

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF CONVENTION TO THE
239TH DIOCESAN CONVENTION OF THE
DIOCESE OF NEW JERSEY**

Amendments to the Constitution of The Episcopal Church
Passed upon First Reading
by the 80th General Convention

Article XII of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church provides in pertinent part:

No alteration or amendment of this Constitution shall be made unless the same shall be first proposed at one regular meeting of the General Convention and be sent to the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese, to be made known to the Diocesan Convention at its next meeting, and be adopted by the General Convention at its next succeeding regular meeting by a majority of all Bishops, excluding retired Bishops not present, of the whole number of Bishops entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, and by an affirmative vote by orders in the House of Deputies in accordance with Article I, Section 5, except that concurrence by the orders shall require the affirmative vote in each order by a majority of the Dioceses entitled to representation in the House of Deputies.

The following three Resolutions were passed by the 80th General Convention, which met during July 2022 in Baltimore, Maryland, as proposed amendments to the Constitution on first reading:

Resolution A157:

Resolved, That Article I, Section 7 of the Constitution be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 7. The General Convention shall ~~meet~~ *hold its regular meeting* not less than once in each three years, at a time and place determined in accordance with the Canons. *In the event of a change of circumstances indicating the necessity or advisability of changing the date of such regular meeting of The General Convention beyond three years, said meeting may be rescheduled as provided by Canon.* Special Meetings may be held as provided for by Canon.

Resolution A031:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention amend Article V, Section 4 of the Constitution to read as follows:

Sec. 4. Whenever a new Diocese is formed and erected out of an existing Diocese *or out of two or more existing Dioceses or parts of them*, ~~it shall be subject to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese out of which it was formed, except as local circumstances may prevent, until the same be altered in accordance with such Constitution and Canons by the~~

~~Convention of the new Diocese the formation process of the newly formed Diocese, including the adoption of its Constitution and Canons, shall be as set forth in the Canons.~~

~~Whenever a Diocese is formed out of two or more existing Dioceses, it shall be subject to the Constitution and Canons of that one of the said existing Dioceses to which the greater number of Members of the Clergy shall have belonged prior to the erection of such new Diocese, except as local circumstances may prevent, until the same be altered in accordance with such Constitution and Canons by the Convention of the new Diocese.~~

Resolution A059:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church repeal Article X in its entirety and replace it with the following:

Sec. 1. The Book of Common Prayer is understood to be those liturgical forms and other texts authorized by the General Convention in accordance with this article and the Canons of this Church.

The Book of Common Prayer in this Church is intended to be communal and devotional prayer enriched by our church's cultural, geographical, and linguistic contexts. The Book of Common Prayer shall contain both public worship and private devotion.

The Book of Common Prayer, as now established or hereafter amended by the General Convention, shall be in use in all the Dioceses of this Church.

Sec. 2. No alteration thereof or addition thereto shall be made unless the General Convention approve the same on first reading in one regular meeting of the General Convention and, by resolve so directing, be sent by the Secretary of the General Convention to the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese, to be made known to the Diocesan Convention at its next regular meeting, and be adopted on second reading without alteration by the General Convention at its next succeeding regular meeting by a majority of all Bishops, excluding retired Bishops not present, of the whole number of Bishops entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, and by an affirmative vote by orders in the House of Deputies in accordance with Art. I, Sec. 5 of this Constitution, except that concurrence in the affirmative by the orders shall require the affirmative vote in each order by a majority of the Dioceses entitled to representation in the House of Deputies.

Sec. 3. No alteration thereof or addition thereto shall be made unless it has previously been authorized for Trial Use in accordance with this Article and the Canons of this Church.

Sec. 4. The General Convention may at any one meeting, by a majority of the whole number of the Bishops entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, and by a majority of the Clerical and Lay Deputies of all the Dioceses entitled to representation in the House of Deputies, voting by orders as previously set forth in this Article:

- a. Amend the Table of Lessons and all Tables and Rubrics relating to the Psalms.

- b. Authorize for Trial Use such alterations or additions in whole or in part to the established Book of Common Prayer as may be proposed in accord with the Canons of this Church and duly undertaken by and implemented according to the directives of the General Convention.
 - c. Authorize for use throughout this Church, as provided by Canon, alternative and additional liturgies to supplement those provided in the Book of Common Prayer.
- Sec. 5. Nothing in this Article shall be construed as restricting the authority of the Bishops of this Church to take such order as may be permitted by the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer or by the Canons of the General Convention for the use of special forms of worship.

Note from the Secretary of Convention

Since Resolution 2022-A059 proposed an amendment by substitution to Article X, the following markup illustrates the exact additions and deletions (by italics and strikethroughs) to the current text of Article X

Article X: Of The Book of Common Prayer

Sec. 1. The Book of Common Prayer is understood to be those liturgical forms and other texts authorized by the General Convention in accordance with this article and the Canons of this Church.

The Book of Common Prayer in this Church is intended to be communal and devotional prayer enriched by our church's cultural, geographical, and linguistic contexts. The Book of Common Prayer shall contain both public worship and private devotion.

The Book of Common Prayer, as now established or hereafter amended by the ~~authority of this Church~~ *General Convention*, shall be in use in all the Dioceses of this Church.

Sec. 2. No alteration thereof or addition thereto shall be made unless the General Convention approve the same shall be on first proposed reading in one regular meeting of the General Convention and, by a resolve thereof so directing, be sent within six months by the Secretary of the General Convention to the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese, to be made known to the Diocesan Convention at its next regular meeting, and be adopted on second reading without alteration by the General Convention at its next succeeding regular meeting by a majority of all Bishops, excluding retired Bishops not present, of the whole number of Bishops entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, and by an affirmative vote by orders in the House of Deputies in accordance with Article Art. I, Sec. 5 of this Constitution, except that concurrence in the affirmative by the orders shall require the affirmative vote in each order by a majority of the Dioceses entitled to representation in the House of Deputies.

Sec. 3. No alteration thereof or addition thereto shall be made unless it has previously been authorized for Trial Use in accordance with this Article and the Canons of this Church.

Sec. 4. ~~But notwithstanding anything herein above contained, the~~ The General Convention may at any one meeting, by a majority of the whole number of the Bishops entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, and by a majority of the Clerical and Lay Deputies of all the Dioceses entitled to representation in the House of Deputies, voting by orders as previously set forth in this Article:

- a. Amend the Table of Lessons and all Tables and Rubrics relating to the Psalms.
- b. Authorize for ~~trial use throughout this Church, as an alternative at any time or times~~ *Trial Use such alterations or additions in whole or in part to the established Book of Common Prayer or to any section or Office thereof, a proposed revision of the whole book or any portion thereof as may be proposed in accord with the Canons of this Church and duly undertaken by and implemented according to the directives of the General Convention.*
- c. Authorize for use throughout this Church, as provided by Canon, alternative and additional liturgies to supplement those provided in the Book of Common Prayer.

Sec. 5. ~~And provided that nothing~~ Nothing in this Article shall be construed as restricting the authority of the Bishops of this Church to take such order as may be permitted by the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer or by the Canons of the General Convention for the use of special forms of worship.

The foregoing proposals will be submitted to the 81st General Convention, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky in June 2024 for consideration upon a second reading. If any members of the Diocese of New Jersey have concerns about any of these proposals, please communicate these concerns to the General Convention Deputies elected at the 2022 Diocesan Convention and Alternate Deputies to be elected at the 2023 Diocesan Convention so that they may be better prepared to deliberate on them at the next General Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ambos
Secretary of Convention