**  
**Canon 49, Section 1**  
**Elected Members of the Cathedral Major Chapter**

The composition of the Major Chapter was set in the 1949 Joint Consolidation Agreement, which is referenced in Diocesan Canon 49. The members of the Chapter elected by the Diocesan Convention were then initially specified as "four presbyters and four lay persons," and this has been carried forward into the current Constitution of the Cathedral and consequently reflected in Canon 49. (The term "presbyter" refers to a person ordained to the priesthood but not to the episcopacy.) Over the subsequent seven decades, and particularly beginning in 1970, the office of the vocational diaconate has been established in The Episcopal Church as a well-recognized order of ministry active in the life of the church. Deacon Keith McCoy has accordingly proposed eliminating the restriction of elected Major Chapter clergy members to presbyters only.

The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons noted that such a change would need to be first made by amending the Constitution of the Cathedral, and the Major Chapter has now acted to do so.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution (capitalization has been conformed to the usage of Episcopal Church Canons):

**Implementing Resolution VII:** *Resolved*, That the third sentence of Section 2 of Canon 49 of the Canons of the Diocese of New Jersey be amended as follows (deletions shown by strikethrough, insertions by double-underline):

SECTION 2. The governing body of Trinity Cathedral shall be a Chapter. The Chapter shall consist of the Bishop, who shall be the presiding officer; the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, the Suffragan Bishops, if there be any; the Dean of the Cathedral; four ~~presbyters~~ Members of the Clergy and four ~~lay persons~~ Lay Persons elected by the Diocesan Convention for three-year terms; three members appointed in writing by the Bishop for three-year terms; the following members elected by and from the Cathedral congregation, namely, a Senior Warden and a Junior Warden each elected for two-year terms, and nine other lay persons elected for three-year terms; and a Treasurer and a Clerk elected by the Chapter.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution.*

**Part VIII**  
**Canon 74, Section 1(b)(1)**  
**Minimum Compensation for Clergy – Housing Allowance**

Current Canon 74 provides for subsidizing clergy housing in one of three alternative situations: (1) paying a housing subsidy in "situations in which the clergyperson owns a home as a primary residence", (2) providing a church-owned rectory along with paying utilities and maintenance together with a housing equity plan, or (3) the congregation's renting of housing for the clergyperson along with paying utilities and a housing equity plan.

Canon Phyllis Jones has noted that the language of the first situation is not entirely clear that it should apply when members of the clergy rent their own apartment or house rather than the parish or mission doing so. The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons agrees that such a clergyperson should clearly be compensated under subsection (1) rather than (3) and so recommends a small clarifying amendment.

Accordingly, the Committee proposes the following implementing resolution:

**Implementing Resolution VIII:** *Resolved*, That Section 1(b)(1) of Canon 74 of the Canons of the Diocese of New Jersey be amended to read as follows (insertions shown by double-underline):

(1) The Parish or Mission shall pay the clergyperson a housing subsidy, not less than the minimum amount established by Diocesan Convention. This provision is intended to apply to situations in which the clergyperson owns or rents a home as a primary residence. In special circumstances the clergyperson may make a written agreement with the Parish or Mission to accept a lesser amount for a given period of time, but all such agreements must be reviewed and approved in writing by the Standing Commission on Clerical Compensation.

*The Standing Committee on Constitution and Canons recommends the adoption of this implementing resolution.*

### Conclusion

The Committee has received no further timely proposals for consideration for this year. The Committee reminds members of Convention that proposals for amendments to the constitution or canons must be submitted to the Committee by December 1, 2023 for consideration at the 2024 Diocesan Convention.

The Committee appreciates the input it receives from other diocesan officers and bodies within the areas of their expertise. The Committee also notes that the Rev. Dr. Jeffrey M. Kirk and Canon Donna Freidel, Esq., are completing their current terms on the Committee, although they have been nominated for a further term. We thank them for their service to the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Canon Dr. John P. Mitchell, Chair  
Canon Donna L. Freidel, Esq., Vice Chair  
Paul De Sarno, Esq.  
The Reverend Dr. Jeffrey M. Kirk  
Canon Paul Ambos, Esq., Secretary