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## #1 LOYALTY TO THE KING

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Moved by: The Reverend Dorothy Miller

Seconder: Paul Fevens

***Resolved that this pledge of loyalty begin by acknowledging our presence today in Mi'kmagia, the ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the treaties of peace and friendship which Mi'kmaq and Maliseet People first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with the surrender of lands and resources but, in fact, recognized the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations. As the Synod of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, the oldest Diocese in the Anglican Church of Canada, assembled in Antigonish on the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of May, 2025, we extend to His Majesty, King Charles III, King of Canada and head of the Commonwealth, our warmest expressions of affection, loyalty and devotion. We wish His Majesty God's blessing and pray that God will guide and protect him in all he endeavors. We wish to assure His Majesty of our sincere goodwill and affection and wish him continued good health and every blessing for the future.***

Commentary: This resolution pledges loyalty to the King.

## #2 GREETING TO THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

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Moved by: The Reverend Canon David Greenwood

Seconder: Dawn Purcell

***Resolved that Synod send to the Archbishop of Canterbury the following memorial: Greetings in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. The Synod of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island meeting in its 152nd Session affirm our continued love and support to you and the Anglican Communion.***

Commentary: This resolution requests that we send to the Archbishop of Canterbury greetings to the Anglican Communion.

## #3 ECUMENICAL VISITORS, COURTESIES OF THE HOUSE

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Moved by: The Reverend Canon Lisa Vaughn

Seconder: The Reverend Carl Fraser

***Resolved that Ecumenical visitors be granted courtesies of the House.***

Commentary: This resolution acknowledges ecumenical visitors and grants them courtesies of the House which includes a voice but no vote.

## #4 RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS

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Moved by: Dawn Purcell

Seconder: Lawrence Roche

***Resolved that the Committee Reports published in the Convening Circular be received.***

## #5 ACCOMMODATION FOR PARTICIPATION

Moved by: Archdeacon Katherine Bourbonniere

Seconder: Linda Rouleau

**Resolved that the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will commit to supporting reasonable and appropriate accommodations that would enable Synod delegates whose disabilities prevent them from full participation in any meeting of Synod, effective immediately at this 152nd Session of Synod, May 23–25, 2025.**

### **Commentary**

Synod is an essential component of the business, communication and building of the community of God in our Diocese. This gathering regularly brings people together to share information, develop strategies, work toward common goals and celebrate successes.

The success of any Synod depends on the active participation of all eligible delegates. Inclusion enables every person to participate as a valued member. Our gathering is enriched by the addition of voices that would otherwise be silent. We lament the wisdom and insight lost by excluding the voices silenced by inaccessible pieces of our present process. Christ calls us to encourage the voices that are often excluded and silenced.

Given the amount of time, effort and resources spent on planning Synod, and the impact of Synod on the life of the Diocese, it is imperative to think of and organize our gathering in a way that supports full participation. This includes considering how we make Synod accessible for people with physical and mental health challenges (within the limits of our resources). Doing this work of seeking to provide appropriate accommodation, keeping in mind that people can face a variety of barriers, not all of them physical, ensures that everyone can participate and be meaningfully involved.

### **Accessibility in public speaking**

Accessibility in public speaking is about physical access, making sure that the spaces where we gather are free of physical barriers, and about creating spaces where everyone, regardless of their ability, can communicate effectively. This takes into account that not all disabilities or challenges are visible.

The accommodations needed to make this possible can be varied. For some, this may mean having ramps or sign language interpreters. For others, it may be about making room for alternative ways of communication, especially for those who struggle with verbal expression due to anxiety, neurodivergence, or other conditions.

While some individuals may require assistive technology others might need accommodations that address cognitive or psychological barriers. For example:

- A person with autism might prefer written communication over verbal.
- Someone with a speech disorder might require extra time or an alternative format, such as pre-recorded responses.
- Some with severe social anxiety may need to present in a smaller setting or someone to read words that they have written. Anxiety is often misunderstood or dismissed, but it is very real, and for many it can cause physical distress, including symptoms like:
  - Increase heart rate, dizziness, or nausea.
  - Mental ‘shut down’ – where an individual physically cannot form words.
  - Panic attacks or dissociation.

Reminder: What works for one person may not work for another, making it essential to have flexible capacity for personalized accommodations.

### **Preventative Measures to Manage Associated Risks**

Unfortunately, any system designed for accessibility can be misused. In this case, someone might falsely claim an inability to speak publicly to avoid accountability, work, or responsibilities. This can undermine real cases of need and lead to skepticism about legitimate accommodation. To address this risk while maintaining fairness and working towards inclusion, we suggest the following measures:

- **Trusted Verification**  
Having written confirmation of the individual's disability and need from a medical professional such as a doctor, psychologist, or psychiatrist is the preferred form of verification, but we recognize that there are a number of potential barriers that an individual may face in seeing one of those medical professionals as well as in obtaining that written confirmation. In acknowledgement of that, an individual may provide their own confirmation, with an attestation that they faced significant barriers preventing them from obtaining a written confirmation from a medical professional.
- **Flexible alternatives**  
Instead of outright exclusion from speaking due to disability, accommodation might involve recorded messages (audio or video), written statements, or an advocate speaker.
- **Consideration to Accommodate**  
Once identified, every reasonable effort to accommodate the individual's specific need will be made to allow them full participation.

## #6 FEAST OF THE CREATOR, SEASONS OF CREATION MEMO

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Moved by: The Reverend Marian Lucas-Jefferies

Seconder: The Reverend Paul Jennings

**Resolved that a memo be sent from this Synod to the 44<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Canada, commending the move to adopt the Feast of the Creator to be celebrated on September 1st of each year (transferable to a Sunday), together with adopting the Season of Creation.**

### Commentary

For more than a millennium, the Orthodox Church has had a feast day on September 1, marking God's original acts of creation. By 1989, the feast had grown to include recommended prayers for creation.

In March 2024, a major ecumenical seminar was held in Assisi, Italy. Participants included representatives of the World Council of Churches and major world communions, including the Anglican Communion, the World Communion of Reformed Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Methodist Council. The Rev. Marian Lucas-Jefferies was one of three Canadian Anglicans who attended.

A strong consensus emerged from this meeting. Those gathered agreed that a Feast of God the Creator should be given a firm place in the calendars of Western churches to focus Christians on the original Creation as the first and foundational act of God's grace. In traditions, like ours, that now observe a Season of Creation, a formally recognized feast day could highlight the beginning of the season each year, giving it an anchor in the formal calendar of the church.<sup>1</sup>

The hope is that such a formally recognized feast day could be celebrated this year, in September 2025, during the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nicene Creed, in which we confess God as "creator of heaven and earth" (second line in the Nicene Creed).

In accordance with this emerging ecumenical consensus, a motion will be coming before General Synod in July proposing the adoption of the "Feast of the Creator" into the calendar of the Anglican Church of Canada, to be celebrated on September 1<sup>st</sup>, transferable to a Sunday, and directing the development of Propers and other liturgical material.

The purpose of our diocesan resolution is to signal support for the General Synod initiative; to make the Feast of the Creator known in the diocese in anticipation of its first celebration in just a few months; and to make a commitment as a diocese to join this ecumenical celebration.

### Theological Rationale

The word "Creation" in English is ambiguous, as it refers both to God's act of creation, and to the created order itself. The proposed focus of the Feast would be on the first of these, giving praise and worship to the Trinity for the divine grace and power shown in the creation of the heavens and earth, and exploring the implications of that doctrine for our attitudes towards the world around us, ourselves, and God. It can be argued that this is a gap in our liturgical calendar, that this first and foundational act of God's loving generosity, as "creator of heaven and earth" is currently not sufficiently marked with its own feast.

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<sup>1</sup> For a fuller account of the Assisi meeting, see the document "A Liturgical Opportunity; An Ecumenical Kairos: An Emerging Consensus to Enhance the "Feast of the Creation" and Honour the Creator" produced by the World Council of Churches and found [HERE](#).

As 2025 is the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed, the institution of this feast would be a fitting tribute to that church-shaping event. At the same time, it will give a theological orientation on which to begin the Season of Creation: first celebrating God's creative act, we can then go on to explore how we encounter God in the created order.

A major liturgical principle long held by ecumenical as well as Anglican traditions is that all Sundays of the liturgical year, as well as all Major Feasts, are Christocentric in nature. They are all Feasts of our Lord. The focus of a Feast of God, Creator, reminds us of the Trinitarian nature of God, and that all Persons of the Holy Trinity are involved in the creation of the universe and its active sustenance, as well as in the bringing about of the new creation in our midst.

In this time of global climate crisis, the impetus is on us to take seriously the Fifth Mark of Mission "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth" which was approved by General Synod 2013 as an addition to our Baptismal Covenant. Whilst the Feast Day will focus on the work of God as Creator, the Season of Creation that follows can be used to focus our attention on our continued offering of worshipful gratitude as well as our work, "with God's help" as stewards of God's creation.

A note on the name of the Feast: a number of different names have been proposed ecumenically, such as "Feast of Creation" or "Feast of God the Creator". For the Canadian church, the General Synod motion is proposing the name "Feast of the Creator" to focus on God as confessed in the creed, and with a nod to a common First Nations way of naming God.

## #7 DIOCESAN SYNOD OFFICE, A STRATEGIC DIRECTION

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Moved by: Lawrence Roche

Seconder: Reverend Dr. Kyle Wagner

**Resolved that this Synod receive, endorse, and encourage the Diocesan Synod Office Strategic Direction as presented.**

**Commentary:**

The Synod Office is embarking on a dynamic two-year strategic journey (2025-2027) focused on strengthening our support for parishes and fostering a vibrant future for the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. This plan acknowledges the current realities facing our communities and builds upon the significant work undertaken since the pandemic. Our core focus areas include envisioning new models for ministry and discipleship, actively building stronger connections and community across the Diocese, and investing in the development of effective lay and clergy leadership.

Over the next two years, our efforts will also prioritize stewardship programming to support vital parish operations and initiatives, enhancing communication and fostering a servant-hearted approach in our interactions with parishes, strengthening our internal Synod Office team, and improving our systems for greater efficiency. Guided by principles of vision alignment, community building, service, embracing change, and a theology of abundance, this strategic direction will inform a wider Diocesan planning process and ensure the Synod Office continues to equip and empower our parishes to thrive as Christ-centered, mission-minded communities of faith.

## #8 FAITH PLEDGE: CAN'T BUY MY SILENCE

Moved by: Cynthia Pilichos

Seconded by: Patrick Donahoe

A resolution to affirm the work of the Diocese and adopt the Faith Pledge of the *Can't Buy My Silence and Daughter Project Canada*.

**Resolved that this Synod adopt the "Faith Pledge" of the *Can't Buy My Silence and Daughter Project Canada*, affirming the commitment already undertaken by the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, to never use Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) in cases involving sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse, discrimination, retaliation, or bullying.**

### **"Faith Pledge"**

**"We pledge never to request another party to submit to a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) with the goal of stopping them from raising complaints, or discussing incidents, of sexual harassment, misconduct or abuse, discrimination, retaliation, bullying, or other harassment in any instance, including pre-hiring and severance agreements. Therefore, we pledge not to use Non-Disclosure Agreements in settlements to cover up sin, silence victims, or avoid accountability."**

### **Commentary**

As Anglicans, we seek to uphold our baptismal covenant. The baptismal covenant to *strive for justice and peace among all people, respect[ing] the dignity of every human being* is central to the Anglican Communion's 4<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission: *To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind, and pursue peace and reconciliation*. The 4<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission is core to the advocacy and action mandate of Anglicans Powering Potential in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and is the reason why Anglicans Powering Potential is introducing this **"Faith Pledge"** Resolution to the 152<sup>nd</sup> Diocesan Synod 2025.

The Marks of Mission express the Anglican Communion's common commitment to, and understanding of, God's holistic and integral mission. The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ. Endorsing the Faith Pledge of *Can't Buy My Silence and Daughter Project Canada* regarding the misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) is a very specific way for Anglicans to give life to the 4<sup>th</sup> Mark of Mission. It is important to note that our Diocese already holds this perspective with regards to our own NDA policy and the Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures.

In recent years, there has been movement among Christian churches in the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, and Canada to restrict the church's use of NDAs that cover up wrongdoing. Addressing the misuse of NDAs is likely to be a feature at the Anglican Church of Canada's 2025 General Synod. Within our Diocese, the Atlantic School of Theology, the University of King's College, and Acadia University have demonstrated leadership by adopting a university pledge to not misuse NDAs.

It is important to understand the mental, emotional, psychological, and spiritual damage to victims who have been coerced into signing a Non-Disclosure Agreement. When misused, NDAs are a tool to silence victims in circumstances of sexual misconduct, racism, and other human rights violations. The negative implications and results of NDAs being used in this way are many, and include:

- allowing a problem to perpetuate, as those who have behaved abusively, or even criminally, may remain in their role, or move to other organizations, with impunity;
- protecting employers' and perpetrators' reputations, but not victims';



- preventing victims from reporting, speaking to family and friends about their own experiences, or preventing them (victims) from warning others;
- compelling victims to lie or risk being sued for defamation;
- creating a so-called “chilling effect” that discourages those wishing to speak up about abuse in their organizational environment from doing so.

Given the foregoing negative possibilities, the *Can't Buy My Silence* campaign is pursuing legislative and regulatory change to make Non-Disclosure Agreements “unenforceable for anything other than their original purpose – the prevention of sharing confidential business information (“intellectual property”) and trade secrets.”

The *Can't Buy My Silence* campaign was founded and is led by British activist and former employee of Harvey Weinstein, Zelda Perkins, together with Dr. Julie Macfarlane, a Canadian law professor and member of the Order of Canada. Additionally, the *Can't Buy My Silence* campaign partners with *Daughter Project Canada*, whose mandate is to “help children and youth at risk of sexual exploitation through awareness-raising, prevention, and advocacy.”

Our Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Sandra Bishop, made it clear in her November 22, 2024, Pastoral Letter, *A Call for a Safer Church* that we “strive to create a safer church and a healthier Christian community for everyone.” Bishop Sandra reminded us that it is clearly stated in our Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Policy and Related Procedures, that: “...the Church should be a place of trust, respect, and safety for all people.... The Diocese recognizes and accepts its responsibility to take active measures to protect the physical, emotional, and spiritual welfare of people involved in the Diocese in relation to the possibility of sexual misconduct....”

So, in adopting the “Faith Pledge” of *Can't Buy My Silence*, in collaboration with *Daughter Project Canada*, the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will be a faith leader regarding the campaign to stop the misuse of Non-Disclosure Agreements, as we strive to ensure justice, respect, and dignity for all, according to our baptismal covenant.

## #9 CANON 35: PARISH GOVERNMENT

Moved by: The Reverend Sue Channen

Secunder: Susan Drain

***Resolved that Canon 35: Parish Government be repealed and replaced with the attached material, with such repeal and replacement to come into effect by resolution of Diocesan Council with the Bishop's consent.***

### CANON 35: PARISH GOVERNMENT

#### BASIS OF CANON AND PURPOSE OF A PARISH

1. (1) The parishes of the Diocese are the primary local expression of the Body of Christ in the Anglican tradition. Their ministries, which enact their life and work, are carried out by congregations under the guidance of their governance structures which are created by this Canon.
- (2) Parish Councils are the governing bodies of the parishes of the diocese and so have responsibility for directing and overseeing the mission of the Parish and its Churches, which is God's mission.

#### INTERPRETATION

2. (1) In this Canon,
  - (a) "Anglican Church Act of Nova Scotia" means Chapter 130 of the Statutes of Nova Scotia for 1967, the Anglican Church Act; or any Act of the Nova Scotia Legislature that replaces it;
  - (b) "Anglican Church Act of Prince Edward Island" means Chapter 53 of the Acts of the General Assembly of Prince Edward Island for 1972, the Anglican Church Act or any Act of the House of Assembly of Prince Edward Island that replaces it;
  - (c) "Bishop" means the Bishop of the Diocese;
  - (d) "church" means
    - (i) a congregation that has a place, physical or virtual, in which to worship or meet, or
    - (ii) where more than one divine service is held in the place on Sundays, all the congregations for which the divine services are held, recognized by a parish as a church included in the parish;
  - (e) "communicant" means a baptized Christian who regularly receives Holy Communion as a worshipping member of a congregation;
  - (f) "congregation" means a group of people organized to minister, worship and learn from God's Holy Word, with or without a place in which to worship or meet;
  - (g) "Diocese" means the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island;
  - (h) "parish" means
    - (i) a congregation, or

- (ii) two or more congregations that are, for the purpose of ministry, grouped together, served by a member of the clergy or other individual licensed by the Bishop in a territory or district allotted by the Bishop for that purpose, but does not include the congregations worshipping at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Halifax.
  - (i) For the purpose of this Canon, the term “Rector” includes the Rector, priest-in-charge or other incumbent of the parish.
- (2) A reference in this Canon to a parish corporation of a parish is a reference to the parish corporation that is formed
- (a) by the Anglican Church Act of Nova Scotia constituting, as a body corporate, the Rector, wardens and the other members of the parish council of the parish; or
  - (b) by the Anglican Church Act of Prince Edward Island constituting, as a body corporate, the Rector, wardens and, the other members of the parish council of the parish.
- (3) For greater certainty, a reference in this Canon to a church or a congregation that forms a part of a parish includes a single congregation or church that, in itself, constitutes that parish.

#### **PARISHES AND CONGREGATIONS AS FUNCTIONING PARTS OF REGIONS**

3. Every parish and every congregation that forms a part of the parish shall be a functioning part of the region in which the parish exists.

#### **PARISH CORPORATIONS**

4. (1) There is, by reason of the Anglican Church Act of Nova Scotia and the Anglican Church Act of Prince Edward Island, a parish corporation for each parish.
- (2) Each parish corporation is a separate legal entity and may
- (a) sue and be sued;
  - (b) have a common seal;
  - (c) receive grants of real and personal property for the use of the church and all parish purposes;
  - (d) improve such real property and receive rents thereof for the like use;
  - (e) with the approval of the Bishop in writing, sell, convey, lease and mortgage such real and personal property;
  - (f) when the appropriate amendments have been made to the Acts, sell, convey, lease and mortgage personal property;
  - (g) make by-laws and regulations for the management of the temporalities of the corporation and the due orderly conducting of its affairs.
- (3) The parish corporation of a parish consists of the Rector, wardens and the other members of the parish council of the parish.

- (4) All documents, including deeds, mortgages, leases and contracts, shall be executed on behalf of a parish corporation under the seal of the corporation and shall be signed by the persons authorized under the bylaws of the parish, but any document relating to real property, including a deed, mortgage or lease, is ineffective unless and until it is approved, in writing, by the Bishop.

## **PARISH COUNCILS**

5. (1) There shall be a parish council for every parish.
- (2) A parish council is the governing body that orders the life of the congregation or congregations forming the parish for which the parish council is established.
6. The governance responsibilities of every parish council include:
- (a) a. articulating and implementing the mission of the parish;
  - b. entering into a covenant with the Rector and reviewing it at least every two years with the Archdeacon;
  - c. approving all policies for the parish, including SafeR Church policies;
  - d. overseeing the assets of the whole parish (including church buildings, cemeteries and all bank accounts and investments);
  - e. developing and monitoring the annual budget (including the budgets of the churches in a multi-church parish);
  - f. approving all contracts including contracts with paid staff;
  - g. ensuring that there is good communication among the congregations and organizations of the parish;
  - h. ensuring that there is effective governance for all outreach activities of the parish; and
  - i. oversight of all activities in the parish.
- (b) regularly evaluating the overall life of the parish and recommend ideas for effective ministries;
- (c) carrying out such duties as are imposed on it by law, including the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese and the by-laws of the parish.
7. (1) Each parish shall be governed in accordance with the bylaws of the parish.
- (2) Upon this Canon coming into effect, the bylaws of each parish shall be the model bylaws approved by Diocesan Executive Council, either for a single church parish or multi-church parish, as applicable.
- (3) Subject to subsections (4) and (5), a parish council may, at a duly called meeting, make, amend or repeal by-laws respecting the affairs of the parish or a church that forms part of the parish if notice of intention to propose the by-law or to amend or repeal a by-law is given
- (a) at a previous meeting of the parish council; or

- (b) in the notice of the meeting at which the making of the by-law, or its amendment or repeal will be proposed.
- (4) A by-law made pursuant to subsection (3) does not come into force unless and until it is
- (a) ratified at the next duly called annual or special meeting of the members of the parish; and
  - (b) approved by the Bishop.
- (5) An amendment or repeal pursuant to subsection (3) does not come into force unless and until it is approved by the Bishop.
- (6) The Bishop shall not approve any bylaw, amendment or repeal if it conflicts with the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese, or with any policy approved by Diocesan Executive Council.
8. (1) The bylaws of a parish shall, without limitation, address the following matters:
- (a) the composition of the parish council;
  - (b) the offices, duties and term limits, if any, of the wardens, secretary and treasurer of the parish;
  - (c) conduct of meetings of the parish, including quorum and eligibility to attend and vote at any meetings of the parish;
  - (d) election of officers of the parish and other members of parish council;
  - (e) conduct of the annual general meeting of the parish;
  - (f) disclosure of the financial affairs of the parish, including the preparation and presentation of an annual budget of income and expenses, and presentation of the prior year's financial statement to the annual general meeting of the parish;
- (2) The bylaws of a multi-church parish may address:
- (a) the composition of church councils;
  - (b) the offices, duties, and term limits, if any, of the wardens, secretary and treasurer of a church;
  - (c) conduct of meetings of a church, including quorum and eligibility to attend and vote at any meetings of the church;
  - (d) election of officers of a church and other members of a church council;
  - (e) conduct of the annual general meeting of a church;
  - (f) disclosure of the financial affairs of a church, which may be incorporated into the financial affairs of the parish.
9. Diocesan Executive Council may from time to time establish policies respecting parish governance, which policies shall have effect upon parishes when approved by Diocesan Executive Council.
10. Annual general meetings of parishes shall be held no later than the last day of February in each year.

## MINISTRIES

11. (1) For the purposes of this Canon, the ministries of a parish are the means by which the life and work of the parish are carried out and shall include:
- (a) proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom in word and example
  - (b) teaching, baptizing, and nurturing new believers
  - (c) responding to human need, both spiritual and tangible, by loving service
  - (d) transforming the unjust structures of society, challenging violence of every kind and pursuing peace and reconciliation
  - (e) safeguarding the integrity of creation, and sustaining and renewing the life of the earth
  - (f) nurturing the household of God, including:
    - (i) Deepening the discipleship of all members of the parish through worship and spiritual practices of prayer, study, and service
    - (ii) Life together which enacts the love we share as siblings in Christ
    - (iii) Regular self-examination of the life and ministry of the parish

And other ministries discerned by the parish or church

- (2) Each parish and church shall nurture and carry out the ministries of the parish for which it is established.
- (3) In order to fulfill the ministries of a parish or a church the parish council established for the parish or the church council established for the church, as the case may be, may establish such structures that are, in the opinion of the parish council or the church council, appropriate for the parish or the church, as the case may be, under the circumstances, including the size and resources of the parish, or the church.
- a) The parish council shall ensure that parish property, finances, and administration which are used in the parish's ministries are adequately managed by:
- (i) providing for a regular inspection of all buildings and grounds owned by the parish corporation, including, cemeteries and, at a time agreed upon by the Rector and the committee, regular inspections of the rectory,
  - (ii) investigating and recommending to the parish council established for the parish a continuing maintenance program and providing estimates of costs and supervision of approved work,
  - (iii) providing operational and janitorial services,
  - (iv) inspecting the rectory owned or rented by the parish, before the appointment of an incumbent, by a committee together with the wardens of the parish and the regional dean for the region in which the territory or district allotted to the parish is located,

- (v) carefully and periodically examining all the buildings to establish the best means for the conservation of energy;
- (vi) the supervision of the finances of the parish and each congregation that forms a part of the parish, including a regular review of the work of the Treasurer of the parish,
- (vii) adequate insurance coverage on all properties of the parish corporation of the parish,
- (viii) the preparation of a budget of estimated receipts and expenditures for the ensuing year for the parish and each church forming a part of the parish for approval by the parish council established for the parish and each church council established for a congregation that forms a part of the parish and presentation to the annual meeting of the parish and the annual meeting of each,
- (ix) the implementation of bequests;
- (x) cultivation of a greater awareness of the Anglican Church's mission and ministry and the resources required to fulfill its gospel mandate, including:
  - maintaining an ongoing awareness of stewardship;
  - empowering the parish to exercise the stewardship of their gifts within the parish and beyond
  - providing secretarial and office help and equipment,
  - providing current parish lists and maintaining up-to-date information on parish registers,
  - providing leadership in maintaining open communication with the parish,
  - providing statistics respecting the parish according to the Diocesan schedule and reporting the statistics to annual meetings of the parish, and
  - when necessary, establishing or providing for the establishment of a committee or task group to make recommendations to the parish council or the church council respecting the hiring or review or both the hiring and review of staff other than clergy.

### **Commentary**

At the 151<sup>st</sup> Synod in 2023, Synod asked that Canon 35 be re-examined as a whole in light of the significant new opportunities and constraints which parishes are experiencing. Our proposal recognizes that certain requirements must be contained in our Canons but that much of the existing Canon would be better handled as bylaws at the parish level, using model bylaws approved by Diocesan Council. These model bylaws will accommodate the diversity of parishes across the Diocese while ensuring that both legal and best practices are clearly set out. Because the bylaws are a critical part of this reform, Diocesan Council is authorized to set the effective date for the Canon to come into effect.

*The following Bylaws are provided for information only and will not be discussed nor debated at Synod. These are templates approved by Diocesan Council in February 2025. Parishes will be invited to review and customize these Bylaws (where permitted) to suit the Parish, subject to Episcopal approval.*

*This Canon shall come into effect on a date established by resolution of Diocesan Executive Council and consented to by the Bishop.*

## **Canon 35: Model By-laws Single-Church Parish**

A By-law relating generally to the conduct of the affairs of Anglican Parish of [Parish Name] (the “Parish”)

### **MANDATE OF PARISH COUNCIL (taken from Canon 35)**

Parish Councils are the governing bodies of the parishes of the diocese and so have responsibility for directing and overseeing the mission of the Parish, which is God’s mission. Governance responsibilities include:

- a. articulating and implementing the mission of the parish;
- b. entering into a covenant with the Rector and reviewing it at least every two years with the Archdeacon (see Canon 25);
- c. approving all policies for the parish, including SafeR Church policies;
- d. overseeing the assets of the whole parish (including church buildings, cemeteries and all bank accounts and investments);
- e. developing and monitoring the annual budget;
- f. approving all contracts including contracts with paid staff;
- g. ensuring that there is good communication among the congregations and organizations of the parish;
- h. ensuring that there is effective governance for all outreach activities of the parish; and
- i. oversight of all activities in the parish.

**BE IT ENACTED** as a by-law of the Parish as follows:

#### **1. DEFINITIONS**

In this By-law and all other by-laws of the Parish, unless the context otherwise requires:

**“Bishop”** means the Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island or, if the context so requires, a predecessor Diocesan Bishop;

**“Bishop’s Designate”** The individual (lay or ordained) whom the Bishop or a previous Bishop has appointed to oversee all aspects of the ministries of a parish when there is no Rector. The Bishop’s Designate is the chief liturgical officer of the parish and is a voting member of Parish Council;

**“By-law”** means this By-law and any other by-law of the Parish as amended with the Bishop’s approval pursuant to Canon 35 and which are, from time to time, in force and effect;

**“Canon”** means any of the canons of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in force from time to time;

**“Collaborative Ministry Arrangement”** A formal arrangement among two or more parishes to share a ministry team of clergy and laity to allow the gifts and callings of each parish to be deployed across the area with the intent of fostering growth in discipleship and vitality in all parishes while sharing the workload;

**“Congregation”**: a group of parishioners who regularly gather for worship, including Fresh Expression style worship, under the direction or sponsorship of the Parish Council;

**“Council of the Community”** An informal gathering of those in attendance after a worship service in order to prepare for events, fundraising activities, building maintenance, and similar work which needs many hands;

**“Meeting of members of the parish”** means an annual meeting or a special meeting of members of the parish who are entitled to vote at an annual meeting of members;



**“Not at arm’s length”** in the context of individuals, means people who are spouses or partners, siblings, or parent or child of each other, or who are members of the same household;

**“Ordinary resolution”** means a resolution passed by a majority of not less than 50% plus 1 of the votes cast on that resolution;

**“Parish”** means either (a) all of the individuals who are members of the congregations of the parish together with all of its organizations, or (b) the geographical area for which the church of the parish is the closest Anglican church, depending upon the context;

**“Parish Council”** means the entity of the parish, as authorized by the Church Acts of Nova Scotia and of Prince Edward Island, which has governance responsibility for the whole parish, the members of which are chosen according to the provisions of this By-law;

**“Rector”** The priest appointed to the office by the Diocesan Bishop or a previous Bishop to oversee all aspects of the ministry of the parish. The Rector is the chief liturgical officer of the parish and is a voting member of Parish Council;

**“Shared Ministry Arrangement”** An arrangement among the Bishop and two or more parishes under which the same individual will be appointed as Rector or Bishop’s Designate for each parish on a part-time basis in each parish. The arrangement may include sharing of other expenses (such as a rectory and office);

**“Special resolution”** means a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast on that resolution.

## **2. INTERPRETATION**

In the interpretation of this By-law, words in the singular include the plural and vice versa, words in one gender include all genders, and “person” includes an individual, body corporate, partnership, trust and unincorporated organization.

## **3. CORPORATE SEAL**

The parish shall have a corporate seal in the form approved by Parish Council. The secretary of Parish Council shall be the custodian of the seal. It may be stored in the same fire-proof box used to store the records of the Parish.

## **4. EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS**

Legal and financial documents pertaining to the parish shall be signed by any two (2) of the signing officers of the parish. Any signing officer may also certify a copy of a parish document to be a true copy. Where the document relates to any of the real property of the parish, the requirements of Canon 38 must be met.

The signing officers are the wardens, secretary, and Rector or Bishop’s Designate.

Should any of these offices be held by people who are not at arm’s length, only one of those people may be a signing officer and Parish Council may appoint an additional signing officer.

**Option:** Parish Council may by resolution from time to time designate, direct, or authorize other persons to enter into specific contracts for goods or services or agreements for use of parish property.

## **5. FINANCIAL YEAR END**

The financial year end of the Parish shall be December 31 in each year.

## **6. BANKING AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The banking business of the Parish shall be transacted at a bank, trust company, credit union or other firm or corporation carrying on a banking business in Canada as the Parish Council may designate, appoint or authorize from time to time by resolution. The banking business or any part of it shall be transacted by any two of the wardens, treasurer, or secretary of the Parish Council. Should any of these offices be held by people who are not at arm's length, only one of those people may be a signing officer and Parish Council may appoint an additional signing officer.

All funds contributed for missionary, diocesan, or other extra-parochial purposes, or for cemetery purposes, may be held in one or more bank accounts separate from the general funds of the parish. Where such funds are held in the same bank account as the general funds of the parish and are tracked in a separate ledger in the accounting records, the balance in that bank account shall not be lower than the total balances in these separate ledgers.

**Option:** Parish Council may by resolution authorize bank accounts to be opened for parish organizations and by resolution appoint the signing officers for those accounts from the members of Parish Council.

## **7. BORROWING POWERS**

The Parish Council may, having obtained the permission of the Bishop required by Canon 38, mortgage, hypothecate, pledge or otherwise create a security interest in all or any property of the Parish, owned or subsequently acquired, in order to raise funds to erect, enlarge, renovate, repair or restore a church, rectory, or parish hall.

**Option:** Parish Council may, by resolution, enter into contracts for goods or services which provide for billing after the service is delivered.

**Option:** Parish Council may authorize signing officers to obtain a credit or payment card in the name of the Parish with appropriate limits to facilitate the purchase of necessary supplies.

## **8. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Parish Council shall make copies of the annual financial statements of the Parish available to the members of the parish as part of the annual meeting package, in printed and electronic form. The financial statements shall include all operations of the parish, including all bank accounts of the parish and parish organizations. Electronic or additional printed copies shall be made available subsequently upon request.

## **9. MEMBERSHIP CONDITIONS**

Membership in the Anglican Church of Canada is by virtue of Christian baptism, but all people are welcome to attend worship services and participate in the life of the parish.

Individuals may vote at meetings of the parish if they meet the following requirements:

- a. have reached 16 years of age;
- b. support the mission of the parish through offerings of time, talent or treasure;
- c. except as allowed by subsection d, have not voted in the annual meeting of another parish for the same period;
- d. Rectors, Bishop's Designates, and members of a ministry team who serve more than one parish in a Shared Ministry Arrangement or Collaborative Ministry Arrangement may vote in all parishes in which they have served in the past year.

## **10. NOTICE OF A MEETING OF MEMBERS**

- a. The annual meeting of the members of the parish shall be held by March 1 each year to elect

members of Parish Council, to receive the financial statements of the parish and to conduct other appropriate business.

- b. Notice of the date, time and place of a meeting of members shall be given to each member entitled to vote at the meeting by the following means:
  - i. during the worship service on the two Sundays prior to the day on which the meeting is to be held; and/or
  - ii. **Option:** and by affixing the notice, no later than 14 days before the day on which the meeting is to be held, to a notice board on which information respecting the Parish's activities is regularly posted and that is located in the main facilities of the Parish; and/or
  - iii. **Option:** and by electronic or other communication facility to each member of the congregation who is entitled to vote at the meeting and for whom such contact information is available, no less than 14 days before the day on which the meeting is to be held.
- c. A report package must be made available to the members of the parish in printed and electronic form at least one week in advance of the meeting and include:
  - i. agenda for the meeting;
  - ii. reports from the Rector/Bishop's Designate, Wardens, Treasurer, and other organizations of the parish;
  - iii. financial statements for the previous year which have been reviewed according to the Diocesan policies; these statements will include the financial statements of all parish organizations which are authorized to raise or spend funds;
  - iv. a budget or forecast for the coming year, including all parish organizations which are authorized to raise or spend funds;
  - v. a statement of the investments of the parish, including cemetery funds, and any terms and conditions to which they are subject;
  - vi. a summary of the parish's insurance policies;
  - vii. a list of the current officers and council members and when their terms expire; and
  - viii. the list of nominations for officers and other elected members of Parish Council.

***If a change to this by-law is proposed which has the effect of reducing the time or scope of the notice of a meeting of members, it must be approved with a special resolution of the members of the parish and by the Bishop.***

## **11. CALLING A SPECIAL MEETING OF MEMBERS**

- a. A special meeting of the members of the parish may be called by:
  - i. The Rector or Bishop's Designate of the Parish; or
  - ii. the wardens of the Parish; or
  - iii. the lesser of:
    - ten members of the parish who are entitled to vote at an annual meeting; or
    - the majority of such members of the parish,if the request is in writing and given to the secretary of the Parish Council.
- b. A special meeting of the parish must be held if any of the following decisions are being made:
  - i. To elect a parochial committee under Canon 25;
  - ii. to elect new officers of Parish Council, in the event that Parish Council is not able to fill a vacancy;
  - iii. to approve, by special resolution, the entry of the parish into a Shared Ministry Arrangement or Collaborative Ministry Arrangement, or to approve the exit of the parish from a Shared Ministry Arrangement or a Collaborative Ministry Arrangement;
  - iv. by special resolution, to request the Bishop to amalgamate the parish with another parish; and/or
  - v. to request the Bishop to deconsecrate any church building.

## **12. NOMINATIONS OF MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCIL AT ANNUAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

- a. The Parish Council shall solicit nominations for members of Parish Council prior to the annual meeting

of the Parish. Candidates may nominate themselves, if eligible.

- b. Additional nominations may be accepted from the floor of the meeting from members of the parish who are entitled to vote at the meeting, provided that the nominee is eligible and consents to the nomination.

**Option:** Parish Council may create a nominating committee to gather such names and confirm the consent and eligibility of candidates.

### **13. PUBLISHING MATERIAL FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

- a. All reports and proposals shall be provided to the secretary of Parish Council, or their designate, at least 3 weeks before the annual meeting for inclusion in the annual meeting package. The Parish shall bear the cost of printing the package.

It shall be the responsibility of any person making a proposal after that date to ensure that enough copies of supporting material are provided at the annual meeting.

### **14. PLACE OF MEETING OF MEMBERS**

Meetings of the parish shall be held at a location within the parish determined by Parish Council. The location shall be accessible to those entitled to vote at the meeting.

### **15. CHAIR OF MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

The members present at the meeting shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting. The meeting shall decide whether the chair has a regular vote, in addition to a vote in the event of an equality of votes.

### **16. QUORUM AT MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

A quorum at a meeting of the members of the parish shall be

- a. five persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of up to fifteen persons;
- b. eight persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than fifteen persons and up to fifty persons;
- c. twelve persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than fifty persons and up to one hundred and fifty persons;
- d. twenty-four persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than one hundred and fifty persons and up to three hundred persons; and
- e. thirty persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than three hundred persons.

### **17. VOTING AT MEETING OF MEMBERS**

At any meeting of members every question shall, unless otherwise provided by the Canons or By-laws, be determined by a majority of the votes cast on the questions. A vote may be held by voice (yea or nay), a show of hands, a ballot, or by electronic voting. If using an electronic platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, the voter must be visible to the appointed counters (or identifiable by way of a method previously approved by Parish Council).

### **18. PARTICIPATION BY ELECTRONIC MEANS AT MEETING OF MEMBERS**

If the Parish Council chooses to make available a telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with one another during a meeting of members of the parish, any person entitled to attend such meeting may participate in the meeting by means of such telephonic, electronic, or other communication facility. A person participating in a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting. Any person participating in a meeting of members of the parish pursuant to this section who is entitled to vote at that meeting may vote by means of any telephonic,

electronic, or other communication facility that the Parish Council has made available for that purpose. Each voter must be identifiable by way of a method previously approved by Parish Council

### **19. MEETING OF MEMBERS HELD ENTIRELY BY ELECTRONIC MEANS**

If the Rector or Bishop's Designate or the wardens call a meeting of members of the parish pursuant to this by-law, the Rector or Bishop's Designate or wardens, as the case may be, may determine that the meeting shall be held entirely by means of a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with one another during the meeting.

### **20. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

The minutes of the meeting of members of the parish shall be prepared by the Secretary of the meeting and reviewed by Parish Council at its next meeting. When reviewed they shall be made available to the members of the parish and approved at the next annual meeting of the parish. Option: a special meeting of members may by resolution authorize Parish Council to approve the minutes of the special meeting at its first meeting after the special meeting.

### **21. MEMBERSHIP OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. The Rector or Bishop's Designate;
- b. each member of the clergy canonically appointed by the Bishop to serve the parish (CAP priests, associate priests, honorary assistants, deacons, curates) (Note: only stipendiary clergy will be voting members of Parish Council);
- c. unless one is elected/appointed to another place on Parish Council, a Licensed Lay Minister, chosen by and from the LLMs of the parish;
- d. two or three wardens, elected at the AGM (the number of wardens shall be determined by resolution at the annual parish meeting on the recommendation of Parish Council);
- e. Secretary of Parish Council, elected at the AGM;
- f. Treasurer of Parish Council, elected at the AGM (the positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined);
- g. between 3 and 6 elected members at large as determined by the annual parish meeting (these members should be chosen to represent the diversity of the members of the parish);
- h. Lay and Youth Delegates to Synod from the parish, elected at the AGM;
- i. on the recommendation of Parish Council, a chairperson of Parish Council may be elected at the annual parish meeting; and
- j. on the recommendation of Parish Council where Parish Council members are directly responsible for the operations of the parish, an additional 4 members at large may be elected at the annual parish meeting.

It is permissible and anticipated that some of these positions may be held by the same individual (e.g. one person is the treasurer of Parish Council and is also a Lay Delegate to Synod; a LLM is also Parish Warden; a Lay Delegate is also a member at large) subject to the restrictions on membership set out in Section 26.

### **22. TERM OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. Each warden holds office for a term commencing at the close of the annual meeting at which the warden was elected and ending at the close of an annual meeting that is no later than the third annual meeting after the meeting at which the warden was elected. Wardens shall be elected for terms that are staggered in such a manner that their terms of office do not all end at the same time.
- b. Each member at large holds office for a term commencing at the close of the annual meeting at which the member at large was elected and ending at the close of an annual meeting that is no later than the third annual meeting after the meeting at which the member at large was elected. Members at large shall be elected for terms that are staggered in such a manner that their terms of office do not all end

- at the same time.
- c. The Rector or Bishop's Designate holds office at the pleasure of the Bishop or until their resignation under Canon 25.
- d. The Lay Delegates to Synod shall be elected in accordance with the Constitution of the Diocese and serve until replaced, but not for more than two consecutive Synods.
- e. All other positions on Parish Council are elected for one year terms.

A person may be re-elected as a warden, secretary or treasurer, except that no person may, without the consent of the Bishop, hold office as a warden, secretary or treasurer for a continuous period of more than nine years.

### **23. CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP DURING THE TERM OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. Councils may fill a vacancy in their elected membership, including a vacancy that occurs as a result of an annual meeting failing to elect all the members to the council that the meeting was entitled to elect.
- b. The filling of a vacancy in the membership of a Council must be ratified at either the first annual meeting of the parish for which the Council was established that is held after the vacancy is filled or at a special meeting of the parish that is held after the vacancy is filled.
- c. A Council may, by resolution, request any member elected to the council who is unable, or who fails, to perform the duties of a member of the council, to resign from the council.
- d. A person may resign from a Council by submitting that person's resignation to the Council in writing (including by electronic means), except that where a person wishes to resign because of a grievance, that person may only do so by submitting that member's resignation to the Bishop in writing and to the council and, in such case, the resignation is not effective unless and until the Bishop communicates the Bishop's acceptance in writing to that person and to the council.
- e. Where a person who is a member of a Council ceases to be qualified to be elected to the Council, that person is deemed to have resigned as a member of the Council except that the Council may, by a resolution supported by at least two thirds of its members, extend that person's membership on the Council as long as the extension does not go beyond the date of the next annual meeting of the parish

### **24. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- 1. All members of Parish Council must
  - a. have attained the age of sixteen years, although all individuals with signing authority must have reached the age of majority in the province of the parish; and
  - b. be a communicant of a congregation that forms a part of the parish and attend worship services in the parish at least monthly unless prevented from doing so by reason of temporary infirmity, extended travel or work; and
  - c. support the mission of the parish through offerings of time, talent or treasure; and
  - d. be in compliance with the Diocesan policies on sexual misconduct and the parish SafeR Church policies, including successfully completing all required training and providing all required police records checks. Failure to comply within six months of being elected or appointed to the Council will result in being removed from Council.
- 2. Members of Parish Council have the following accountabilities:
  - a. To attend the meetings of the Parish Council and meetings of the members of the parish and participate in the deliberations at such meetings.
  - b. To be conversant with the affairs of the Parish; this may include having a portfolio of committees or groups within the parish assigned to each member of Council to ensure that communication flows freely between Council and the various groups.
  - c. To represent the best interests of the members of the parish and the Parish in all matters that come before Council for decision.
  - d. To communicate to Council the concerns and opinions of parishioners on matters concerning the

- mission of the Parish and Diocese.
- e. To participate in the execution and implementation of decisions taken by the Council or the Parishioners.
  - f. To excuse themselves from decisions where there might be an actual or perceived conflict of interest.
3. Multiple roles:
- a. An ordained person or postulant may not hold any other office.
  - b. A parish warden may not be the parish treasurer.
  - c. A paid staff person may not be a warden or the treasurer.
  - d. Otherwise, a member of Parish Council may hold more than one role.
4. Conflicts of interest.
- a. Unless permitted to do so by a resolution passed by the council that has the question before it, neither a person who is in receipt of a payment for carrying out duties or performing services for a parish, nor a person with whom that person is not at arm's length, may vote on any question that is before the Parish Council where the question relates to the salary, remuneration or any term of employment of that person.
  - b. The list of signing authorities shall not include people who are not at arm's-length with each other.
5. Roles of specific officers:
- a. The wardens are the chief lay officers of the parish. Parish Council may, by resolution, delegate particular responsibilities to the various wardens.
  - b. It is the responsibility of the treasurer, under the general direction of Parish Council and in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese, to:
    - i. keep accurate records of all financial transactions of the parish;
    - ii. provide monthly statements of the income and expenses of the parish to the parish and the parish council;
    - iii. provide, according to the Diocesan schedule, statistics of the parish and report them to each annual meeting of the members of the parish;
    - iv. make all necessary banking arrangements;
    - v. arrange for payment of all salaries and accounts as approved by the parish council;
    - vi. manage all investments of the parish including those held for the benefit of its cemeteries;
    - vii. ensure that all monies received for the parish are immediately deposited in a chartered bank, credit union or trust company selected by the parish council to the credit of the parish in one or more accounts as may be determined by the Parish Council;
    - viii. ensure that the parish's charitable returns, HST returns, and any other returns required by law are filed on a timely basis;
    - ix. if necessary, make provision for a qualified person to perform accounting duties in accordance with established procedures. It is permissible for the parish to pay an individual to act as bookkeeper to maintain the financial records of that parish or church. The role of treasurer will then include oversight of the bookkeeper's work, as well as the other duties of a treasurer.
    - x. Parish Council may appoint a Finance Team under the direction of the Treasurer to undertake these duties. The Treasurer remains accountable for all the work done by the members of the Finance Team.
  - c. The responsibility of the Secretary of Parish Council is to record the minutes of the meetings of Parish Council and of resolutions passed, to ensure that the permanent records are safely maintained, and generally to act as Secretary for the meetings of Parish Council or the members of the parish, and other duties assigned by Canon or the by-laws of the parish.

## **25. NOTICE OF MEETING OF PARISH COUNCIL**

Notice of regular meetings of Parish Council shall be given to the parish through announcements at Sunday services and may also be given electronically. Notice of an extraordinary meeting of Parish Council shall be given to all members of council at least one week in advance of the meeting and include the proposed agenda and all supporting materials.

## **26. REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. Parish Council shall meet at least six times per year. Parish Council may appoint a day or days in any month or months for regular meetings of Parish Council at a place and hour to be named. The proposed agenda and all supporting materials shall be sent to the members of Parish Council at least one week prior to the meeting.
- b. At least annually, Parish Council will consider:
  - i. The parish's mission as part of God's mission to the world;
  - ii. how the offerings of time, talents, treasure and callings of the members of the parish can best be used in service of the ministries of the parish;
  - iii. the Council's goals for the year and insights from its work on previous goals;
  - iv. how the time, talents, treasure and callings of the members of Parish Council can best be used in the work of Parish Council;
  - v. the Parish's SafeR Church policy and related documents (such as position audits, risk assessments, and risk mitigation strategies); and
  - vi. the state of its buildings, cemeteries, and any other property, and any major repairs or upgrades that will be needed in the next three years.
- c. Approved minutes of Parish Council shall be made readily available to members of the parish, with due care taken regarding confidential matters.
- d. All meetings of Parish Council shall be open to the public, except where the subject matter must be kept confidential.

At a meeting of a parish council a majority of the elected members of the parish council, shall constitute a quorum.

## **27. VOTING AT MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

At all meetings of Parish Council, every question shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast on the question. Parish Council may adopt a policy to permit the chair of the meeting to have a vote on all matters. In case of an equality of votes, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

## **28. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PARISH**

- a. Parish Council may from time to time appoint any committee or other advisory body, as it deems necessary or appropriate for such purposes and with such powers as Council shall see fit. Any such committee may formulate its own rules of procedure, subject to such regulations or directions as Parish Council may from time to time make. Any committee member may be removed by resolution of the Parish Council. The Rector or Bishop's Designate is ex officio a voting member of all such committees, entitled to notice of meetings but without the requirement to attend.
- b. The Rector or Bishop's Designate may from time to time appoint any committee or advisory body to plan, coordinate or lead worship. The work of such groups shall be reported to Parish Council for information and consultation. Any decision which requires an expenditure shall be approved following the process for all other expenditures.
- c. **Option:** Parish Council may establish an executive committee consisting of the Rector or Bishop's designate, the wardens, and at Parish Council's option any of: the treasurer, the secretary, and the chair of Parish Council, if any.
- d. **Option:** Parish Council may establish a "Council of the Community" which will meet informally to prepare for events, fundraising activities, building maintenance, and similar work which needs many hands.



### **29. INVALIDITY OF ANY PROVISIONS OF THIS BY-LAW**

The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of these by-laws shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions.

### **30. OMISSIONS AND ERRORS**

The accidental omission to give any notice to any member of the parish or member of a Council, Executive Team or committee of the parish, or the non-receipt of any notice by any such person where the Parish Council has provided notice in accordance with the by-laws or any error in any notice not affecting its substance shall not invalidate any action taken at any meeting to which the notice pertained or otherwise founded on such notice.

### **31. DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISM**

- a. Disputes or controversies among members of the parish, or members of Parish Council, committee members, or volunteers of the Parish are as much as possible to be resolved by following the Safer Church policy of the Parish, the Sexual Misconduct and similar policies of the Diocese.  
If the matter is still unresolved, the individual may:
  - i. bring the dispute to the Rector or Bishop's Designate, the Parish wardens or Church wardens for resolution; or
  - ii. if necessary, ask the Regional Dean or Archdeacon of the Region to assist in resolving the issue.
- b. If a parish warden wishes to resign during their term as a result of a grievance, that resignation must be made in writing to the Bishop and to the Parish Council. The resignation is not effective until the Bishop communicates in writing that it has been accepted.

### **32. BY-LAWS AND EFFECTIVE DATE**

The Parish Council may not make, amend or repeal any by-laws that regulate the activities or affairs of the Parish without having the by-law, amendment or repeal confirmed at a meeting of the members of the parish by ordinary resolution. The by-law, amendment or repeal is only effective when confirmed by the members and by the Bishop in the form in which it was confirmed.

## **Canon 35: Model By-laws, Multi-Church Parish**

A by-law relating generally to the conduct of the affairs of **Anglican Parish of [Parish Name]** (the “Parish”).

### **MANDATE OF PARISH COUNCIL (taken from Canon 35)**

Parish Councils are the governing bodies of the parishes of the diocese and so have responsibility for directing and overseeing the mission of the Parish and its Churches, which is God’s mission. Governance responsibilities include:

- a. articulating and implementing the mission of the parish;
- b. entering into a covenant with the Rector and reviewing it at least every two years with the Archdeacon (*see Canon 25*);
- c. approving all policies for the parish, including SafeR Church policies;
- d. overseeing the assets of the whole parish (including church buildings, cemeteries and all bank accounts and investments);
- e. developing and monitoring the annual budget (including the budgets of the churches in a multi-church parish);
- f. approving all contracts including contracts with paid staff;
- g. ensuring that there is good communication among the congregations and organizations of the parish;
- h. ensuring that there is effective governance for all outreach activities of the parish; and
- i. oversight of all activities in the parish.

**BE IT ENACTED** as a by-law of the Parish as follows:

#### **1. DEFINITIONS**

In this By-law and all other by-laws of the Parish, unless the context otherwise requires:

“**Bishop**” means the Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island or, if the context so requires, a predecessor Diocesan Bishop;

“**Bishop’s Designate**”: the individual (lay or ordained) whom the Bishop or a previous Bishop has appointed to oversee all aspects of the ministries of a parish when there is no Rector. The Bishop’s Designate is the chief liturgical officer of the parish and is a voting member of Parish Council;

“**By-law**” means this By-law and any other by-law of the Parish as amended with the Bishop’s approval pursuant to Canon 35 and which are, from time to time, in force and effect;

“**Canon**” means any of the canons of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in force from time to time;

“**Church**” means all the congregations which meet together virtually or in person in the same location.

“**Church council**” means a Council elected by the members of a church which is part of the parish, pursuant to this By-law;

“**Collaborative Ministry Arrangement**”: a formal arrangement among two or more parishes to share a ministry team of clergy and laity to allow the gifts and callings of each parish to be deployed across the area with the intent of fostering growth in discipleship and vitality in all parishes while sharing the workload;

“**Congregation**”: a group of parishioners who regularly gather for worship, including Fresh Expression style worship, under the direction or sponsorship of the Parish Council;

**“Council of the Community”** An informal gathering of those in attendance after a worship service in order to prepare for events, fundraising activities, building maintenance, and similar work which needs many hands;

**“Meeting of members of a church”** means an annual meeting or a special meeting of members who are entitled to vote at an annual meeting of a church within the parish;

**“Meeting of members of the parish”** means an annual meeting or a special meeting of members of the parish who are entitled to vote at an annual meeting of members;

**“Not at arm’s length”**, in the context of individuals, means people who are spouses or partners, siblings, or parent or child of each other, or who are members of the same household;

**“Ordinary resolution”** means a resolution passed by a majority of not less than 50% plus 1 of the votes cast on that resolution;

**“Parish”** means either (a) all of the individuals who are members of the congregations of the parish together with all of its organizations, or (b) the geographical area for which the church of the parish is the closest Anglican church, depending upon the context;

**“Parish Council”** means the entity of the parish, as authorized by the Church Acts of Nova Scotia and of Prince Edward Island, which has governance responsibility for the whole parish (including the churches of a multi-church parish), the members of which are chosen according to the provisions of this By-law;

**“Rector”**: the priest appointed to the office by the Diocesan Bishop or a previous Bishop to oversee all aspects of the ministry of the parish. The Rector is the chief liturgical officer of the parish and is a voting member of Parish Council;

**“Shared Ministry Arrangement”**: an arrangement among the Bishop and two or more parishes under which the same individual will be appointed as Rector or Bishop’s Designate for each parish on a part time basis in each parish. The arrangement may include sharing of other expenses (such as a rectory and office); and

**“Special resolution”** means a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast on that resolution.

## **2. INTERPRETATION**

In the interpretation of this By-law, words in the singular include the plural and vice versa, words in one gender include all genders, and “person” includes an individual, body corporate, partnership, trust and unincorporated organization.

## **3. CORPORATE SEAL**

The parish shall have a corporate seal in the form approved by Parish Council. The secretary of Parish Council shall be the custodian of the seal. It may be stored in the same fire-proof box used to store the records of the Parish.

## **4. EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS**

Legal and financial documents pertaining to the parish shall be signed by any two (2) of the signing officers of the parish. Any signing officer may also certify a copy of a parish document to be a true copy. Where the document relates to any of the real property of the parish, including the church buildings of the parish, the requirements of Canon 38 must be met.

The signing officers are the wardens, secretary, and Rector or Bishop’s Designate.

Should any of these offices be held by people who are not at arm's length, only one of those people may be a signing officer and Parish Council may appoint an additional signing officer.

**Option:** Parish Council may by resolution from time to time designate, direct or authorize other persons to enter into specific contracts for goods or services or agreements for use of parish property, including property related to a church.

## **5. FINANCIAL YEAR END**

The financial year end of the Parish shall be December 31 in each year.

## **6. BANKING AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The banking business of the Parish shall be transacted at a bank, trust company, credit union or other firm or corporation carrying on a banking business in Canada as the Parish Council may designate, appoint or authorize from time to time by resolution. The banking business or any part of it shall be transacted by any two of the wardens, treasurer, or secretary of the Parish Council. Should any of these offices be held by people who are not at arm's length, only one of those people may be a signing officer and Parish Council may appoint an additional signing officer.

All funds contributed for missionary, diocesan, or other extra-parochial purposes, or for cemetery purposes, may be held in one or more bank accounts separate from the general funds of the parish. Where such funds are held in the same bank account as the general funds of the parish and are tracked in a separate ledger in the accounting records, the balance in that bank account shall not be lower than the total balances in these separate ledgers.

**Option:** Parish Council may by resolution authorize bank accounts to be opened for the churches of the parish and for parish or church organizations and by resolution appoint the signing officers for those accounts from the members of Parish Council.

## **7. BORROWING POWERS**

The Parish Council may, having obtained the permission of the Bishop required by Canon 38, mortgage, hypothecate, pledge or otherwise create a security interest in all or any property of the Parish (including its churches), owned or subsequently acquired, in order to raise funds to erect, enlarge, renovate, repair or restore a church, rectory, or parish hall.

**Option:** Parish Council may, by resolution, enter into contracts for goods or services which provide for billing after the service is delivered.

**Option:** Parish Council may authorize signing officers to obtain a credit or payment card in the name of the Parish with appropriate limits to facilitate the purchase of necessary supplies.

## **8. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Parish Council shall make copies of the annual financial statements available to the members of the parish as part of the annual meeting package in printed and electronic form. The financial statements shall include all operations of the parish, including its churches, bank accounts of parish organizations, and all shared activities and assets. Electronic or additional printed copies shall be made available subsequently upon request.

## **9. MEMBERSHIP CONDITIONS**

Membership in the Anglican Church of Canada is by virtue of Christian baptism but all people are welcome to attend worship services and participate in the life of the parish.

Individuals may vote at meetings of the parish if they meet the following requirements:

- a. have reached 16 years of age; and
- b. support the mission of the parish through offerings of time, talent or treasure; and
- c. except as allowed by subsection d, have not voted in the annual meeting of another parish for the same period;
- d. Rectors, Bishop's Designates, and members of a ministry team who serve more than one parish in a Shared Ministry Arrangement or Collaborative Ministry Arrangement may vote in all parishes in which they have served in the past year.

Individuals may vote at meetings of a church of the parish if they meet the following requirements:

- a. have reached 16 years of age; and
- b. support the mission of the church through offerings of time, talent or treasure have not voted in the annual meeting of another parish for the same period.

#### **10. NOTICE OF A MEETING OF MEMBERS**

- a. The annual meeting of the members of the parish shall be held by March 1 each year to elect members of Parish Council, to receive the financial statements of the parish and to conduct other appropriate business. The annual meetings of the members of the churches of the parish shall be held before the annual meeting of the members of the parish.
- b. Notice of the date, time and place of a meeting of members shall be given to each member entitled to vote at the meeting by the following means:
  - i. during the worship service on the two Sundays prior to the day on which the meeting is to be held; and/or
  - ii. **Option** and by affixing the notice, no later than 14 days before the day on which the meeting is to be held, to a notice board on which information respecting the Parish's activities is regularly posted and that is located in the main facilities of the Parish and its churches; and/or
  - iii. **Option** and by electronic or other communication facility to each member of the congregation who is entitled to vote at the meeting and for whom such contact information is available, no less than 14 days before the day on which the meeting is to be held.
- c. A report package must be made available to the members of the parish in printed and electronic form at least one week in advance of the meeting and include:
  - i. agenda for the meeting;
  - ii. reports from the Rector/Bishop's Designate, Wardens, Treasurer, and other organizations of the parish;
  - iii. financial statements for the previous year which have been reviewed according to the Diocesan policies; these statements will include the financial statements of all parish organizations which are authorized to raise or spend funds;
  - iv. a budget or forecast for the coming year, including all parish organizations which are authorized to raise or spend funds;
  - v. a statement of the investments of the parish, including cemetery funds, and any terms and conditions to which they are subject;
  - vi. a summary of the parish's insurance policies;
  - vii. a list of the current officers and council members and when their terms expire; and
  - viii. the list of nominations for officers and other elected members of Parish Council.
- d. A report package must be made available to the members of a church in printed and electronic form at least one week in advance of the meeting and include:
  - i. agenda for the meeting;

- ii. reports from the Rector/Bishop's Designate, Wardens, Treasurer, and other organizations of the church;
- iii. financial statements for the previous year which have been reviewed according to the Diocesan policies; these statements will include the financial statements of all church organizations which are authorized to raise or spend funds;
- iv. a budget or forecast for the coming year, including all church organizations which are authorized to raise or spend funds;
- v. a statement of the investments of the parish which are held for the benefit of the church, including cemetery funds, and any terms and conditions to which they are subject;
- vi. a list of the current officers and council members (if any) and when their terms expire, and;
- vii. the list of nominations for officers and other elected members of Church Council, if there is one.

***If a change to this by-law is proposed which has the effect of reducing the time or scope of the notice of a meeting of members, it must be approved with a special resolution of the members of the parish and by the Bishop.***

#### **11. CALLING A SPECIAL MEETING OF MEMBERS**

- a. A special meeting of the members of the parish may be called by:
  - i. The Rector or Bishop's Designate of the Parish; or
  - ii. The Wardens of the Parish; or
  - iii. The lesser of:
    - ten members of the parish who are entitled to vote at an annual meeting; or
    - the majority of such members of the parish, if the request is in writing and given to the secretary of the Parish Council.
- b. A special meeting of the parish must be held if any of the following decisions are being made:
  - i. To elect a parochial committee under Canon 25;
  - ii. to elect new officers of Parish Council, in the event that Parish Council is not able to fill a vacancy;
  - iii. to approve, by special resolution, the entry of the parish into a Shared Ministry Arrangement or Collaborative Ministry Arrangement, or to approve the exit of the parish from a Shared Ministry Arrangement or a Collaborative Ministry Arrangement;
  - iv. by special resolution, to request the Bishop to amalgamate the parish with another parish; and/or
  - v. to request the Bishop to deconsecrate any church building. In this case, a resolution to approve this request must have been adopted at a special meeting of the members of that church
- c. A special meeting of the members of a church may be called by:
  - i. The Rector or Bishop's Designate of the Parish,
  - ii. ii. the wardens of the Church,
  - iii. iii. the wardens of the Parish, or
  - iv. the lesser of:
    - ten members of the church who are entitled to vote at an annual meeting; or
    - the majority of such members of the church, if the request is in writing and given to the secretary of the Church.

#### **12. NOMINATIONS OF MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCIL AT ANNUAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

- a. The Parish Council shall solicit nominations for members of Parish Council prior to the annual meeting of the Parish. The Church Executive shall solicit nominations for members of the executive (and Church

Council if there is one) prior to the annual meeting of the Church. Candidates may nominate themselves if eligible.

- b. Additional nominations may be accepted from the floor of the meeting from members of the parish who are entitled to vote at the meeting, provided that the nominee is eligible and consents to the nomination.
- c. **Option:** Parish Council may create a nominating committee to gather such names and confirm the consent and eligibility of candidates.

### **13. PUBLISHING MATERIAL FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

- a. All reports and proposals shall be provided to the secretary of Parish Council, or the secretary of the Church, or their designate, at least 3 weeks before the annual meeting for inclusion in the annual meeting package. The Parish shall bear the cost of printing the package.
- b. It shall be the responsibility of any person making a proposal after that date to ensure that enough copies of supporting material are provided at the annual meeting.

### **14. PLACE OF MEETING OF MEMBERS**

- a. Meetings of the parish shall be held at a location within the parish determined by Parish Council.
- b. Meetings of the church shall be held at a location determined by the Church Executive.
- c. The location of meetings shall be accessible to those entitled to vote at the meeting.

### **15. PLACE OF MEETING OF MEMBERS**

- a. Members and non-members of the Parish are entitled to be present at a meeting of members of the parish. However, only those members entitled to vote at the meeting of members according to the provisions of this By-law are entitled to cast a vote at the meeting.
- b. Members and non-members of the Parish are entitled to be present at a meeting of members of the church. However, only those members entitled to vote at the meeting of members of the church according to the provisions of this By-law are entitled to cast a vote at the meeting.

### **16. CHAIR OF MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

The members present at the meeting shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting. The meeting shall decide whether the chair has a regular vote, in addition to a vote in the event of an equality of votes.

### **17. QUORUM AT MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

A quorum at a meeting of the members of the parish shall be:

- a. five persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of up to fifteen persons;
- b. eight persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than fifteen persons and up to fifty persons;
- c. twelve persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than fifty persons and up to one hundred and fifty persons;
- d. twenty-four persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than one hundred and fifty persons and up to three hundred persons; and
- e. thirty persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting where the average Sunday attendance of the parish consists of more than three hundred persons.

Quorum for the meeting of the members of a church shall be:

- a. three persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the church consists of up to fifteen persons;

- b. eight persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the church consists of more than fifteen persons and up to fifty persons;
- c. twelve persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the church consists of more than fifty persons and up to one hundred and fifty persons;
- d. twenty-four persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting, where the average Sunday attendance of the church consists of more than one hundred and fifty persons and up to three hundred persons;
- e. thirty persons who are entitled to vote at the meeting where the average Sunday attendance of the church consists of more than three hundred persons.

#### **18. VOTING AT MEETING OF MEMBERS**

At any meeting of members every question shall, unless otherwise provided by the Canons or By-laws, be determined by a majority of the votes cast on the questions. A vote may be held by voice (yea or nay), a show of hands, a ballot, or by electronic voting. *If using an electronic platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams, the voter must be visible to the appointed counters (or identifiable by way of a method previously approved by Parish Council).*

#### **19. PARTICIPATION BY ELECTRONIC MEANS AT MEETING OF MEMBERS**

If the Parish Council or Church executive chooses to make available a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with one another during a meeting of members of the parish or church, any person entitled to attend such meeting may participate in the meeting by means of such telephonic, electronic or other communication facility. A person participating in a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting. Any person participating in a meeting of members of the parish or church pursuant to this section who is entitled to vote at that meeting may vote by means of any telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that the Parish Council or Church executive has made available for that purpose. *Each voter must be identifiable by way of a method previously approved by Parish Council.*

#### **20. MEETING OF MEMBERS HELD ENTIRELY BY ELECTRONIC MEANS**

If the Rector or Bishop's Designate or the wardens call a meeting of members of the parish pursuant to this by-law, the Rector or Bishop's Designate or wardens, as the case may be, may determine that the meeting shall be held entirely by means of a telephonic, electronic or other communication facility that permits all participants to communicate adequately with one another during the meeting.

#### **21. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

- a. The minutes of the meeting of members of the parish shall be prepared by the Secretary of the meeting and reviewed by Parish Council at its next meeting. When reviewed they shall be made available to the members of the parish and approved at the next annual meeting of the parish.
- b. **Option:** a special meeting of members may by resolution authorize Parish Council to approve the minutes of the special meeting at its first meeting after the special meeting.
- c. The minutes of any meeting of members of a church shall be prepared by the Secretary of the meeting and reviewed by the church executive team at its next meeting. When reviewed they shall be made available to the members of the church and approved at the next annual meeting of the church.

#### **22. MEMBERSHIP OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. The Rector or Bishop's Designate
- b. Each member of the clergy canonically appointed by the Bishop to serve the parish (CAP priests, associate priests, honorary assistants, deacons, curates). Only stipendiary clergy will be voting members of Parish Council.



- c. Unless one is elected/appointed to another place on Parish Council, a Licensed Lay Minister, chosen by and from the LLMs of the parish
- d. Two or three parish wardens, elected at the Parish AGM. The number of wardens shall be determined by resolution at the annual parish meeting on the recommendation of Parish Council
- e. Secretary of Parish Council – elected at the Parish AGM
- f. Treasurer of Parish Council – elected at the Parish AGM. The positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined.
- g. The warden/wardens of each of the churches – elected by the churches
- h. The treasurer of each of the churches – elected by the churches
- i. The Lay and Youth Delegates to Synod from the parish – elected at the Parish AGM
- j. If a church does not have its own Church Council or Church executive, two representatives of that church elected by the congregation (if representatives from that church are not elected already to other positions on Parish Council)
- k. On the recommendation of Parish Council, a chairperson of Parish Council may be elected at the annual parish meeting

It is permissible and anticipated that some of these positions may be held by the same individual (e.g. one person is the treasurer of Parish Council and is also a Lay Delegate to Synod; an LLM is also Parish Warden; a Lay Delegate is also a member at large) subject to the restrictions on membership set out in Section 25.

### **23. TERM OF OFFICE OF MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. Each warden holds office for a term commencing at the close of the annual meeting at which the warden was elected and ending at the close of an annual meeting that is no later than the third annual meeting after the meeting at which the warden was elected. Wardens shall be elected for terms that are staggered in such a manner that their terms of office do not all end at the same time.
- b. The Rector or Bishop's Designate holds office at the pleasure of the Bishop or until their resignation under Canon 25.
- c. The Lay Delegates to Synod shall be elected in accordance with the Constitution of the Diocese and serve until replaced, but not for more than two consecutive Synods.
- d. Church wardens and treasurers serve on Parish Council while they hold those offices.
- e. All other positions on Parish Council are elected for one year terms.
- f. A person may be re-elected as a parish warden, secretary or parish treasurer, except that no person may, without the consent of the Bishop, hold office as a parish warden, secretary or treasurer for a continuous period of more than nine years.

### **24. CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP DURING THE TERM OF PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. Councils may fill a vacancy in their elected membership, including a vacancy that occurs as a result of an annual meeting failing to elect all the members to the council that the meeting was entitled to elect.
- b. The filling of a vacancy in the membership of a Council must be ratified at either the first annual meeting of the parish or church for which the Council was established that is held after the vacancy is filled or at a special meeting of the parish that is held after the vacancy is filled.
- c. A Council may, by resolution, request any member elected to the council who is unable, or who fails, to perform the duties of a member of the council, to resign from the council.
- d. A person may resign from a Council by submitting that person's resignation to the Council in writing (including by electronic means), except that where a person wishes to resign because of a grievance, that person may only do so by submitting that member's resignation to the Bishop in writing and to

the council and, in such case, the resignation is not effective unless and until the Bishop communicates the Bishop's acceptance in writing to that person and to the council.

- e. Where a person who is a member of a Council ceases to be qualified to be elected to the Council, that person is deemed to have resigned as a member of the Council except that the Council may, by a resolution supported by at least two thirds of its members, extend that person's membership on the Council as long as the extension does not go beyond the date of the next annual meeting of the parish

## **25. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF PARISH COUNCIL, A CHURCH EXECUTIVE, OR CHURCH COUNCIL**

1. All members of Parish Council must:
  - a. have attained the age of sixteen years, although all individuals with signing authority must have reached the age of majority in the province of the parish; and
  - b. be a communicant of a congregation that forms a part of the parish or church and attend worship services in the parish at least monthly unless prevented from doing so by reason of temporary infirmity, extended travel or work; and
  - c. support the mission of the parish through offerings of time, talent or treasure; and
  - d. be in compliance with the Diocesan policies on sexual misconduct and the parish SafeR Church policies, including successfully completing all required training and providing all required police records checks. Failure to comply within six months of being elected or appointed to the Council will result in being removed from Council.
2. Members of Parish Council have the following accountabilities:
  - a. to attend the meetings of the Parish or Church Council and meetings of the members of the parish or church and participate in the deliberations at such meetings;
  - b. to be conversant with the affairs of the parish or church; this may include having a portfolio of committees or groups within the parish assigned to each member of Council to ensure that communication flows freely between Council and the various groups;
  - c. to represent the best interests of the members of the parish or church and the Parish or Church in all matters that come before Council for decision;
  - d. to communicate to Council the concerns and opinions of parishioners on matters concerning the mission of the Parish and Diocese;
  - e. to participate in the execution and implementation of decisions taken by the Council or the Parishioners; and
  - f. to excuse themselves from decisions where there might be an actual or perceived conflict of interest.
3. Multiple roles:
  - a. an ordained person or postulant may not hold any other office;
  - b. neither a parish warden nor a church warden may be the parish treasurer;
  - c. a church warden may not be the treasurer of that church;
  - d. a paid staff person may not be a parish or church warden nor a parish or church treasurer.
  - e. Otherwise, a member of Parish or Church Council may hold more than one role.
4. Conflicts of interest.
  - a. Unless permitted to do so by a resolution passed by the council that has the question before it, neither a person who is in receipt of a payment for carrying out duties or performing services for a parish or church, nor a person with whom that person is not at arm's length, may vote on any question that is before the Parish or Church Council where the question relates to the salary, remuneration or any term of employment of that person.
  - b. The list of signing authorities shall not include people who are not at arm's-length with each other.
5. Roles of specific officers:

- a. The wardens are the chief lay officers of the parish. Parish Council may, by resolution, delegate particular responsibilities to the various wardens.
- b. It is the responsibility of the treasurer of the Parish, under the general direction of Parish Council and in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese, and working closely with the treasurers of the churches of the parish, to:
  - i. keep accurate records of all financial transactions of the parish including its churches;
  - ii. provide monthly statements of the income and expenses of the parish (including those of its churches) to the parish and the parish council;
  - iii. provide, according to the Diocesan schedule, statistics of the parish and report them to each annual meeting of the members of the parish;
  - iv. make all necessary banking arrangements;
  - v. arrange for payment of all salaries and accounts as approved by the parish council;
  - vi. manage all investments of the parish including those held for the benefit of its churches and cemeteries;
  - vii. ensure that all monies received for the parish (including for its churches) are immediately deposited in a chartered bank, credit union or trust company selected by the parish council to the credit of the parish in one or more accounts as may be determined by the Parish Council;
  - viii. ensure that the Parish's charitable returns, HST returns, and any other returns required by law are filed on a timely basis;
  - ix. if necessary, make provision for a qualified person to perform accounting duties in accordance with established procedures. It is permissible for the parish or church to pay an individual to act as bookkeeper to maintain the financial records of that parish or church. The role of treasurer will then include oversight of the bookkeeper's work, as well as the other duties of a treasurer.
  - x. Parish Council may appoint a Finance Team under the direction of the Treasurer to undertake these duties. The Treasurer remains accountable for all the work done by the members of the Finance Team.
- c. The responsibility of the Secretary of Parish Council is to record the minutes of the meetings of Parish Council and of resolutions passed, to ensure that the permanent records are safely maintained, and generally to act as Secretary for the meetings of Parish Council or the members of the parish, and other duties assigned by Canon or the by-laws of the parish.

## **26. NOTICE OF MEETING OF PARISH COUNCIL**

Notice of regular meetings of Parish Council shall be given to the parish through announcements at

Sunday services and may also be given electronically. Notice of an extraordinary meeting of Parish Council shall be given to all members of council at least one week in advance of the meeting and include the proposed agenda and all supporting materials.

## **27. REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- a. Parish Council shall meet at least six times per year. Parish Council may appoint a day or days in any month or months for regular meetings of Parish Council at a place and hour to be named. The proposed agenda and all supporting materials shall be sent to the members of Parish Council at least one week prior to the meeting.
- b. At least annually, Parish Council, together with any Church Council or Church Executive will consider:
  - i. The parishes and churches' mission as part of God's mission to the world
  - ii. How the offerings of time, talents, treasure and callings of the members of the parish can best be used in service of the ministries of the parish
  - iii. The Councils' goals for the year and insights from the work on previous goals

- iv. How the offerings of time, talents, treasure and callings of the members of Parish and Church Councils can best be used in the work of the Parish and Church Councils
  - v. The Parish's SafeR Church policy and related documents (such as position audits, risk assessments, and risk mitigation strategies)
  - vi. The state of its buildings, cemeteries, and any other property, and any major repairs or upgrades that will be needed in the next three years
  - vii. The budget for the shared operating and capital expenses which are the responsibility of the parish as a whole. Those expenses shall be allocated to the churches within the parish in the proportion that the churches' assessable incomes for the year are of the parish's whole assessable income.
- c. Approved minutes of Parish Council shall be made readily available to members of the parish, with due care taken regarding confidential matters.
  - d. All meetings of Parish Council shall be open to the public, except where the subject matter must be kept confidential.

At a meeting of a parish council, or a church council, a majority of the elected members of the parish council, or church council, as the case may be, constitute a quorum.

## **28. VOTING AT MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

At all meetings of Parish or Church Council, every question shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast on the question. Parish or Church Councils may adopt a policy to permit the chair of the meeting to have a vote on all matters. In case of an equality of votes, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

## **29. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE PARISH**

- a. Parish Council may from time to time appoint any committee or other advisory body, as it deems necessary or appropriate for such purposes and with such powers as Council shall see fit. Any such committee may formulate its own rules of procedure, subject to such regulations or directions as Parish Council may from time to time make. Any committee member may be removed by resolution of the Parish Council. The Rector or Bishop's Designate is *ex officio* a voting member of all such committees, entitled to notice of meetings but without the requirement to attend.
- b. The Rector or Bishop's Designate may from time to time appoint any committee or advisory body to plan, coordinate or lead worship. The work of such groups shall be reported to Parish Council for information and consultation. Any decision which requires an expenditure shall be approved following the process for all other expenditures.
- c. **Options:** Parish Council may establish an executive committee consisting of the Rector or Bishop's designate, the wardens, and at Parish Council's option any of: the treasurer, the secretary, and the chair of Parish Council, if any.

**Church governance** Each of the churches of the parish shall adopt one of the following structures of governance, which shall be decided upon annually at the meeting of members of the church:

- a. A Church Council shall be made up of
  - i. The Rector or Bishop's Designate
  - ii. Unless one is elected/appointed to another place on Church Council, a Licensed Lay Minister who serves the church, chosen by and from the LLMs of the parish
  - iii. Up to three wardens, elected for three-year terms on a staggered basis
  - iv. Secretary of Church Council
  - v. Treasurer of Church Council (the positions of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined)
  - vi. Elected members at large – number between 3 and 6. The number of elected members will depend upon whether there are committees or groups which carry out the operational

responsibilities. If there are no committee, the Church Council may include up to 4 more members to carry out those responsibilities. These members should be chosen to represent the diversity of the members of the church. These members shall be elected for three-year terms on a staggered basis.

vii. The positions of LLM, Secretary and Treasurer are elected for renewable one-year terms

or

- b. A Church Executive made up of the Rector/ Bishop's designate, between one and three wardens, secretary, treasurer, and, optionally, an individual who takes responsibility for the care of the property, who are elected at the AGM of the church.

or

- c. Two or more Churches may elect a joint Church Council (with membership as set out in a. above) from among the members of the churches, with each church having its own Church Executive,

or

- d. The members of a church may request Parish Council to assume the responsibility for the governance of the church. In this event, the annual meeting of the church will elect two people to represent it on Parish Council.

Under any of these options, the operational work of the church may be arranged by creating a Council of the Community which meets informally to arrange work such as events, property maintenance, or fundraising.

Parish Council may delegate appropriate authority to the wardens and treasurer of each Church to enable the routine upkeep of the building, including the costs of utilities and regular maintenance. Parish Council shall make all significant decisions regarding capital expenditures, rental of space, changes in worship schedules, use of a bequest, or other matters of a financial or legal nature, taking into account the recommendation of the Church Council or Church Executive.

### **30. INVALIDITY OF ANY PROVISIONS OF THIS BY-LAW**

The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of these By-laws shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions.

### **31. OMISSIONS AND ERRORS**

The accidental omission to give any notice to any member of the parish or member of a Council, Executive Team or committee of the parish, or the non-receipt of any notice by any such person where the Parish Council has provided notice in accordance with the By-laws or any error in any notice not affecting its substance shall not invalidate any action taken at any meeting to which the notice pertained or otherwise founded on such notice.

### **32. DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISM**

- a. Disputes or controversies among members of the parish, members of Parish or Church Council or Church Executive team, committee members, or volunteers of the Parish are as much as possible to be resolved by following the SafeR Church policy of the Parish, the Sexual Misconduct and similar policies of the Diocese.

If the matter is still unresolved, the individual may:

- i. bring the dispute to the Rector or Bishop's Designate, the Parish wardens or Church wardens for resolution; or
  - ii. if necessary, by asking the Regional Dean or Archdeacon of the Region to assist in resolving the issue.
- b. If a warden of the parish or a church wishes to resign during their term as a result of a grievance, that resignation must be made in writing to the Bishop and to Parish Council. The resignation is not effective until the Bishop communicates in writing that it has been accepted.

### 33. BY-LAWS AND EFFECTIVE DATE

The Parish Council may not make, amend or repeal any by-laws that regulate the activities or affairs of the Parish without having the by-law, amendment or repeal confirmed at a meeting of the members of the parish by ordinary resolution. The by-law, amendment or repeal is only effective when confirmed by the members and by the Bishop in the form in which it was confirmed.

## #9 (A) CANON 35: PARISH GOVERNMENT\*

Moved by: The Reverend Matthew Sponagle

Seconder: Dawn Purcell

A resolution to amend one clause of Canon 35: Parish Government in the event the proposed repeal and revision are unsuccessful.

***Resolved that Canon 35: Parish Government be amended by removing the sections with lines running through them and adding the sections that are underlined as set out below:***

### Canon 35: Parish Government

16. (3) Monies deposited to the credit of a parish or a church shall be drawn upon by cheque ~~signed for the parish or the church~~ or electronic transfer, as the case may be, ~~by any two of the treasurer, secretary and wardens of the parish or the church~~ observing best-banking practices as outlined in the related Administrative Policy 2.2.16: Best-Banking Practices.

#### Commentary

This resolution is proposed only if the Canon 35: Parish Government repeal and revisions are unsuccessful. This amendment brings into harmony Parish banking practices and this Canon. The specificity of this clause has not been repeated in the proposed revision of Canon 35.

*\* This motion will only be brought forward if the repeal and revision of Canon 35, Parish Government does not pass. It is intended to make current electronic banking practices, connecting governance to Administrative Policy 2.2.16: Best-Banking Practices.*

## #10 AFFIRM AND ACKNOWLEDGE MEMBERS OF THE 2SLGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY

Moved by: The Reverend Kris MacKenzie

Seconder: The Reverend Dr. Patti Brace

A resolution to commit to affirming, acknowledging, and continuing to welcome and include those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ in and to our communities.

### ***Resolved that this synod:***

- ***affirm the dignity, worth, and equality of all people, including those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+ (Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and other sexual and gender identities);***
- ***acknowledge historical and ongoing harm faced by 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, particularly within faith communities;***
- ***commit to work towards healing, reconciliation, and full inclusion of 2SLGBTQIA+ people;***
- ***and commit to providing safe spaces within the church where 2SLGBTQIA+ people are welcomed, valued, and supported in their faith journeys.***

### **Commentary**

This resolution is vital for all people of this Synod and Diocese as it acknowledges the historical and ongoing harm faced by 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, demonstrating a commitment to healing, reconciliation, and the full inclusion of these individuals in our faith communities. It underscores the importance of creating safe and welcoming spaces within the church for all people, celebrating the beautiful diversity among us.

## #11 CANON 11: DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Moved by: The Reverend Canon David Greenwood

Seconder: Edith Marshall

A resolution to amend Canon 11: Diocesan Council, as crafted in consultation with the Canon 11 Task Force appointed following Synod 151, 2023.

***Resolved that Canon 11: Diocesan Council be amended by removing the sections with lines running through them and adding the sections that are underlined as set out below, with such amendments to come into effect by resolution of Diocesan Council with the Bishop's consent.***

### CANON 11: DIOCESAN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

#### 1 The Diocesan Executive Council

There shall be ~~an~~ a strategic executive body of Synod to be known as the Diocesan Executive Council.

#### 2 Powers

The Diocesan Executive Council shall be the representative of Synod, between the sessions of Synod, subject to the authority of the Bishop, and shall

- (a) be the final decision-making body apart from Synod itself; and
- (b) be primarily responsible for determining and interpreting diocesan policy; and
- (c) approve and exercise stewardship over the budget.

#### 3 Role

- (1) The role of Diocesan Executive Council is to formulate and interpret policy which
  - (a) arises out of the forum of Synod;
  - (b) arises from the activities of Diocesan staff and committees; and
  - (c) ~~by generating~~ generates concepts, philosophies, and policies, which will ensure that the church maintains a stance appropriate to its responsibilities with respect to the growth of our society and the needs of both church and society for the future.
- (2) It is also the role of Diocesan Executive Council to advise the Bishop with respect to the welfare of the church.

#### 4 Duties

The Diocesan Executive Council shall be responsible for

- (a) implementing resolutions of Synod and in its discretion referring them to appropriate bodies for implementation;



- (b) reviewing and directing the implementation of decisions of committees where approval of the Council has been sought;
- (c) receiving and reviewing communications from church and community bodies external to the diocese structure as is necessary for the Council to make recommendations;
- (d) managing any conflicts between committees that arise and cannot be resolved by the committees themselves;
- (e) appointing task forces deemed necessary to expedite the work of Council;
- (f) meeting with archdeacons, regional deans, and regional and parish leadership to pray, listen, learn, and identify issues challenging the diocese; and
- (g) the submission of a written report in summary form of all matters and activities to the next regular session of Synod.

## 5 Membership

~~(1) The following persons shall constitute the membership of the Diocesan Council:~~

- ~~(a) The Diocesan Bishop who shall chair, unless the Bishop appoints an alternate chair;~~
- ~~(b) The Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop, if any; (Non-voting)~~
- ~~(c) The Chancellor of the Diocese;~~
- ~~(d) The Vice-Chancellor of the Diocese, if any;~~
- ~~(e) The Dean of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island;~~
- ~~(f) The Executive Officer, if any; (Non-voting)~~
- ~~(g) The Executive Secretary of Synod;~~
- ~~(h) The Financial Controller; (Non-voting)~~
- ~~(i) Two Regional Representatives from each Regional Council comprised of one member of the clergy and one lay person, both of whom shall be members of the Synod, with one of its two Regional Representatives to be elected by each of the Regional Councils for two consecutive terms at the session of each such Regional Council immediately prior to a regular meeting of Synod (each an "Electoral Session"), with the intent that only one half of the Regional Representatives on Diocesan Council shall be replaced at any one election.~~

~~— In the event that a Regional Representative elected by a Regional Council ceases to be member of Synod or that a vacancy in respect of a Regional Representative otherwise occurs, such Regional Representative shall cease to be a member of Diocesan Council and the Regional Council shall elect a replacement Regional Representative to Diocesan Council at the first session of such Regional Council occurring after the Regional Representative ceases to be a member of Synod. If the Regional representative to Diocesan Council is not otherwise a member of Synod, their name shall be certified to the~~

~~Executive Secretary of Synod as a Regional Delegate to Diocesan Synod for the duration of their term on Diocesan Council.~~

(1) The following persons shall constitute the membership of the Diocesan Executive Council:

Voting Members

- (a) The Diocesan Bishop who shall chair, unless the bishop appoints an alternate chair;
- (b) Two regional representatives comprised of one member of the clergy and one lay person, both of whom shall be members of the Synod, elected from the members of Synod during the meeting of Synod, and formally appointed to their position on the Council prior to the end of Synod.

In the event that an elected member is unable to continue with their duties, misses three consecutive Council meetings, or resigns from Council causing a vacancy of regional representative to occur, the Regional Council shall elect a replacement Regional Representative to Diocesan Council at the first session of such Regional Council occurring after the Regional Representative ceases to be a member of Synod. If the Regional representative to Diocesan Council is not otherwise a member of Synod, their name shall be certified to the Executive Secretary of Synod as a Regional Delegate to Diocesan Synod for the duration of their term on Diocesan Council.

- (c) Two youth delegates to be elected by the youth delegates to Synod from their number to serve on Diocesan Council until the next Diocesan Synod.
- (d) The Dean of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island;
- (e) The Chancellor of the Diocese;
- (f) The Diocesan Executive Officer;
- (g) The Executive Secretary of Synod;
- (h) A maximum of four members appointed by the bishop, should the bishop at the bishop's discretion decide to make such appointments;

Non-Voting, Ex Officio Members

- (i) The Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop, if any;
- (j) The Financial Controller;
- (k) The Vice-Chancellor of the Diocese, if any, unless they are acting in the role as the Chancellor.

(2) A person may be re-elected as a member of Diocesan Executive Council.

## **6 Meetings**

- (1) The Diocesan Executive Council shall meet regularly, in-person or electronically, for a minimum of four times annually, at such times and places as the Bishop thinks appropriate.

- (2) A quorum of the Diocesan Executive Council shall be a majority of the elected members.
- (3) In the absence of the Bishop, the Chair shall be that person nominated by the bishop of the Diocese, and failing such nomination the Chair shall be that person chosen by the other voting members of the Diocesan Executive Council.
- (4) All meetings and debates shall be governed by the Rules of Order and Procedure as defined in the Constitution of the Synod of the Diocese of Nova Scotia.
- (5) All minutes of the Diocesan Executive Council meetings, together with supporting materials (collectively the “Minutes”), shall be circulated electronically by email to members of the Diocesan Executive Council and Chairs of Standing Committees, Archdeacons, Regional Deans, Chairs of Regional Councils and, at the discretion of the Executive Secretary of Synod, to other persons (collectively the “Addressees” and each an “Addressee”); provided however that upon receipt of a written request from an Addressee, the Executive Secretary of Synod shall mail a copy of such Minutes to such Addressee.

### **Commentary**

At the last Synod, it was moved that a working group (WG) be formed to “re-examine those Canons outlining membership and personnel (volunteer and stipendiary) required at all levels of parish and regional governance,” “to re-examine Canon 11: The Diocesan Council, and to propose canon revisions.”

The Canon 11 WG comprised current and former members of Diocesan Council, two of which were also former Executive Secretaries of Synod. Membership of the WG came from different regions of the diocese.

We explored similar canon laws and diocesan policies from other dioceses, and identified different approaches that address recruitment, an orientation program, Council meeting set-up, retention, and tasks (job description) for Diocesan Council members. We made 16 recommendations to Diocesan Council, of which they supported exploring 14 of them. We suggested that four of these recommendations would affect Canon 11 and the remainder would be better served if placed in a Diocesan policy or guideline document. The Policy/guideline document has been circulated for background information purposes and will be reviewed by an upcoming Diocesan Council. What is placed before Synod today are the minor changes to Canon 11 which will lead to the policy/guideline’s consideration and acceptance.

## **Proposed Accompanying Policy 2.2.16: Diocesan Executive Council Companion Policy to Canon 11 (2025)**

*The text of this proposed policy is provided only for information. Neither debate nor discussion of the policy will be entertained at Synod. Questions and commentary may be directed to Canon 11 Task Force members or Diocesan Council members.*

### **A. PURPOSE** **for Members of Diocesan Executive Council (Lay and Clergy)**

To provide direction, clarify expectations, and outline the anticipated outcomes for the exciting ministry of senior leadership within the Diocesan Executive Council.

### **B. OVERVIEW**

The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (*the Diocese, Diocesan*) is Episcopally led and Synodically governed. Our leadership rests with and through the Diocesan Bishop and their staff. The strategic governance for the Diocese is provided by the bi-annual Diocesan Synod in a gathering of diocesan clergy, elected lay representatives, and appointed diocesan staff in accordance with the *Constitution of the Synod of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island* (amended 2023). Between each gathering of Synod, the Diocesan Executive Council, (*the Council, Executive Council*) provides that strategic level of governance.

### **C. SELECTION PROCESS FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS**

1. Executive Council is balanced between lay and clerical members and is drawn from membership across the Diocese through the election of two members from each Region of the Diocese. At the expense of a minimal nimble Council, this ensures a larger membership with vision and voice into, and from, all areas of the Diocese.
2. Each Region is to elect one clerical and one lay member drawn from the membership of Synod. The election takes place during Synod with the membership of Synod dividing into Regional groups. The regional clerical representative is elected by all regional members: clerical, lay, and youth (*see C-3.*). The regional lay representative is elected by all regional members: clerical, lay, and youth (*see C-4.*). The two youth representatives to Diocesan Executive Council are not regionally based, and are elected by all youth delegates to Synod. (*see C-6.*)
3. **Clergy Members:** In selecting the clerical representative, the regional members may choose to select a newly ordained person, filled with new ideas and enthusiasm, and in order to provide a diocesan wide experience of the Church. Conversely, the regional members may choose to select an experienced clergy member who will bring a practical and experiential knowledge to Executive Council. The Region's Archdeacon or Regional Dean may be appropriate for election to this important ministry.
4. **Lay Members:** In selecting the lay representative, the regional members may choose someone with experience in a specific important employment field such as health care, small business administration, government, policy development, real estate, educational systems, or the judiciary. Conversely, the regional members may desire to consider someone who has linguistic or cross-cultural formation or someone who has experienced, or is challenged by underemployment, justice, or health care issues. Again, there may be a desire for someone who has held senior position at the parish or regional level such as a former warden, treasurer, administrator, Licensed Lay Minister, or Chair of Regional Council.
5. Six weeks prior to Synod, the Diocesan Executive Director, will correspond with all elected Synod members and parish clergy and wardens to encourage them to encourage their parish's elected Synod Representatives to consider offering themselves for further ministry as an elected regional representative on Executive Council. In all cases, it is hoped that the members selected for Executive Council will be critical thinkers, eager, innovative, strong willed, willing to prepare and speak up, and with a strong sense of justice. Though not necessary, it would be helpful if the members selected are

familiar with reading financial statements and have some knowledge of, or desire to learn about, church law, policy, and programs.

6. **Youth Delegates:** Two youth delegates are to be elected by the youth delegates to Synod to serve on Executive Council. These two youth members are independent from, and not included in the one clerical and one lay members selected by each Region. In selecting these youth delegates, it is hoped the youth delegates to Synod will select eager, forthright, and motivated persons.
7. Above all, every clerical, lay, and youth member must be inquisitive, innovative, bold, and willing to question established policy, documents, and authority.
8. Once selected and duly elected by the regional groups meeting within Synod, the names are to be provided promptly to the Executive Secretary of Synod who shall inform the Bishop, Executive Director, and Registrar. Prior to the conclusion of Synod, all elected clerical, lay, and youth members will gather before Synod to be formally appointed by the Bishop. Any new, episcopally-appointed members, if known, or members to be reappointed by the Bishop for the next Executive Council, may be invited to attend this formal appointment.
9. **Episcopally-appointed members:** A maximum of four members may be appointed by the Bishop. Members may be appointed at any time between synods, though the appointment expires at the adjournment of the following Diocesan Synod unless reappointed. It would be helpful for Executive Council to know, at the time of such appointments, the reason, rationale, or skills that such persons are to bring to Executive Council. It would be desirable for the Bishop to introduce such appointed members at their first Executive Council gathering.

#### **D. ORIENTATION**

1. Executive Council members, clerical, lay, and youth may be re-elected at Synod to a following Council. In this way, some leadership and experience will continue as Council resumes following Synod. Otherwise, new members will join Council following each Diocesan Synod. All members, coming directly from Synod will start Council with a fresh vision from that Synod, of the tasks and programs before the Diocese.
2. The Executive Secretary of Synod will ensure an up-to-date orientation program is created and delivered to new, or desiring returning, members of Executive Council. The Orientation program will include:
  - a. a schedule of upcoming meeting dates and locations;
  - b. information on the expectations of Council members concerning study of read-ahead material prior to each gathering and methods for access and logging onto the website for resources;
  - c. a copy of the most recent Diocesan Executive Council minutes;
  - d. a current listing of all Committees, Support Teams, Diocesan Staff Agencies, Ministry Chairs, and Coordinators;
  - e. a current listing, by name, of the Bishop, Archdeacons, Regional Deans, Chancellor, Executive Director, Controller, and Diocesan Staff;
  - f. a listing of all Diocesan and Anglican abbreviations and acronyms;
  - g. a typical pattern of a meeting, perhaps a sample or previous agenda; and
  - h. a document on the file coding system.

The Orientation program should be delivered in person or online prior to the first Council meeting following Synod.

#### **E. HOW AN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING IS SET UP**

1. The Bishop, Executive Director, and Executive Secretary of Synod will meet to establish the agenda prior to each Executive Council meeting.
2. The Executive Director will advise relevant staff, VSST Chairs, Task Forces, Working Groups, and other agencies whether they will be required to submit a report in support of planned issues on the agenda.

3. Required reports will be received and distributed by the Executive Secretary of Synod not less than 10 days prior to an Executive Council meeting. The minutes of the last Council meeting may be sent out at the convenience of the Executive Secretary of Synod but not later than 10 days prior to a Council meeting.
4. If a required report is not received 10 days prior to Executive Council, the proposed agenda item is to be struck off the agenda and the Executive Director is to investigate why Council is being frustrated in its function and role.
5. Worship: Prior to Executive Council gathering, a Region will be identified to lead a time of worship during the Council session. Part of Council is intended to be a time of gathering in prayer to discuss and discern the priorities and missional journeys facing the Diocese. It is hoped the worship will be times of spiritual growth, rooted in Anglicanism, insightful, and prayerful.

#### **F. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS**

1. The role of Executive Council is extremely important to the life and ministries within the Diocese. Council is the strategic senior body of governance within the Diocese. It is important that Council members take the time to read, study, reflect upon, and pray over the proposals sent to them as read-ahead documents. During Council their questions, suggested revisions, discussions, and guidance are sought after and eagerly welcomed.
2. In the two years between Synods there will be approximately 10 Executive Council meetings. Members must be able to anticipate attending most of them.
3. In addition to the preparation for, and attendance and participation at, Executive Council meetings, it is strongly encouraged that elected members:
  - a. At least annually, meet with their Region's Archdeacon and Regional Dean, either together as clerical and lay Council members or individually, to determine the challenges facing the clergy and parishes within the region and the Diocese;
  - b. Attend and participate within their Regional Council meetings; and
  - c. Over the course of their 2-year mandate, attempt to visit each parish within their Region at least once, to either attend a Parish Council meeting or attend a Sunday morning worship service in order to listen, learn, and discern the issues and challenges facing the parish; and to provide either a presentation or to speak on the work of the Diocesan Executive Council.

## #12 CANON 20: REGIONS AND REGIONAL DEANS

Moved by: The Reverend Joanne Neal

Seconder: The Reverend Shirley Cole

A resolution to amend Canon 20: Regions and Regional Deans, as crafted in consultation with the Canon 20 Task Force appointed following Synod 151, 2023.

***Resolved that Canon 20: Regional Deans be amended by deleting the words struck out, and adding the words underlined, as follows:***

### **CANON 20: REGIONS AND REGIONAL DEANS**

#### **2. APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF OFFICE**

(1) The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a priest, vocational deacon or licensable lay person living or serving in the Region as Regional Dean of the Region. ~~and, in doing~~

(2) When the proposed Regional Dean is a priest carrying out a ministry in a parish, the Bishop shall consult with the appropriate Archdeacon, the clergy of the Region, and the lay representatives to the Regional Council and inform the parish in which the priest who the Bishop intends to appoint performs his or her ministry, of the Bishop's intention to appoint that priest a Regional Dean, in order that the parish may have 14 days in which to amend the Covenant between the said priest and the parish to reflect the additional Diocesan duties of the said priest.

~~(23)~~ The appointment is at the pleasure of the Bishop.

~~(34)~~ Normally, a Regional Dean serves for a term of five years, renewable once.

~~(45)~~ A Regional Dean who resigns or ceases to live or serve as a priest in the Region ceases to be the Regional Dean.

~~(56)~~ Where a Regional Dean is unable to perform the Regional Dean's duties, the Bishop may appoint another priest eligible person to serve serving in the Region as Acting Regional Dean.

#### **COMMENTARY:**

The role of Regional Dean is a ministry of servant leadership, working to advance the mission, vision, and organizational culture of the diocese while supporting a given region in its canonical alignment and effective financial and asset management. The Regional Dean may be assisted by the charisms and skills of associate partners identified from CAPP personnel, vocational deacons, or laity of the region. Building a supportive collegial community amongst regional clergy through opportunities such as clericus, the Regional Dean reinforces the importance of the area's history and identity in relation to the diocesan family. The Regional Dean and regional parishes mutually engage in Gospel hospitality as they foster meaningful and fruitful relationships.

The task of this working group was to examine Canon 20 in light of our current context: clergy demographics and vacancies; shifts to the economic, social, and political landscape; changes to the makeup of congregations; and the practical imperative to consider different models of ministry. Possibilities for enhancing the canon are given in the spirit of aligning it more closely with that context in order to further build up the body of Christ and to help us move forward as a diocese with hope and confidence.

Working group members included clergy and laity from a range of diocesan regions. They provided input based on a careful review of the current Canon 20, personal experience and insight, and informal discussions with other clergy and laity within their respective regions. Once an initial draft was completed, information sharing and input-seeking sessions were held with the Regional Deans and the Archdeacons of the diocese, with Bishop Sandra and Executive Director, the Reverend Ann Turner, present. A presentation was made to Diocesan Council in June, 2024. The report and recommendations for enhancing Canon 20 were accepted by Diocesan Council.



## #13 CANON 16: BUDGET

Moved by: The Reverend Matthew Sponagle

Seconder: The Reverend Arran Thorpe

A resolution to amend Canon 16: Budget, addressing the definition of a Parish and allotment in the year of, prior to, or after amalgamation.

***Resolved that Canon 16: Budget be amended by adding the sections that are underlined as set out below.*** (Sections 1 (8) and (9), Section 4: 1 (d) and (f), Section 9 (a) and (b), and Section 10.)

### CANON 16: BUDGET

#### 1. Definitions

- (1) "Budget" is the total amount required to be raised annually for the work of the Diocesan Synod.
- (2) "Allotment" is that proportion of parish income which each parish is required to share for the wider work of the Church, as determined under the provisions of this Canon.
- (3) "Basic Year" is that last calendar year for which statistics have been reported.
- (4) "Gross Receipts" is the receipts of a parish from all of the following sources:
  - a) the amounts received by all congregations of the parishes from all sources, including amounts earned on all investments and principal sums expended.
  - b) all amounts received by all parish organizations, after deducting the cost of raising such amounts.
- (5) "Assessable Income" is gross receipts less allowable exemptions.
- (6) "Capital Expenditure" means an expenditure made on new construction or major improvement or reconstruction, that is other than normal repairs, maintenance or of a fixed asset, and that adds materially to the scope of or use of a facility and includes expenditures that is defined by regulations of the Diocesan Council from time to time as a Capital Expenditure for the purposes of this Canon.
- (7) "Memorial Donation" means a donation or contribution made in memory of a particular person or group of persons and specified by the donor for the purchase of a specific memorial or directed by the donor to be paid to a specific memorial or endowment fund.
- (8) "Parish" includes, for the purpose of this Canon, the Cathedral Church of All Saints.
- (9) "Parish Organizations" include any entity created to pay, or assist in paying, a parish's standard operating expenses.

#### 2. Budget Task Group

- (1) The Budget Task Group shall be a sub-committee of, and responsible to, the Financial Management and Development VSST.

- (2) Membership of the Budget Task Group:
  - a) Two members appointed by the Financial Management and Development VSST from its membership;
  - b) Two members appointed by the Regional Deans from their membership. Provided that if a person who has been appointed pursuant to this subsection ceases to be a Regional Dean, the person shall continue as a member until the earlier of the next meeting of Synod or the appointment of a successor by the Regional Deans;
  - c) Not more than two clerical and two lay members may be co-opted by the Budget Sub-Committee;
  - d) Appointed under 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c) for a three-year term and may serve two terms.

(3) Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected at the first meeting of the Sub-Committee after each annual meeting of Synod.

(4) Quorum

A Quorum of the Sub-Committee shall be a majority of its members.

- (5) The Diocesan Controller shall attend all meetings of the Budget Task Group in an advisory capacity, without the right to vote.

### **3. Responsibilities of the Budget Task Group**

- (1) Unless otherwise determined by the Financial Management and Development VSST, the Budget Task Group shall be responsible for:
- (2) The review of annual parochial returns and all the financial statements of the parishes;
- (3) The provision of a standard financial return form to indicate the complete finances of the parish;
- (4) The securing of planned budget requirements for Diocesan Synod needs and Responsibilities;
- (5) The adjusting and coordinating of all estimates in consultation with appropriate bodies;
- (6) The periodic review of the allotment rate with responsibility to recommend any change;
- (7) The submission of a draft budget, with a suggested allotment rate as one of the key components, to the Financial Management and Development VSST;
- (8) The study and interpretation of policy and the recommendation of policy change to the Financial Management and Development VSST;
- (9) Such other duties as may be assigned to it by the Financial Management and Development VSST.

### **4. Exemptions**

- (1) Exemptions will be allowed as follows:
  - a) Basic Exemption. A basic exemption for each parish will be determined each year by the Budget Task Group in conference with the Parish Relations Task Group applied automatically by the Diocesan Office;

- b) All flow-through funds collected or spent for assistance to the poor and needy, appeals as approved by the Diocesan Council, or collected for other organizations and agencies which will be transmitted outside the parish. Monies raised from fund raising activities by Parish Sponsored Youth Organizations (Scouts, Guides, J.A.'s, G.A.'s, C.B.L., etc.) and expended by these groups on their program activities will be treated as flow-through funds;
  - c) Funds contributed or interest earned on funds contributed specifically to a Cemetery Fund which are placed in that fund. Capital or interests may not be withdrawn from Cemetery Funds for any purpose other than for cemetery maintenance or development (See Canon 39: 10-12);
  - d) Bequests and proceeds from the sale of land and buildings that are placed in endowment funds. Capital and interest withdrawn for any purpose must be included in parish income for that year. Exemptions claimed must be in accordance with this Canon;
  - e) Grants, including operating grants, government grants for non-operating activities or projects in the parish, and monies received from non-parish sources as compensation for damages to church property (e.g. insurance proceeds);
  - f) Income from fund-raising events, hall rentals and similar income generating activities is reported as the net income for each event. The cost of earning such income is exempt, but cannot exceed the income earned from each activity;
  - g) All amounts in excess of \$5000 paid as a housing allowance; in addition with regard to any Parish which owns its own rectory where the Parish rector resides, and provided the said Parish does not pay a housing allowance, any costs which exceed \$5,000 annually incurred by the Parish related to the occupancy of the Parish rectory including but not limited to taxes, insurance, utilities, telephone services, and maintenance, shall also be exempt;
  - h) All other exemptions outlined in the parochial return or described in the proposal attached hereto, including missional exemptions, building repair and maintenance exemption and capital expenditures exemption, as approved after the 2019 Synod by Diocesan Council prior to and with effect only until the next regular meeting of Synod, it being agreed that any changes to exemptions approved by Diocesan Council hereunder must be approved by resolution of the next regular meeting of Synod in order for such changes to remain in effect, except that the regular janitorial services and associated materials are outside maintenance such as plowing, grass cutting and related activities are not exempt. "Missional exemptions" means the portion of clergy stipends specified in the parochial return and any other expenses incurred for the purpose of caring out any of the Five Marks of Mission as described in the proposal.
  - i) All clergy travel reimbursement by a Parish in a previous year in excess of 5% of the total operating results for that year.
  - j) That the first \$1,000.00 of expenditures relating to all funds spent on Christian Education – Children's Programs (e.g. Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Messy Church), Youth Programs, Servers Guilds and Adult Programs, including funds spent for curriculum materials, social events and supplies, incurred by any parish shall be exempt from allotment.
- (2) Memorial Donations: The Parish Relations Task Group of the Healthy Parishes VSST may reduce the assessable income of a Parish for any year by an amount equal to a Memorial Donation or expenditure from a memorial investment pursuant to Clause 4(1)(d) of this Canon.

- (3) Exemption through allotment appeal. Any income received for a special purpose that amounts to more than 10% of the assessable income of a parish for the previous year and that is not a regular or annual occurrence, provides grounds for an Appeal to the Parish Relations Task Group, as specified in paragraph 8(4) of this Canon, to reduce the assessable income on which allotment is based.
- (4) Any exemption claimed in the Parochial Return shall include receipts or other appropriate documentation, to enable the Parish Relations Task Group to determine that the request is consistent with the criteria for these exemptions.

## **5. Expenses or Income Which are Not Exempt**

No exemptions shall be approved for any donations, gifts or income from any source (including interest or other income accruing from any endowment, investment or other fund or bequest), or for any memorials, expenditures, moving expenses, repairs or renovations, except as specified in paragraph 4 above.

## **6. Budget Preparation and Allotment Rate**

- (1) The allotment rate for the Budget for the next year shall be computed as the percentage that the amount to be raised (the net budget) is of the Assessable Income of all parishes for the previous year.
- (2) In the construction of the annual budget, the Budget Task Group should take full account of all factors that may affect
- (3) the income of the Diocese; and
- (4) the working capital requirements of the Diocese.
- (5) Deficit financing is absolutely prohibited.
- (6) The Financial Management and Development VSST shall present the proposed Budget and allotment rate to Diocesan Council, which shall approve the allotment rate and the budget with or without amendments.
- (7) Surplus financing is absolutely prohibited, excepted in so far as the committee has included an amount demonstrably required to increase working funds, as in (2)(b) above.
- (8) If at any time during the year it appears that expenditures should be made which are in excess of that provided in the budget, notification shall be made as soon as possible to the Financial Management and Development VSST, so that it can advise and make recommendations to Diocesan Council.
- (9) Once the Diocesan Council has approved the rate for any year in accordance with this Canon, Diocesan Council, unless it is in receipt of certain knowledge not known at the time the rate was set, shall not alter the rate except in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Canon for initially setting the rate.

## **7. Annual Parochial Return**

- (1) On or before the 31st of March of each year, unless required earlier by some regulation of Synod or a Committee of Synod, every parish of the Diocese shall furnish a financial report reviewed in

accordance with Canon 37(10) for the previous year, ending the 31st of December, reporting Gross Receipts and Assessable Income as defined in Section 1, sub-section 4 and 5.

- (2) The information required by the foregoing sub-section shall be furnished by the parish officers on a form supplied by the Budget Task Group.
- (3) The Budget Task Group may call for any further information deemed necessary.
- (4) The Budget Task Group, with the approval of the Financial Management and Development VSST shall have the right to examine the records and accounts of any parish, any congregation or organization of a parish.

## **8. Payment**

- (1) The allotment rate for the next year shall become effective and binding on all parishes on the adoption of the Budget for the next year by the Diocesan Council.
- (2) The allotment rate for the next year shall be applied to the Assessable Income of the parish for the previous year. The allotment amount so determined shall be remitted to the Synod in twelve equal monthly payments in the next year.
- (3) Any amount of allotment unpaid at the end of any year shall be considered as debt outstanding and shall be payable in full to the Synod on such terms and conditions as may be negotiated between the delinquent parish and the Synod.
- (4) A parish which would suffer undue hardship in paying its allotment amount may appeal to the Parish Relations Sub-Committee in accordance with guidelines established by the Financial Management and Development VSST. The Parish Relations Sub-Committee shall have the power to adjust the amount of the allotment or to adjust the payment schedule.

## **9. Allotment in the year of, prior to, or after amalgamation.**

- a) The proceeds from the sale of buildings and/or land in the year of, prior to, or after amalgamation, will be subject to allotment for that year, subject to an exemption for funds transferred to the Consolidated Trust Fund (CTF) or a parish within the diocese.
- b) Proceeds collected by way of allotment in year 1 from the application of this paragraph will be disbursed to each Diocesan parish in year 2 based on that parish's share of the total Diocesan allotment for year 1.

## **~~9-10.~~ Other**

No special appeals for funds outside a parish shall be made without the consent of the Diocesan Council with the concurrence of the Bishop.

### **Commentary**

Section 1 (8): Canon 39 excludes the Cathedral Church of All Saints from the definition of a Parish. This addition clarifies that the Cathedral Church of All Saints participates in the allotment system. While the Parish of St. Peter's Cathedral and Georgetown enjoy some of the privileges of a Cathedral, they also meet the standard obligations of a Parish with regards to allotment.

Section 1 (9): At least two parishes have created separate charities and encourage parishioners to redirect their offerings to these charities in lieu of the parish. The charities pay church expenses from this income.

This structure reduces the parish's offerings for the purpose of calculating the allotment. The intention of this amendment is not to curtail the work of parishes supporting the expenses of an historic structure but to inhibit deferring regular operating costs to an external organization or fund.

Section 4: 1 (d): This amendment is in accordance with the long-standing administrative practice of exempting the proceeds from the sale of land and buildings.

Section 4: 1 (f): This amendment clarifies that a parish cannot report a net loss from a fundraising event or hall rental. Losses from fundraising or rentals are incurred as part of outreach efforts. Qualified outreach costs can be included in the maximum \$3,000 for missional activities.

Section 9: Proceeds from the sale of land and buildings are excluded by the allotment formula in the year of amalgamation.

This addition creates an allotment on the proceeds of sale that are disbursed to organizations outside the diocese.

All parishes will benefit from the special allotment. For example: If a parish gifts \$500,000 outside the diocese, the special allotment will be \$100,500. The rebate to parishes will amount to approximately 5% of their allotment.

Section 10: This is the result of renumbering.

## #14 MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Moved by: Thomas Garlick

Seconder: The Reverend Kris MacKenzie

A resolution to address the mental health crisis in our communities.

***Resolved that the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island acknowledges the mental health crisis in our provinces and will work to equip our lay and clergy leaders to respond to this crisis by:***

- a. encouraging all clergy and lay leaders to take mental health first aid;***
- b. offering Mental Health First Aid (MFHA), or an equivalent program, in each region;***
- c. promoting open discussions about mental health within the church community;***
- d. creating a task group to develop liturgical resources supporting mental wellness, including a Service of Prayer for Mental Wellness in Our Communities.***

### Commentary

This resolution is crucial for the diocese because it directly addresses the mental health crisis that is impacting countless individuals within our communities. Mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, and trauma, are prevalent in society, and many members of the diocese are certainly facing such struggles. By equipping clergy and lay leaders with the tools and knowledge to respond effectively to mental health concerns, the diocese strengthens its pastoral care and enhances its ability to nurture the spiritual and emotional well-being of its community.

Mental health is an integral aspect of human well-being, and by addressing it within the church, the diocese fosters a culture of acceptance, support, and understanding. This will help ensure that all members, especially those facing mental health challenges, feel valued, cared for, and empowered to seek help. The Church's role in offering a safe and compassionate space for all aspects of life—physical, emotional, and spiritual—is essential to creating a holistic faith community. It also reinforces the core Christian values of love, compassion, and healing, aligning with the Church's mission to care for all of God's people.

The impact of this resolution would be transformative. Clergy and lay leaders who would become trained in mental health first aid would become better equipped to recognize and respond to mental health issues within their congregations. This would result in more compassionate, effective, timely interventions, as well as an overall church environment where individuals feel more comfortable discussing their struggles with mental wellness without fear of judgment. By normalizing conversations around mental health, the diocese would help break down the stigma surrounding mental health, fostering an atmosphere of empathy and understanding.

The introduction of liturgical resources for mental wellness would be a powerful tool in providing a spiritual and emotional outlet for individuals who are struggling, allowing them to engage with their faith in a way that acknowledges and validates their mental health challenges. This resolution would lead to a more compassionate, supportive, and cohesive community where people know they are not alone in their struggles and where they have access to resources to help them navigate their mental health journey.

A future where this resolution is fully implemented would see this as a diocese where mental health is treated as a priority, equally important to physical health, within the church community. Clergy and laity would be better prepared to address mental health concerns, both in themselves and in others, and the church would be a trusted resource for mental wellness support. Parishes would have trained leaders who

could offer guidance, referrals, and pastoral and emotional support to individuals struggling with mental health challenges.

Church services and events would be more inclusive of mental health issues, ensuring that no one feels excluded or isolated because of their mental health status. In this future, the diocese would become a model for other faith communities in how to integrate awareness of mental wellness into spiritual practices and church life. Mental wellness would be woven into the fabric of the church's pastoral care and outreach programs. Furthermore, the diocese would continually assess its mental health initiatives, ensuring that they evolve to meet the changing needs of its community, ensuring long-term sustainability. Ultimately, this future would lead to a church community where all individuals, regardless of their mental health status, can find healing, understanding, and wholeness in both their faith and their lives.



## #15 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (DEIA)

Moved by: Thomas Garlick

Seconder: The Reverend Will Ferrey

A resolution to commit to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility with both policy and education.

***Resolved that the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island will commit to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) by:***

- a. creating and implementing a Diocesan Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Policy that is in line with best practices for DEIA;***
- b. facilitating training around the policy for clergy and lay leaders to help them understand, navigate, and implement it;***
- c. facilitating anti-bias/anti-racism training, encouraging all clergy and lay-leaders to participate.***

### **Commentary**

This resolution is vital to the Diocese because it embodies the core Christian values of love, justice, and inclusion. By committing to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), the Diocese would closer align itself with Christ's teachings, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, are welcomed, valued, and included. DEIA is a framework for building institutions where everyone belongs, thrives, and where systemic barriers are addressed to ensure equal opportunities for all.

The Church is called to be a place where every person is treated with dignity, and this initiative is essential for breaking down the barriers that have historically excluded people based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, ability, or any other part of their identity. This commitment reflects the unconditional love that Christ demonstrated for all, including the marginalized, oppressed, and voiceless. By embracing DEIA, the Diocese will ensure that its ministry is expansive, encompassing all members of society, and fostering a faith community that is truly representative of the Kingdom of God. This resolution also strengthens the Diocese's mission to bring people together, forming a unified community that reflects the diversity of God's creation and the inclusive nature of the Church. In this way, the Diocese can more effectively serve and reach out to the needs of every person, regardless of their background or identity.

The impact of this would be profound and transformative. The Diocese would become a more inclusive, compassionate, and supportive church environment where people from all walks of life, regardless of their race, gender, nationality, or ability, feel fully accepted and valued. By embracing DEIA, the Church would actively combat the exclusion of historically marginalized and underserved communities, offering them a space where they can thrive spiritually. The Diocese would become more representative of the diversity in our broader society, enabling it to serve as a place of healing, reconciliation, and justice for all. This would not only impact the internal dynamics of the Church but would also deepen its outreach efforts.

The Church would be better equipped to engage with diverse communities, advocate for their rights, and champion justice for those who are vulnerable and oppressed. As the Church becomes more inclusive, it would help create stronger, more connected communities where people from all backgrounds can find solidarity, shared purpose, and support. Ultimately, this initiative would foster a deeper sense of belonging and ensure that the Diocese is a living reflection of God's love and justice in the world.

A fully implemented DEIA commitment would result in a Diocese where diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility are central to every aspect of church life. The Church would reflect the beautiful and varied tapestry of God's creation, with leadership, ministries, and congregational activities fully representing the diversity of the surrounding community.

Every individual, regardless of their identity, would feel a deep sense of belonging, knowing that they are valued for who they are. For marginalized or underrepresented groups, the church would serve as a haven—providing them with a voice, support, and a space where they can flourish spiritually, emotionally, and socially.

Clergy and lay leaders would be equipped with the necessary training and resources to navigate issues of bias, racism, inequality, and injustice, ensuring that all members of the community feel respected and heard. The Church would embrace its role as a prophetic witness to justice, using its voice and influence to challenge systems of oppression in the broader society, advocating for those whose voices are often silenced.

This future would be marked by a culture of mutual respect, understanding, and love, where everyone, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstance, is welcomed with open arms. In this future, the Diocese would be recognized as a beacon of inclusivity, where the Gospel is lived out through justice, love, and the pursuit of unity. It would not only be a safe and welcoming space for everyone but also a vibrant and diverse community that leads by example in the broader world, showing the power of inclusivity and unity in Christ.

**GUIDE FOR SPEAKING TO MOTIONS / RESOLUTIONS OR AMENDMENTS**

The Mover may speak for **five minutes, once per motion**. The Secunder and each speaker thereafter may speak for **three minutes**. The Mover may speak for five minutes in closing the debate.

Move to the microphone and enter the line of speakers. When it is your turn to speak and you are recognized by the Chair, address the Chair and members of Synod, thus,

**“Bishop Sandra and Members of Synod”**

Give your name, your parish and region (or situation), thus

**“My name is \_\_\_\_\_ My parish is \_\_\_\_\_**

**My region is \_\_\_\_\_”**

*Tell Synod whether you are speaking for or against the motion/resolution, for example,*

**“I am speaking for the motion/resolution or amendment”**

or

**“I am speaking against the motion/resolution or amendment”**

*Then give your reasons or make your points why you are for or against the motion/resolution or amendment.*

It is usually helpful to jot down the points you wish to make:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

**There will be warnings as your time is near the five and three minutes.**

## Some information about process, from “The New Robert’s Rules of Order”

This is a brief summary of some of the terms and procedures that may be used at synod. If this summary of Rules of Procedure differs from the interpretation of the Chair, the decision of the Chair shall stand.

**Motion of Consent:** Needed to introduce a motion not previously submitted. It is put forward without discussion of the substance of the new motion. Motions to change the Constitution or Canons are not permitted from the floor.

**To Amend:** To add or insert words/paragraphs; to strike out certain words/sections and/or substitute others. Amendments must not change the intent of the motion. Each amendment must be dealt with before any others can be put forward.

**To Divide:** A form of amendment; if the motion has parts on which you might want to vote differently, you can move an amendment to divide the motion.

**To Defer:** This motion takes precedent over ‘to amend’ but yields ‘to table’ or ‘call for the question’. The intent is to limit discussion and move to another time (can be on a different day).

**To Table:** This effectively sets aside an issue or motion until later in the same meeting, though a tabled motion may not make it back to the agenda before Synod ends. When a call to table is put forward, it is voted upon without any further discussion. If it is passed, business moves on. If it is defeated, then debate on the motion continues.

**To Postpone:** Moves discussion and voting on a motion to a specific time; requires 2/3 majority to pass.

**Point of Order:** Objection by a member concerning a violation of rules. This takes precedence over the current discussion until the point raised is resolved.

**Point of Privilege:** A ‘courtesy’ granted by the Chair (the Bishop) to allow a person to speak to Synod. It must be asked for specifically and also be granted by the Chair (not always done). Privilege can be requested to speak generally or to speak twice to a motion, for example.

**Point of Clarification:** A delegate stands, raises their hand, says “Point of Clarification” and asks a question to clarify a point being made by a speaker.

**Call for the Question:** This usually will bring to an end any further discussion (after all recognized speakers have had opportunity to address Synod) and direct Synod to Vote.

**Vote by Orders:** Clergy and Laity are the two orders of Synod delegates for our Diocese. Vote by Orders is called for when we want to confirm that a motion is favoured by a majority of both Clergy and Lay delegates. A call for Vote by Orders can currently be done before or after voting happens on a motion. The Bishop, or any 4 members of Synod may request the Vote by Orders. It is not subject to approval by Synod and must be conducted immediately. The result of a Vote by Orders supersedes any prior vote. If a motion does not pass by a majority of both orders, then the motion is defeated.

**Motions in Force:** A motion passed by Synod comes into force immediately unless the Bishop dissents from or reserves the motion. If the Bishop dissents, the motion is lost.

**NOTE:** These processes are designed to ensure that everyone has a chance to participate and to share ideas in an orderly manner. Rules should not be used to prevent discussion of important issues.

**Section 29. Rules of Order and Debate**

- (1) When the Bishop, or other person presiding has taken the chair, no member shall continue standing.
- (2) The business on the agenda paper shall take precedence over all other business.
- (3) When any member is about to speak he or she shall rise and address the Chair.
- (4) An address from the Bishop shall be in order at any time.
- (5) No motion or amendment shall be considered as before Synod (except such as proposed by the Bishop or by a Committee) unless seconded and reduced to writing and in the hands of the Chair.
- (6) Any notice of motion may be taken up by any member present at such meeting, in the same manner as if that member had given the notice.
- (7) No member save the mover of a motion who, as mover, shall have the right of reply shall speak more than once on the same question, without asking and receiving permission from the Chair.
- (8) Except with consent of the House, the mover of a report and the mover of a motion may not speak more than five minutes and the seconder three minutes; and each speaker thereafter three minutes. The mover may speak for five minutes in closing the debate. (16) All questions of order shall be decided by the Chair without debate, and the decision of the Chair shall be final.
- (9) When a question is under consideration, no other motion shall be received except to adjourn Synod, to move the previous question, to lay it on the table, to postpone it to a certain time, to postpone it indefinitely, to adjourn the debate, to commit it, to consider it clause by clause, to amend it or to divide it; and motions for any of these purposes shall have precedence in the order here named.
- (10) Motions to suspend a rule of order or to adjourn, to lay on the table, or to divide the motion or for the previous question shall be decided without debate.
- (11) No rule of order shall be suspended except upon the vote of two-thirds of the members present.
- (12) After a motion has been read to Synod by the Chair or the Executive Secretary, it shall be deemed to be in the possession of Synod, but it may be withdrawn by the mover at any

time before being put or before amendment with the permission of the Synod.

(13) Any member may require at any period of the debate that the motion under discussion be read for the member's information.

(14) When a member is speaking, no other member shall interrupt except to raise a point of order, nor pass between the member speaking and the Chair.

(15) A member called to order while speaking shall sit down unless permitted to explain. (17) An amendment to an amendment shall be first put and if defeated, then other

amendments to the original amendment may be made severally and each submitted in turn to the House until one is accepted or all defeated; then the amendment to the main motion in amended form, when, if defeated, the main motion shall be put.

(18) No more than one amendment to a proposed amendment to a motion shall be in order; yet a substitute for the whole matter may be proposed and received, provided it deals with the subject at hand.

(19) When any question is about to be put to vote, the members shall stay in their seats, and shall not hold any private discourse; and when a motion is about to be put no member shall leave until such motion is disposed of.

(20) The Chair shall have the right to vote on all questions but no casting vote, and in the event of an equality of votes on any proposition, it shall be declared lost.

(21) A question once determined shall not again be drawn into discussion in the same session without the special sanction of the Chair.

(22) When Synod is about to rise or adjourn, every member shall stand in the member's place until the Bishop or other person presiding has left the hall.

(23) Members of the public may be present at the meetings of Synod on the understanding that they must be subject to the direction of the Chair; and must withdraw if required by the Chair, on the request of any three members of Synod.