

Who: Rebecca Myers

Amendment to: Constitution

Dio: Central Pennsylvania

Beginning – Preamble at the start

Parish / City: St. Paul's Harrisburg

Resolution with Proposed Change:

Beloved in Christ, we gather as the Episcopal Diocese of the Susquehanna to be formed and governed for the mission of God in this place. As the prophet Micah 6:8 proclaims, we are called “to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.” Our Constitution exists to order our common life so that we may faithfully live out this calling in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In faithfulness to our Baptismal Covenant, we confess our sins and the ways they have wounded the Body of Christ. We repent of all that denies the image of God in one another and separates us from the love to which we are called. With God’s help, we will persevere in resisting evil, proclaim the Good News, seek and serve Christ in all persons, love our neighbor as ourselves, strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

This Constitution is both our covenant and our guide, shaping us as a people committed to healing, reconciliation, and the building of God’s Beloved Community. In it we find the framework for our shared ministry, so that, with God’s help, we may be a sign and foretaste of God’s Kingdom, where love unites all and every barrier is broken down.

Context of Change:

This Preamble grounds our diocesan Constitution in the theological and moral commitments of our faith. Drawing on Micah 6:8 and the Baptismal Covenant from the Book of Common Prayer, it declares our mission, acknowledges our sins, names our commitment to justice, peace, and reconciliation, and envisions the Diocese as a sign of God’s Beloved Community. By adopting this Preamble, we proclaim that our governance is not merely administrative, but a shared covenant to live out the Gospel together.

The proposed amendment provides a preamble to the Constitution providing an overall purpose for the Constitution.

Who: Jane Miron

Amendment to: The Canons

Dio: Central Pennsylvania

Canon 3, Section 1.c. – Commission on Ministry
Membership

Parish / City: St. Thomas Lancaster

Resolution with Proposed Change:

The Canons under Canon 3. Commission on Ministry, Section 1. Membership add subsection d.:

"In addition, an Archdeacon for Deacons will serve as an ex officio member with voice and vote of the Commission on Ministry".

Context of Change:

The proposed amendment adds a provision that makes the Archdeacon for Deacons an ex officio member of the Commission on Ministry with voice and vote.

Reason for Amendment

The rationale for appointing an Archdeacon for Deacons to the COM is to provide the following advantages for the people in the Ordination Process:

1. The presence of the Archdeacon of Deacons on the COM validates the role of the deacon in the church and the seriousness of this vocation. This is an important witness to the church in general but can be particularly important for those in the ordination process experiencing a call to the vocational diaconate.
2. At the monthly COM meetings, the Archdeacon of Deacons can articulate and proclaim with a consistent voice the roles and responsibilities of the deacon and provide clarity to people in the process regarding the differentiation between the roles of deacon and priest.
3. The Archdeacon of Deacons participates in the leading of the SSFM class – the Deacon's Path – and therefore begins to build a relationship with all persons in the ordination process early in their discernment which can continue through their ordination and placement in a parish.
4. The Archdeacon of Deacons can observe the long-term growth and challenges of the person-in-the process, which provides valuable information when working with the bishop on the placement of the deacon in a particular parish.
5. Every person in the process will be a deacon for at least six months. Through the years of engagement of the COM with the person in the process, the Archdeacon of Deacons builds relationships with each person and can more effectively and intentionally mentor them during this time of formation as a deacon.
6. The Archdeacon of Deacons attends the ordinations of people s/he knows and has supported through the process, which makes the celebration fuller and more joyous.

By serving on the COM, the Archdeacon gains a deeper and fuller understanding of the persons in discernment and is therefore in a better position to assist the Bishop in placement of deacons, based on the deacon's skills and personality. Knowledge gained by learning to know persons in discernment throughout their process also helps in the Archdeacon's ongoing oversight of the diaconal ministry in the diocese.

Having the Archdeacon for Deacons as an ex officio member of the COM lends an additional sense of authority to the discernment process in two ways: for those seeking the vocational diaconate there is an enhanced sense of being part of the diaconal ministry of the diocese; for the COM, itself, the Archdeacon's presence helps to foster and maintain a true sense of diaconal ministry in the context of the four-fold ministry at the heart of the Episcopal church.

Who: Anjel Scarborough

Amendment to: Canons

Dio: Central Pennsylvania

Title II, Canon 4, Section 1 – Annual Meeting

Parish / City: All Saints Hershey

Resolution with Proposed Change:

Proposed change to Title II, Canon 4.1 - Annual Meeting. Propose to amend the final sentence to strike the words "provided that the Annual Meeting shall be held no later than January 31st." Final proposed change will read:

Every Parish shall have an Annual Meeting, for the purpose of electing members of Vestry and Delegates and alternate Delegates to the Convention, and for such other purposes as may be specified in the parish bylaws. The parish bylaws shall specify the method of setting the date of the Annual Meeting, the timing and manner of providing notice of the Annual Meeting, and the quorum for conducting business.

Context of Change:

This canon specifically tasks the parishes with setting the date of their Annual Meeting; however, it then attempts to restrict the date to force parishes to have their Annual Meeting in January. Several parishes have found a January meeting untenable. This puts an undue burden on parishes requiring a rewrite of their bylaws to meet a diocesan mandate. Since the deadline for submitting the Parochial Report to the church wide office is March 1st and requires certification by the Vestry not the Annual Meeting, and given that the names of the representatives to Diocesan Convention are due into the diocesan offices by June each year, there is no justification for the diocese to mandate a deadline of January 31st for the Annual Meeting of every parish.

Who: John Feather

Amendment to: Canons

Dio: Bethlehem

Title IV, Canon 2, Section 2 – Additions & Amendments

Parish / City: St. Luke's Lebanon

Resolution with Proposed Change:

I move to amend the proposed Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of the Susquehanna, Title IV. General Provisions, Canon 2, Additions and Amendments to the Canons, in Sec. 2, by deleting the phrase "two-thirds (2/3)" from the affirmative vote requirement and substituting the phrase "a majority" in its place.

As a result, the concluding phrase of that Section 2 will read "...except by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Convention."

Context of Change:

The proposed amendment deletes a provision and offers a substitution.