



Resolutions Referred to Dioceses from the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church Austin, Texas

A Summary

The 79th General Convention proposed several changes to the Constitution of The Episcopal Church (TEC). In accordance with Article XII of the TEC Constitution, it is the responsibility of each Diocese to make known such proposed alterations to its Convention prior to the 80th General Convention in 2021, and to certify that such action has been taken.

The text of each proposed amendment is included in the Convention Handbook. The following is a summary of the amendments, many of which are technical in nature:

A063: amends Constitution Article X to permit a General Convention to approve alternate and additional liturgies as a supplement to the Book of Common Prayer.

A089: amends Constitution Articles VI and VII to ensure consistency in the Constitution and Canons with respect to referring to a Church denomination being in “full communion” with The Episcopal Church.

A122: Amends Article IX of the Constitution to delete the word “removal” in paragraph 6. In 1994, the General Convention amended Title IV of the Canons (the disciplinary canon) by eliminating “removal” as a sentence and adding Admonition as a sentence. However, the reference to “removal” in Article IX of the Constitution was not changed.

A150: Amends Article I.2 of the Constitution to make consistent the use of the term “Bishop Suffragan” throughout the Constitution and Canons. The last sentence clarifies the meaning of a bishop “exercising” or “having” jurisdiction, including jurisdiction over areas that are not dioceses such as Navajoland, the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe (over which the Presiding Bishop exercises jurisdiction), and Guam (over which the Presiding Bishop exercises jurisdiction).



THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL CONVENTION
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RESOLUTIONS REFERRED TO DIOCESES FROM THE 79TH GENERAL CONVENTION

Proposed Constitutional Amendments, First Reading

The following Constitutional amendments shall be read by the Secretary of the Diocesan Convention preceding the final vote at the 80th General Convention in 2021, such reading to be certified by the Diocesan Convention with the Secretary of the General Convention.

A063: Amend Article X of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church (First Reading)

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church amend Article X of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church as follows

ARTICLE X

The Book of Common Prayer, as now established or hereafter amended by the authority of this Church, shall be in use in all the Dioceses of this Church. No alteration thereof or addition thereto shall be made unless the same shall be first proposed in one regular meeting of the General Convention and by a resolve thereof be sent within six months 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 a vote by orders in the House of Deputies in accordance with Article I, Sec. 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. But notwithstanding anything herein above contained, 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 to the established Book of Common Prayer or to any section or Office thereof, a proposed revision of the whole Book or of any portion thereof, duly undertaken by 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.*

And Provided that 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.

A089: Amend Articles VI and VIII Regarding Full Communion

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention amend Articles VI and VIII to read as follows:

ARTICLE VI

Sec. 1. The House of Bishops may establish a Mission in any area not included within the boundaries of any Diocese of this Church or of any Church in *full* communion with this Church, and elect or appoint a Bishop therefor.

ARTICLE VIII

No person shall be ordered Priest or Deacon to minister in this Church until the person shall have been examined by the Bishop and two (2) Priests and shall have exhibited such testimonials and other requisites as the Canons in that case provided may direct. No person shall be ordained and consecrated Bishop, or ordered Priest or Deacon to minister in this Church, unless at the time, in the presence of the ordaining Bishop or Bishops, the person shall subscribe and make the following declaration:

I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Episcopal Church.

Provided, however, that any person consecrated a Bishop to minister in any Diocese of an autonomous Church or Province of a Church in *full* communion with this Church may, instead of the foregoing declaration, make the promises of Conformity required by the Church in which the Bishop is to minister.

If any Bishop ordains a Priest or Deacon to minister elsewhere than in this Church, or confers ordination as Priest or Deacon upon a Christian minister who has not received Episcopal Ordination, the Bishop shall do so only in accordance with such provisions as shall be set forth in the Canons of this Church.

No person ordained by a foreign Bishop, or by a Bishop not in *full* communion with this Church, shall be permitted to officiate as a Minister of this Church until the person shall have complied with the Canon or Canons in that case provided and also shall have subscribed the aforesaid declaration.

A Bishop may permit an ordained minister in good standing in a church with which this Church is in *full* communion as specified by the Canons who has made the foregoing declaration, or a minister ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its predecessor bodies who has made the promise of conformity required by that Church in place of the foregoing declaration to officiate on a temporary basis as an ordained minister of this church. No minister of such a Church ordained by other than a Bishop, apart from any such ministers designated as part of the Covenant or Instrument by which full communion was established, shall be eligible to officiate under this Article.

A122: Amend Article IX to Change Removal to Admonition

Resolved, That the Article IX of the Constitution be amended as follows:

ARTICLE IX

The General Convention may, by Canon, establish one or more Courts for the Trial of Bishops.

Presbyters and Deacons canonically resident in a Diocese shall be tried by a Court instituted by the Convention thereof; Presbyters and Deacons canonically resident in a Missionary Diocese shall be tried according to Canons adopted by the Bishop and Convocation thereof, with the approval of the House of Bishops; provided that the General Convention in each case may prescribe by Canon for a change of venue.

The General Convention, in like manner, may establish or may provide for the establishment of Courts of Review of the determination of diocesan or other trial Courts

The Court for the review of the determination of the trial Court, on the trial of a Bishop, shall be composed of Bishops only.

The General Convention, in like manner, may establish an ultimate Court of Appeal, solely for the review of the determination of any Court of Review on questions of Doctrine, Faith, or Worship.

None but a Bishop shall pronounce sentence of *admonition*, or suspension, ~~or removal~~ or deposition from the Ministry, on any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon; and none but a Bishop shall admonish any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon.

A sentence of suspension shall specify on what terms or conditions and at what time the suspension shall cease. A sentence of suspension may be remitted in such manner as may be provided by Canon.

A150: Amend Article 1.2 of the Constitution

Resolved, That Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution is hereby amended to read as follows:

Article I

Sec. 2. Each Bishop of this Church having jurisdiction, every Bishop Coadjutor, every Bishop Suffragan ~~Bishop~~, every Assistant Bishop, and every Bishop who by reason of advanced age or bodily infirmity, or who, under an election to an office created by the General Convention, or for reasons of mission strategy determined by action of the General Convention or the House of Bishops, has resigned a jurisdiction, shall have a seat and a vote in the House of Bishops. A majority of all Bishops entitled to vote, exclusive of Bishops who have resigned their jurisdiction or positions, shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. ~~Bishops who exercise or have jurisdiction are those who exercise ecclesiastical authority in a diocese or other jurisdiction of this Church.~~

A151: Amend Article I.4-8 of the Constitution

Resolved, That Article II.4-8 of the Constitution is hereby amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE II

Sec. 4. It shall be lawful for a Diocese, at the request of the Bishop of that Diocese, to elect not more than two ~~Suffragan~~ Bishops *Suffragan*, without right of succession, and with seat and vote in the House of Bishops. A ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop *Suffragan* shall be consecrated and hold office under such conditions and limitations other than those provided in this Article as may be provided by Canons of the General Convention. A ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop *Suffragan* shall be eligible for election as Bishop *Diocesan* or Bishop Coadjutor of a Diocese, or as a Bishop *Suffragan* in another Diocese.

Sec. 5. It shall be lawful for a Diocese to prescribe by the Constitution and Canons of such Diocese that upon the death, *removal or deposition* of the Bishop or ~~if the Bishop resigns, or is removed from office pursuant to Canon III.12.12(7)~~, a ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop *Suffragan* of that

Diocese may be placed in charge of such Diocese and become temporarily the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof ~~servicing as the Bishop Diocesan Pro Tempore~~ until such time as a new Bishop shall be chosen and consecrated; or that during the disability or absence of the Bishop, a Bishop Suffragan of that Diocese may be placed in charge of such diocese and become temporarily the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof ~~servicing as the Bishop Diocesan Pro Tempore of the Diocese.~~

Sec. 6. A Bishop may not resign jurisdiction without the consent of the House of Bishops.

Sec. 7. It shall be lawful for the House of Bishops to elect a ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop Suffragan who, under the direction of the Presiding Bishop, shall be in charge of the work of those chaplains in the Armed Forces of the United States, Veterans' Administration Medical Centers, and Federal Correctional Institutions who are ordained Ministers of this Church. The ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop Suffragan so elected shall be consecrated and hold office under such conditions and limitations other than those provided in this Article as may be provided by Canons of the General Convention. The ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop Suffragan shall be eligible for election as Bishop Diocesan, or Bishop Coadjutor or ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop Suffragan of a Diocese.

Sec. 8. A Bishop Diocesan or Coadjutor who has ~~for at least five years next preceding exercised jurisdiction as the Ordinary, served as the Bishop Diocesan~~ nor as the Bishop Coadjutor, of a Diocese ~~for any period of time~~, may be elected as Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Coadjutor, or ~~Suffragan~~ Bishop Suffragan of another Diocese ~~only if five or more years have passed since the Bishop first served as Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese in which the Bishop is currently or last served as Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor~~. Before acceptance of such election a resignation of jurisdiction in the Diocese in which the Bishop is then serving, conditioned on the required consents of the Bishops and Standing Committees of the Church to such election, shall be submitted to the House of Bishops, and also, if the Bishop be a Bishop Coadjutor, a renunciation of the right of succession. Such resignation, and renunciation of the right of succession in the case of a Bishop Coadjutor, shall require the consent of the House of Bishops.

A152: Amend Article III of the Constitution

Resolved, That Article III of the Constitution is hereby amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE III

Bishops may be consecrated for foreign lands upon due application therefrom, with the approbation of a majority of the Bishops of this Church entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, certified to the Presiding Bishop; under such conditions as may be prescribed by Canons of the General Convention. Bishops so consecrated shall not be eligible to the office of Diocesan or of Bishop Coadjutor of any Diocese in the United States or be entitled to vote

in the House of Bishops, nor shall they perform any act of the episcopal office in any Diocese or Missionary Diocese of this Church, unless requested so to do by the Ecclesiastical Authority thereof. If a Bishop so consecrated shall be subsequently duly elected as a Bishop of a Missionary Diocese of this Church, such election shall then confer all the rights and privileges given in the ~~Canon~~ *Canons* to such Bishops.

A153: Amend Article IV of the Constitution

Resolved, That Article IV of the Constitution is hereby amended to read as follows:

ARTICLE IV

In every Diocese a Standing Committee shall be elected by the Convention thereof, except that provision for filling vacancies between meetings of the Convention may be prescribed by the Canons of the respective Dioceses. When there is a Bishop in charge of the Diocese, the Standing Committee shall be the Bishop's Council of Advice. If there be no Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor or *Bishop Suffragan Bishop* canonically authorized to act, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese for all purposes declared by the General Convention. The rights and duties of the Standing Committee, except as provided in the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention, may be prescribed by the Canons of the respective Dioceses.

A176: Amend Article V – Second Reading (Note: this is actually a first reading, because there was a floor amendment in 2018 and therefore must be read again in 2021)

Resolved, That Article V, Section 1 is amended as follows:

Sec. 1 A new Diocese may be formed, with the consent of the General Convention and under such conditions as the General Convention shall prescribe by General Canon or Canons, (1) by the division of an existing Diocese; (2) by the junction of two or more Dioceses or of parts of two or more Dioceses; or (3) by the erection into a Diocese of an unorganized area evangelized as provided in Article VI. The proceedings shall originate in a Convocation of the Clergy and Laity of the unorganized area called by the ~~Ecclesiastical Authority~~ Bishop for that purpose; or, with the approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority, in the Convention of the Diocese to be divided; or (when it is proposed to form a new Diocese by the junction of two or more existing Dioceses or of parts of two or more Dioceses) by mutual agreement of the Conventions of the Dioceses concerned, with the approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese. After consent of the General Convention, when a certified copy of the duly adopted Constitution of the new Diocese, including an unqualified accession to the Constitution and Canons of this Church, shall have been filed with the Secretary of the

General Convention and approved by the Executive Council of this Church, such new Diocese shall thereupon be in union with the General Convention.

A183: Amend Article IX – First Reading

Resolved, That the Constitution Article IX be amended to read as follows:

Article IX

The General Convention may, by Canon, establish one or more Courts for the Trial of Bishops.

Presbyters and Deacons ~~canonically resident in a Diocese shall be tried by a Court instituted by the General Convention by Canon. thereof; Presbyters and Deacons canonically resident in a Missionary Diocese shall be tried according to Canons adopted by the Bishop and Convocation thereof, with the approval of the House of Bishops; provided that the General Convention in each case may prescribe by Canon for a change of venue.~~

The General Convention, in like manner, may establish or may provide for the establishment of Courts of Review of the determination of diocesan or other trial Courts.

The Court for the review of the determination of the trial Court, on the trial of a Bishop, shall be composed of Bishops only.

The General Convention, in like manner, may establish an ultimate Court of Appeal, solely for the review of the determination of any Court of Review on questions of Doctrine, Faith, or Worship.

None but a Bishop shall pronounce sentence of suspension, or removal, or deposition from the Ministry, on any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon; and none but a Bishop shall admonish any Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon.

A sentence of suspension shall specify on what terms or conditions and at what time the suspension shall cease. A sentence of suspension may be remitted in such manner as may be provided by Canon.

A151: Amends Article II.4-8 of the Constitution as follows:

- Section 4: To make the titles of bishops consistent throughout the Constitution and Canons.
- The amendment to Section 5 clarifies that a Bishop Suffragan may be placed in charge of a diocese and exercise jurisdiction as the Bishop Diocesan Pro Tempore until a successor is consecrated if the Bishop Diocesan dies, resigns or is removed from office or until the Bishop Diocesan returns to office if the absence is temporary.
- The amendment to Section 8 clarifies that a total of five years of combined service, served consecutively, as Bishop Coadjutor and then Bishop Diocesan is required before the bishop may be elected elsewhere.

A152: Amends Article III of the Constitution to correct a typographical error.

A153: Amends Article IV of the Constitution to make the titles of bishops consistent throughout the Constitution and Canons.

A176: Amends Article V of the Constitution with respect to procedures required to form a new Diocese.

A183: Amends Article IX to provide for the possible creation of a provincial, church-wide, or other way of providing for the discipline of Priests and Deacons, as an alternative to each Diocese maintaining its own separate disciplinary structure.