

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF LIBERIA
MEMBER OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF
THE PROVINCE OF WEST AFRICA



CONSTITUTION
AS AMENDED 2011
AND
CANONS
AS AMENDED
2018

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**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
OF
LIBERIA
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
DIOCESE OF LIBERIA
AS AMENDED
2011**

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ARTICLE I:

ACCESSION TO THE CHURCH OF THE PROVINCE OF WEST AFRICA

The Episcopal Church of Liberia hereby accedes to the Constitution and Canons of the Church of the Province of West Africa.

ARTICLE II

1. THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

There shall be a convention of the Church in this Diocese annually at such time and place as may be designated by the preceding convention; but, if there shall appear to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese sufficient cause for changing the time or place so designated, another time or place may be appointed

2. SPECIAL CONVENTIONS

Special Conventions may be held at any time the Ecclesiastical Authority, after consultation with the Diocesan Standing Committee, may deem necessary to transact any vital business or to attend to any important matter requiring the approval of the Convention.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONVENTION

The objectives of the Convention shall be to take such actions as shall promote the welfare of the church in the Diocese of Liberia, and also, to hear and act upon the annual address of the Bishop as well as the reports of organizations and bodies operating under it.

4. MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

- A. The members of the Diocesan Convention shall be as follows:
 - i. The Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor as well as the Suffragan Bishops if there are any;
 - ii. Every Presbyter and Deacon canonically resident in the Diocese or who may, with the consent of the Diocesan, is engaged in parochial, missionary or education work;

- iii. Lay Delegates from the Cathedral Parish, every Autonomous Parish, every aided Parish, and every other Congregation in union with the Diocese;
 - iv. The Chancellor of the Diocese, the Vice Chancellor, the Secretary of the Diocese or the locum tenens of the Secretary, the Treasurer of the Diocese or anyone acting for the Treasurer, and the Registrar of the Diocese; and
 - v. The Lay Members of the Standing Committee, Heads of Institutions of Higher Learning of the Diocese, the Director of Christian Education, and Heads of organizations established by the Convention.
- B. (i) Every Parish, Autonomous or Aided, shall be represented in the Convention by the Wardens and two (2) Lay Delegates for up to the first five hundred (500) Communicants, and thereafter, one (1) Lay Delegate for each additional three hundred (300) Communicants or any major fraction thereof, provided that the total number of Lay Delegates from an Autonomous or Aided Parish shall not exceed five (5), exclusive of the Wardens.
- (ii) Every Organization, Mission or Congregation in union with the Diocese shall be entitled to be represented in the Convention by one (1) Lay Delegate for up to the first two hundred (200) Communicants, and thereafter, one (1) Lay Delegate for each additional three hundred (300) Communicants or any major fraction thereof, provided that the total number of Lay Delegates from any Organization, Mission or Congregation shall not exceed three (3).
- (iii) The total Communicants in a parish or a Congregation shall be arrived at, by the statistical report included in the Annual Reports required to be sent to the Bishop from every Parish and every Congregation as provided in the Canons. In case a Parish or a Congregation fails to file such a report, the Secretary of the Convention shall, in consultation with the Bishop, allocate to such Parish or Congregation a number of Communicants based on the last report that is available from the delinquent Parish or Congregations
- C. The Diocesan may annually invite the heads of organizations affiliated with the Diocese to represent such organizations at the Convention, as well as any other person he deems necessary, such persons shall have a seat and voice but shall not vote.

5. NOTICE OF DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Written notice of every Diocesan Convention shall be given by the secretary of the Convention at least one month prior to the date of the Convention stating the time and the place. Such notice shall be given to every Clergyman entitled to a seat in the Convention; every Parish in union with the Convention and every Mission. In case of a Special Convention, the notice shall specify the purpose for which the Convention is called.

**6. EXCLUSION OF LAY DELEGATES FROM VOTING
IN CERTAIN CASES**

Lay Delegates shall not be entitled to vote at any session of the Convention of the Diocese in any of the following circumstances:

- i. In case the Parish or Mission sending such delegate shall for two years immediately preceding have failed to report to the Bishop as required by the Canons.
- ii. In case the Parish or Mission sending such delegate shall for two years preceding have failed to pay its Quota and assessment as leveled by the Canons.
- iii. In case the Parish sending delegates, having been for two years immediately preceding without regular services, shall have failed to notify the Bishop thereof and to request that a Minister be assigned to it.
- iv. In case the Parish or Mission sending such delegates for one year immediately preceding will fully refuse to comply with any provision of this Constitution or Canons after having been duly notified by the Ecclesiastical Authority of its failure to comply.

7. PRESIDENT OF THE CONVENTION

- a. The Diocesan Bishop shall be the President of the Diocesan Convention and, in his absence, the Bishop Coadjutor. If there is no Coadjutor and the Bishop is absent, then the Suffragan Bishop in order of seniority of consecration shall preside, if there is a Suffragan Bishop.
- b. If the seat is vacant and there be no Suffragan Bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall designate a presiding Officer to open the Convention. Immediately after the Credentials Committee reports and the delegates have been seated, the Convention shall proceed to the Election of a President Pro Tempore of the Convention.

8. **QUORUM AND MANNER OF VOTING**

One half of the Clergy entitled to vote and Lay Representatives from at least one-fourth of the Parishes and Missions entitled to representation in the Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

At meetings of the Diocesan Convention, the Clergy and Laity shall deliberate and vote as one body; provided that on demand of any five clerical members, the vote shall be taken by order, in which case the concurrence of both orders shall be necessary for the adoption of a measure.

9. **SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION**

- (i) The Diocesan Convention shall elect from among communicants of the church in good standing upon recommendation of the Bishop for a term of three years, a secretary who shall serve as the Secretary of the Convention and Secretary of the Diocese of Liberia. The Secretary shall be entitled to a seat and vote in the Convention.
- (ii) The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of the meetings of both bodies, preserve them, issue an Annual Journal, attest to the public acts of the Convention and the Diocese and perform such other services as may be required by the Bishop, the Diocesan Council, and the Convention or as may be prescribed by the Canons.
- (iii) At the completion of the term, the Secretary, if not re-elected, shall deliver to his successor all books, papers and other properties relating to the Diocesan Council, the Convention, and the Diocese.
- (iv) If the Secretary should die, resign, be removed from the Diocese or otherwise be incapable of acting, the Bishop, in consultation with the Diocesan Council, may appoint someone to fill the vacancy until the next Annual Convention.

10. **ASSISTANT SECRETARY**

One or more Assistant Secretaries shall be elected annually by the Convention, to assist the Secretary in the performance of the duties, and shall, in the Secretary's absence, act as Secretary of the Convention.

11. **SECRETARY TO PREPARE REPORT**

Immediately after the adjournment of the Diocesan Convention next preceding the regular meeting of the Provincial Synod or of the General Convention, the Secretary shall prepare such reports as may be required for transmittal either to the Provincial Synod or to the General Convention.

12. **TREASURER**

- (i) The Diocesan Convention, upon recommendation of the Bishop, shall elect a Treasurer for a term of five years. The Treasurer shall be entitled to a seat and vote in the Convention and shall submit a statement of accounts to each Convention,
- (ii) The Treasurer of the Convention shall also be Treasurer of the Diocese of Liberia.
- (iii) The Treasurer shall receive and disburse moneys collected under authority of the Convention and the Diocesan Council.
- (iv) The Treasurer shall give a bond in such amount as shall be determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council.
- (v) The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as may be required by Resolution adopted by the Convention or by the Diocesan Council.
- (vi) Should the Treasurer die, resign, be removed from the Diocese or otherwise be incapable of acting, the Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council, may appoint someone to fill the vacancy until the next Annual Convention.

**ARTICLE III
CHANCELLOR**

- 1. The Diocesan Convention shall elect a Chancellor, upon nomination of the Bishop, for a term of three years. The Chancellor shall be a Communicant of the Diocese in good standing and learned in the law. The Chancellor shall be the legal advisor of the Bishop, the Convention, the Diocesan Council, the Diocesan Standing Committee, and all committees that may need legal advice, and perform such other duties as may be required by the

Canons or by the Resolution of the Convention. The Chancellor shall be entitled to a seat and vote in the Convention.

2. Whenever the Bishop deems it necessary, the Bishop may, with the assent of the Diocesan Convention or the Diocesan Council, appoint a Vice Chancellor and/or Deputy Chancellors in the various Archdeaconries, to assist the Chancellor in the discharge of duties.
3. Should a vacancy occur in the office of Chancellor, Vice Chancellor or Deputy Chancellor, the Bishop shall appoint a qualified person to fill such office until the next Convention.

ARTICLE IV REGISTRAR

1. There shall be a Registrar appointed by the Bishop, with the assent of the Diocesan Convention, who shall be a Communicant in good standing and shall hold office for such period as the Bishop may determine.
2. The Registrar shall collect and preserve all documents and papers pertaining to the Diocese, not in the custody of any other officer or Committee thereof; also the journals and public documents of other Diocesan Conventions, and of the General Convention, and of the Provincial Synod and other pamphlets and publications connected with the Church. The Registrar shall collect and preserve such materials as can be obtained relative to the history of the Diocese, of the Parishes and Congregations thereof, and catalogue and classify all books, documents and papers in the Registrar's custody so as to make the contents thereof accessible for reference.
3. The Registrar shall perform such other duties, as may be required by resolution adopted by the Convention or by the Bishop.
4. If a vacancy occurs in the office of the Registrar, the Bishop shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting of the Convention.

ARTICLE V DIOCESAN COUNCIL

1. There shall be a Diocesan Council, which shall exercise all the power of the Diocesan Convention between its meetings to promote all the work of the diocese including but not limited to

missions, Christian Education, Stewardship and Evangelism, Publicity and Youth.

2. The Diocesan Council shall adopt such By-Laws as will enable the Diocesan Council to perform its duties and discharge its responsibilities.

ARTICLE VI DIOCESAN STANDING COMMITTEE

1. The Diocesan Standing Committee shall be elected by the Diocesan Convention and shall consist of not less than five Presbyters and an equal number of Laymen, Communicants of the Church in good standing resident within the Diocese.
2. The Diocesan Standing Committee, when there is a Bishop in Charge of the Diocese, shall be the Bishop's Council of Advice. If there be no Bishop Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishop canonically authorized to act, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.
3. It shall elect from among its members a President and a Secretary and shall act in conformity with its own rules. The Diocesan may summon the Standing Committee whenever the Diocesan shall desire the Committee's advice.
4. Other rights and duties of the Standing Committee shall be prescribed by the Canons.

ARTICLE VII REPRESENTATION IN THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD & THE GENERAL CONVENTION

1. The Diocesan Convention shall elect by ballot not more than three Clerical and not more than three Lay Representatives to represent the Diocese in the Provincial Synod of the Church of the Province of West Africa at the Meeting of the Convention preceding the convening of the Synod.
2. The Diocesan Convention in the calendar year next before the year in which the General Convention of the Episcopal Church of the United States is held, shall elect the members of the Clergy and two members of the Laity as well as a corresponding number of alternates to represent the Diocese.

ARTICLE VIII ELECTION OF BISHOPS

1. All Diocesan, Coadjutor or Suffragan Bishops of this Diocese shall be elected by ballot by the Diocesan Convention either at its regular Annual Meeting or at a Special Convention called by the Ecclesiastical Authority for that purpose. For any such Special Convention, at least thirty days' notice shall be given. The election shall follow the procedure specified in the Constitution and Canons.
2. There shall be appointed by the Diocesan Convention a Bishop's Nominating Committee to make nominations to the Convention of persons qualified for election by the Convention as a Bishop in the Diocese.
3. Each nominee shall be a Priest for at least six years and be not less than 30 years of age.
4. The Nominating Committee shall consist of four Clerical members and four Lay members elected by their respective Houses. The Diocesan Chancellor or any person acting for the Chancellor shall be an ex-officio member and Chairman of the Nominating Committee but shall have no right to vote.
5. If a Diocesan Bishop shall have need of Episcopal assistance by reason of the extent of Diocesan work, age or infirmity, a Bishop Coadjutor, with the right of succession, or a Suffragan Bishop, without the right of succession, may be elected by and for the said Diocese; or an Assistant Bishop may be appointed as hereinafter provided.
6. A Bishop Coadjutor may also be elected within two years, or at such time as may subsequently be provided by the Constitution and Canons of the Church of the Province of West Africa, before the retirement date of a Diocesan Bishop. However, prior to the election of a Bishop Coadjutor, the Provincial Synod should be informed, and during its recess, the Episcopal Synod. In such instance, the Diocesan Bishop shall read or cause to be read, to the Diocesan Convention, his consent to such election and wherein he shall state to the Convention, the duties which he shall thereby assign to the Bishop Coadjutor, and such consent shall form part of the proceedings of the Convention. The duties assigned by the Diocesan Bishop to the Bishop Coadjutor may be enlarged by mutual consent whenever the Diocesan Bishop may desire to assign such additional

duties to the Bishop Coadjutor. There shall not, at any time, be more than one Bishop Coadjutor in the Diocese.

7. The Suffragan Bishop shall act, in all respects, as the assistant of the Bishop of the Diocese and under his supervision. He shall be assigned a specific area of the Diocese. There shall not be more than two Suffragan Bishops in the Diocese. The Episcopal Synod shall be informed whenever the Diocesan Convention decides that a Suffragan Bishop should be elected.
8. When the Diocesan Bishop feels there is a need for an Assistant Bishop, the Diocesan Bishop may, with the consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocese, request the Diocesan Convention to approve the creation of the position of Assistant Bishop and to authorize the Bishop to appoint an Assistant Bishop with the consent of the Diocesan Standing Committee under such conditions as the Bishop may determine. Such Assistant Bishop may be appointed from among Bishops who, having retired or having resigned their previous responsibilities, are qualified to perform Episcopal acts in this Church, provided that the appointment shall terminate upon the Assistant Bishop attaining the age of 70 years.

ARTICLE IX ADMISSION OF NEW PARISHES AND CONGREGATIONS

1. Any group of Christians in Liberia, desirous of establishing a Congregation may be admitted in union with the Diocese of Liberia by a majority of votes in an Annual Meeting of the Diocesan Convention if it does the following:
 - I. Submit an application to the Bishop in writing, signed by at least twenty (20) or more Baptized persons, at least fifteen (15) of whom shall be Communicants of the Church, indicating their desire to be admitted in union the Diocese as a Congregation.
 - II. Promise that, if their application is accepted, they will at all times conform to, and abide by the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, and to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church of Liberia, and will not withdraw from the Diocese.
2. When the Bishop receives the application, the Bishop will submit it to the Diocesan Standing Committee, which shall thoroughly examine the application, investigate the Parish or Congregation and make a recommendation to the Diocesan Convention.

**ARTICLE X
EXPULSION, SUSPENSION OR DISSOLUTION OF
A PARISH OR CONGREGATION**

1. Any Parish or Congregation which acts contrary to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese or to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of this Diocese or in any manner harmful or inimical to the Church, or which retains and supports a Rector or Vicar, of a Parish, or a Minister of a Congregation, who does not conform to the said Constitution and Canons, Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church of Liberia shall be expelled from union with this Diocese, upon a vote of two- thirds of the members of the Diocesan Convention.
2. The Bishop, with consent of the Standing Committee, shall determine when a Parish has fallen below the criteria required for admission as a Parish in union with the Diocese and place it on an Ecclesiastical and Canonical basis of a Congregation.
3. When a Congregation in union with the Diocese fails for five consecutive years to make an Annual Report or to pay its assessments, such Congregation may be dissolved.

**ARTICLE XI
AMENDMENTS**

The Constitution may only be amended in the following manner:

The proposed amendment or amendments having been submitted to the Diocesan Convention and approved by a majority of the members voting by Orders, shall lie over until the next Convention and if then approved by a majority of the members voting by Orders, shall thereupon stand adopted.

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CANONS
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AS AMENDED AND RESTATED
2018**

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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF LIBERIA
CANONS
OF THE
DIOCESE OF LIBERIA

CANON I
DIOCESAN CONVENTION

1. **Roll of Clergy:** The Bishop, or in case of a vacancy in the Episcopate, the Standing Committee, shall on or before the day of a Meeting of a Special Convention cause to be delivered to the Secretary of the Convention, a certified list of Clergy canonically registered in the Diocese, together with the names of their respective cures or other stations or assignments. In case of Clergy who have been ordained or received into the Diocese within the year immediately preceding, the dates of their ordination or reception shall also be given. From the list so furnished the Bishop, the Secretary shall prepare the roll of the Clergy who are entitled to vote or be seated in the Convention.

2. **The Testimonial of Lay Delegates:** Lay Delegates to the Diocesan Convention shall present a certificate of their election in the following form:

(Name of the Church, Place and Date).

“This certifies that at a meeting of the Congregation of this Church held for the purpose of electing Delegates and Alternates to the Diocesan Convention, A.B., C.C., and D.E, being Communicants of the Church in good standing, and qualified voters in this Parish (or Mission) were duly chosen as Delegates; and B.C.D.E. and F.G., also being Communicants in good standing and qualified voters in this Parish (or Mission) were duly chosen as Alternate Delegates to represent the Parish (or Mission) in that body for the year ensuing”.

“In Testimony of which, I have set my hand (or if two Wardens, we have subscribed and set our hands) the day and year above written”.

This certificate shall be signed by the Rector or Secretary of the Vestry, or by the Wardens, and in case of a Mission by the Minister-in-Charge or by the Clerk, and transmitted to the Secretary of the Convention at least 30 days before the meeting of the Convention.

3. **Roll of the Lay Delegates:** From the said Certificate of Lay Delegates, the Secretary of the Diocesan Convention shall prepare a roll of the Lay Delegates entitled to seats and votes in the Convention.
4. **Attendance of Members of Convention:** It shall be the duty of Clergy and Lay persons having a seat In the Convention to attend every meeting hereof.
5. **Opening of Convention:** Every Convention shall be opened with the Celebration of Holy Communion. The Bishop's Address and Episcopal Charge, if any, shall be published in the Journal.
6. Lay Members of the Convention shall be Communicants in good standing with the Congregation that they represent. Delegates shall be chosen at a Special Meeting of the Congregation to be held on the first Sunday in December or not later than the third Sunday in December each year by the qualified electors of the congregation in the Cathedral Parish, Parishes or Organized Missions of the Diocese. If such election is not, held, the delegates may be elected by the Executive Committee of the Cathedral Chapter, the Vestry or the Bishop's Committee as the case may be. If these organizations fail to convene and no election is held, then the Dean of the Cathedral, the Rector of the Parish, the Vicar or the Minister-in-Charge of the Congregation, by whatever name that person is called, shall appoint the delegates.
7. The full Quota and Assessment of the Convention Year, plus any arrears due for the previous year or years, shall be paid before the delegate(s) may be seated.
8. At meetings of the Convention, the Clergy and Laity shall deliberate and vote as one body; provided that on the demand of any five Clerical members or any five Lay Members, the vote shall be taken by Orders, in which case the concurrence of both Orders shall be necessary for the adoption of a measure.
9. Rules and Regulations for the Convention that do not contradict these Canons and Resolutions of General Convention may be established by the Diocesan Convention, with the written approval of the Bishop-in-Charge or by the Clerk, and transmitted to the Secretary of the Convention at least 30 days before the meeting of the' Convention.
10. The Convention Year shall end on December 31.
11. One half of the Clergy entitled to vote and Lay Representatives from at least one-fourth of the Parishes and Missions entitled to representation in the Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

12. The President of the Convention, at the opening of the Convention, shall appoint such regular committees as the President may deem necessary, including Committees on the State of the Church and on the Constitution and Canons.
13. All elections in the Convention shall be by ballot.
14. Election of Bishops
 - a. Whenever a vacancy occurs or is about to occur, or whenever a decision is taken by the Diocesan Convention to elect a Bishop Coadjutor or a Suffragan Bishop, the Diocesan Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority shall within seven days notify the Archbishop in writing.
 - b. Upon receipt of the Archbishop's reply the Diocesan Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority shall promptly notify the Chairman of the Nominating Committee and the Diocesan Convention.
 - c. The Chairman of the Nominating Committee shall then convene a meeting of the Committee to consider nominations for submission to the Diocesan Convention. The Chairman shall make a written report to the Diocesan Convention within seven days of the end of the meeting.
 - d. Not more than three nominees shall be submitted by the Nominating Committee to the Diocesan Convention.
 - e. At the next Annual Diocesan Convention or at a Special Diocesan Convention called by the Ecclesiastical Authority for that purpose, a Bishop shall be elected from among the names submitted to it by the Nominating Committee, with the Clergy and Laity sitting and voting together by ballot. Two thirds of the members present and voting shall be decisive. At such an election, the Chancellor shall preside.
 - f. The Secretary of the Diocesan Convention together with the Registrar shall within seven days of such election submit to the Archbishop under the Seal of the Diocesan the name of the person elected.
 - g. After the submission of the Report of the Bishop's Nominating Committee, as is provided for in Canon I, Section 14(c) of the Constitution and Canons of the Church of the Province of West Africa, the candidates for the offices of Bishops - Diocesan,

Coadjutor, or Suffragan - shall, prior to the elections, be required to undergo a thorough medical examination and obtain a certificate that no physical or mental condition exists which may impair the ability of the candidate to perform the duties of the Office.

15. The resignation or retirement of Bishops of the Diocese shall be in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the Church of the Province of West Africa.

CANON II ORGANIZATIONS OF THE DIOCESE

A. ARCHDEACONRIES

1. The Bishop, with the consent of the Diocesan Standing Committee, shall determine, from time to time, the number of Archdeaconries and their geographical boundaries; provided that Trinity Cathedral shall not be included within the boundary of any Archdeaconry and the Cathedral shall not be subject to Archidiaconal visits. However, Trinity Cathedral, at the discretion of the Bishop, may participate in the activities of the Archdeaconry within which it is situated.
2. When an Archdeaconry is set up in accordance with this Canon and an Archdeacon is appointed by the Bishop, the Archdeacon shall have the following duties:
 - (a) Supervision of the work of the Clergy and Lay Workers within the Archdeaconry;
 - (b) Induction of Clergy on the Mandate of the Bishop;
 - (c) Performance of all such other duties as the Bishop may from time to time assign.
3. The Bishop, in consultation with the Diocesan Standing Committee, shall designate Mission Areas.
4. At each Diocesan Convention, the Bishop shall inform the Convention of Archdeaconries set up and Mission Areas designated under the provision of this Canon.

B. THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL

1. The Diocesan Council shall consist of the following members: the Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor and Suffragan Bishops, if there be any; the

Archdeacons, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Chancellor, the Registrar, other officers of the Diocese, the President of the Episcopal Churchmen, the President of the Episcopal Churchwomen, the President of the Diocesan Board of Education, the Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Trustees, the Chairman of the Diocesan Pension Board, the Chairman of the Diocesan Development Board, the President of the Episcopal Youth Council, one Clergy and one Lay Person to be appointed by the Bishop for a term of two years; one Clergy and one Lay Person to be elected by the Convention from each Archdeaconry for a term of two years.

The Bishop may invite Diocesan staff officers and/or presiding officers of the Diocesan Committees dealing with Missions, Church extension, Finance, Property, Stewardship, Social Relations and other committees which may be established, to participate without vote, in meeting of the Council if and whenever the Bishop deems it necessary.

2. At the first election one Clergy person and two Lay Persons, each from different Archdeacons, shall be elected for a term of one year and two Clergy and one Lay Person, each from a different Archdeaconry, shall be elected at the succeeding election for a two-year term. The Diocesan Convention decides by any means how those at the first election to be elected for a one-year term and those to be elected for a two-year term shall be selected.
3. No person shall be appointed or elected a member of the Diocesan Council who is not a Communicant of the Church in good standing and a member of a Parish or Congregation in union with the Diocese.

Vacancies

4. The Bishop shall have the power to fill all vacancies caused by death, resignation or removal from the Diocese, or otherwise, of any member of the Diocesan Council appointed by the Bishop; and the Diocesan Council shall have the power to fill all vacancies caused by death, resignation, or removal from the Diocese or otherwise, of any member elected by the Convention. Members appointed or elected to fill vacancies shall serve for the unexpired term of the vacant office, for which they were appointed or elected.
5. The office of any member of the Diocesan Council, who shall be absent from three consecutive meetings of the Council, may be declared vacant by the vote of a majority of those present at the meeting.

Officers

6. The Officers of the Diocesan Council shall consist of a President, a Vice President, and a Secretary. The Bishop of the Diocese shall be President of the Diocesan Council. The Diocesan Council shall elect from its membership a Vice President. The Secretary of the Diocese shall be the Secretary of the Diocesan Council.

By-Laws

7. The Diocesan Council may adopt and enforce all necessary By-Laws for its governance, but they shall not contravene the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese and the Council may organize its work in such manner as it may see fit.
8. The Diocesan Council may organize departments, as the work may demand, and determine the work and scope of each department. It shall elect a Chairperson for each department organized upon nomination by the Bishop.
9. Each department so organized shall have the power to choose and appoint additional members of the department who shall be Communicants in good standing.

Meetings

10. The Diocesan Council shall meet and organize immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Convention, and shall also hold meetings at such other times as may be provided by Bylaws. A special meeting may be called by the Bishop.

Quorum

11. Nine (9) members of the Diocesan Council, including representatives from at least two Archdeaconries, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Custodian of Records

12. The Diocesan Council shall be the sole custodian of the records of the Diocese except those of the Standing Committee.

C. THE DIOCESAN STANDING COMMITTEE

1. Each member of the Diocesan Standing Committee shall serve a term of two years and may be re-elected if the Convention so desires. At the first election of the ten members - five Presbyters and five Lay Persons - two of each shall be elected for a term of two years and three of each shall be elected for a term of one year. Thereafter, each member at the succeeding elections shall be elected for a two-year term so that the Standing Committee will have a continuing membership.
2. The Diocesan Convention shall decide by any means how the two members of each Order - for the first two-year term and the three members of each Order - for the first one-year term, shall be elected.
3. The Diocesan Standing Committee may declare a seat vacant in the event a member becomes unable to perform duties as a result of illness, residence outside of Liberia for three months without justifiable reasons, or conviction for a criminal offense involving dishonesty or imprisonment for more than six months.
4. Vacancies enumerated in Count 3 above and vacancies caused by death, resignation or otherwise, shall be conveyed to the Diocesan Council, which shall have power to fill the vacancy or vacancies, by election of one or more persons for the unexpired term of the vacancies.

D. THE DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

1. There shall be an autonomous Diocesan Board of Education with authority to act on all matters affecting the educational programs and policies of the Church under the supervision of the Bishop and the Diocesan Council. It shall supervise the educational programs of the Church and propose changes and policies affecting its function for approval of the Convention.
2. It shall consist of a membership of nine, one of whom shall be the Chairperson. The tenure of its members shall be for a period of three Convention years.
3. Episcopal Church Related Schools in the Diocese of Liberia shall be defined as those schools which occupy Episcopal Church property, enjoy statutory privileges under the aegis of the Episcopal Church, and which have not been given up by the Church by appropriate statutory processes.
4. The responsibility of such schools shall be to submit Annual Reports to the Diocesan Board of Education and to maintain the academic standards set by Government.

E. THE DIOCESAN BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. There shall be an autonomous Diocesan Board of Trustees composed of nine (9) persons. Seven shall be elected by the Diocesan Convention for a term of six (6) years. So as to have a continuing Board of Trustees, at the first election, two persons shall be elected for two years; two persons shall be elected for four years, and three persons for six years. The group of two years, four years and six years shall be determined in the manner that the Convention may select. Thereafter, at each subsequent election, each person shall be elected for a term of six years; two other members of the Board shall be appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese and they shall serve at the Bishop's pleasure for terms decided upon by the Bishop.

The members of the Board of Trustees shall be eligible for reelection. The Diocesan Convention may at any time by simple majority vote of the majority of members present and voting, remove any of the members of the Board if the Convention is not satisfied with the member's performance, and elect a replacement to fill the unexpired term.

2. The Board of Trustees shall elect biannually its officers and shall determine its own rules and procedures. The Board of Trustees shall inform the Bishop and the Diocesan Council every two years of its elected officers and shall also furnish the Bishop and the Diocesan Council with its rules and procedures.
3. (a) The Board of Trustees shall be responsible to prudently manage the real properties, securities, and investments and other personal properties of the Diocese, depositing cash income into the Diocesan Treasury; and it shall have authority, in consultation with the Bishop and the Chancellor, to negotiate, conclude and sign agreements dealing with the properties, securities, investments and other personal properties on behalf of the Diocese.
 - (a) With the consent of the Bishop and the Diocesan Council, the Board of Trustees shall also have the power to acquire real or personal property to add to the existing portfolio of the Diocese.
 - (b) The Board of Trustees may dispose of assets if it considers it to be in the interest of the Diocese, but only with the consent of the Bishop and the Diocesan Council given in writing.

In such a case, a full report shall be made by the Board to the ensuing Diocesan Convention.

(c) The Board of Trustees shall, as may be necessary, keep in close touch and cooperate with the Diocesan Development Board.

4. The Diocesan Council shall have authority to declare vacant a position on the Board of Trustees if a member:
 - (a) Is convicted of a criminal offence involving dishonesty by a court of competent jurisdiction;
 - (b) Ceases to reside in Liberia;
 - (c) Becomes insane.

In such a case, the Diocesan Council may make an interim appointment to fill the vacancy until the ensuing Diocesan Convention when the vacancy is to be filled by election for the remaining portion of the term.

F. THE DIOCESAN PENSION BOARD

1. There shall be an autonomous Diocesan Pension Board which shall be charged with the responsibility of interpreting, administering and improving the Diocesan Pension Plan covering the Bishops, Clergy and employees of the Diocese.
2. The members of the Board shall be appointed by the Diocesan Bishop with the consent of the Diocesan Council and shall serve for a term designated by the Diocesan. Any member of the Board is eligible for reappointment at the end of a designated term.
3. The Board shall consist of not more than nine persons, and shall include the Diocesan Treasurer, who shall be Secretary of the Board.
4. The Board shall cooperate with the underwriters of the Diocesan Pension Plan in doing whatever is advisable and necessary to ensure that the Bishops, Clergy, and employees of the Diocese may be assured of the best pension protection under the Plan; and the Board shall make a report to the Diocesan Convention of such matters related to the Plan as may be of interest to the Convention.
5. The Board shall keep the Bishop and Treasurer of the Diocese fully informed of the important matters connected with the Plan. When modifications or adjustments become necessary the Board shall, through the Bishop, seek approval of the Diocesan Convention or, during its recess, the Diocesan Council, for such modifications or adjustments.

standing, shall proceed to elect or appoint a Communicant in good standing to fill the vacancy.

CANON III WORSHIP

1. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, including the Articles of Religion as prescribed by the Episcopal Church of the United States of America, shall be used as the Standard of Worship for the Episcopal Church of Liberia, until such time as the Province of West Africa produces its own Standard of Worship.
2. Any Congregation, worshiping in any language in Liberia, may use a form of service in such language if it has been approved and authorized by the Bishop of the Diocese, after the Bishop has been satisfied that it is in accordance with the Doctrine and Worship of the Church.
3. Lessons prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, as mentioned in Section 1, shall be read only from translations of the Holy Scriptures as shall be approved or authorized by the Bishop of the Diocese.
4. Ministers shall have control and final authority in the administration of matters pertaining to music in the Church; and they shall see that music is used as an offering for the glory of God and as a help to the people in their worship.

CANON IV DEDICATED AND CONSECRATED CHURCHES

1. No Vestry, Trustees or other body authorized by the laws of Liberia to hold property for any Parish or Congregation shall encumber or alienate any dedicated and consecrated Church or Chapel, or any Church or Chapel, which has been used solely for Divine Service, belonging to the Parish or Congregation which they represent, without the previous consent of the Bishop, acting with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Standing Committee.
2. No dedicated and consecrated Church or Chapel shall be removed, taken down or otherwise disposed for any worldly or common use, without the previous consent of the Bishop, acting with the consent of the Diocesan Standing Committee.

**CANON V
THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY**

1. There will be a Commission on Ministry consisting of three Clergy and six Lay Persons who shall be appointed by the Bishop to serve a term of three years each.
2. The Commission shall assist the Bishop in determining present and future needs for the Ministry in the Diocese, in matters pertaining to the enlistment and selection of persons for the Ministry; in the guidance of Postulants and Candidates for Holy Orders; in the guidance and pastoral care of Deacons and Deaconesses, and of the professional church workers in matters pertaining to the continuing education of the Ministry and in such other matters relating to the Ministry as may be assigned by the Bishop.
3. In those cases where the conduct and evaluation of the examination of persons for Holy Orders is assigned to the Diocesan Commission on Ministry, the said Commission shall make the Report called for under Section 2 of Canon X and shall send a copy of said report to the Board of Examining Chaplains of the Diocese.

**CANON VI
POSTULANTS FOR HOLY ORDERS**

1. (a) Any person desiring to be admitted as a Postulant for Holy Orders shall first consult his or her immediate Pastor or, if there be none, some Presbyter to whom the individual is personally known, indicating the desire for admission to the Ministry and all other relevant matters relating to qualification or that may tend to affect the person's course of preparation.
 - (b) If after careful inquiry, the Presbyter counsels the person to persevere in that person's intentions, the person shall make his or her desire known personally, if possible, or in writing to the Bishop. The person shall give all information that the Bishop may require.
 - (c) Whenever possible, the Bishop shall confer with the applicant and require such examinations as the Bishop may deem necessary by professionals designated by the Bishop.

2. (a) The Bishop, on the basis of information presented, shall decide whether or not to refer the application to the Commission on Ministry. If the Bishop does, the Commission on Ministry shall meet with the applicant to review the application so as to determine whether it will submit a favorable recommendation to the Bishop on the applicant's qualification to pursue a course of preparation for the Holy Orders.
 - (b) In submitting its recommendation, the Commission shall forward to the Bishop the applicant's formal application, its recommendation, a transcript of the applicant's academic record, and a certificate from the Minister and Vestry of the Parish of which the applicant is personally known and from three or more Lay Persons, Communicants of the Church in good standing, to whom the applicant is personally known.
3. When the requirements have been met, the Bishop may admit the applicant as a postulant for Holy Orders, recording the applicant's name and the date of admission in a book to be kept especially for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Postulant, the Commission on Ministry and if applicable, the Dean of the theological school which the applicant may attend.
4. The Bishop may require the Commission on Ministry, and the Board of Theological Education, to prepare, subject to the Bishop's approval, rules, regulations, courses, examinations, as the case may be, for the guidance of the Postulant.

CANON VII CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS

1. A Postulant for Holy Orders may apply for admission as a Candidate for Holy Orders six months after: (i) admission as a Postulant; (ii) enrollment in the theological school, seminary, or some program of preparation for the ordained ministry approved by the Bishop; (iii) reaffirmation of the Bishop; (iv) reaffirmation of the certificate required in Canon VI, Section 2b; and a recommendation in writing from the Diocesan Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry as to the person's readiness to be received as a Candidate for Holy Orders.
2. The Bishop shall not consider accepting as a Candidate for Holy Orders any person who has been refused admission as a Candidate for Holy Orders in any other Diocese, or who having been admitted, has afterwards ceased to be a Candidate, until the applicant shall have produced a letter from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person was refused admission, or in which the person has been a Candidate, indicating the cause of refusal or of cessation.

3. During the course of the Candidate's academic preparation for Holy Orders, an annual report shall be rendered to the Bishop by the theological school that the Candidate is attending, or by the Presbyter(s) under whom the Candidate is assigned to pursue studies.
4. Every Candidate for Holy Orders shall communicate with the Ecclesiastical Authority, personally or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic experience, and personal and spiritual development.
5. The Bishop shall prescribe rules and regulations on the length of time a person may remain a Candidate for Holy Orders; grounds for termination of candidacy; and how a rejected candidacy may be renewed.
6. The Commission on Ministry, with the approval of the Bishop, shall prescribe the normal standard of learning and examination of Candidates for Holy Orders.
7. In special cases, the normal standard of learning may be modified by the Commission on Ministry, with the approval of the Bishop.

CANON VIII ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

1. No appointment for ordination of any Candidate shall be made until the Bishop is satisfied that all canonical requirements have been met.
2. The authority, assigned by these Canons for Ordination, which is to be exercised by the Bishop of the Diocese, may be exercised by the Bishop Coadjutor, if there is one, or by a Suffragan Bishop or an Assistant Bishop, when required by the Bishop of the Diocese.
3. No person shall be ordained a Deacon unless that person is at least twenty-one years of age.
4. No person shall be ordained a Deacon within eighteen months from admission as a Candidate for Holy Orders, unless in special circumstances, the Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, shall shorten the time of candidacy; but in no case shall the period be shortened to less than six months.
5. Before the ordination of a Deacon, the Bishop shall require the applicant to submit to a thorough examination, covering both mental and physical conditions by licensed professionals selected by the Bishop. The reports shall be sent also to the Standing Committee.

6. No person shall be ordained a Deacon unless recommended to the Bishop by the Standing Committee.
7. The Candidate shall lay before the Standing Committee the following:
 - (i) An application in writing signed by the Candidate, stating the Candidate's date of birth.
 - (ii) Certificates from the Bishop(s) by whom the Candidate was admitted a Postulant and a Candidate showing the dates of admission as a Postulant and as a Candidate. Evidence satisfactory to the Committee may be presented if the certificates cannot be had.
 - (iii) A Certificate from a Presbyter of this Church, known to the Ecclesiastical Authority.
 - (iv) A Certificate from the Minister and Vestry of the Parish of which the Candidate is a member; or if there is no Organized Parish at the place of residence of the Candidate or should it be impracticable to obtain the signatures of the Minister and Vestry, as a result of circumstances not affecting the Candidate's moral or religious character, a Presbyter of the Diocese and six Lay Persons, Communicants of the Church in good standing. The Standing Committee may also prescribe, in special cases, the type of Certificate that may be satisfactory to it.
8. When the Standing Committee is satisfied, after receipt of the Certificates, that all other canonical requirements have been complied with, and that there are no valid objections of any kind against the Candidate, it may, at a duly convened meeting, by majority vote, recommend the Candidate to the Bishop for ordination in a Testimonial as may be prescribed by the Bishop.
9. The Testimonial, having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objections on any grounds, the Bishop may make an Order for ordination; and at the time of the ordination, the Bishop shall require the Candidate to subscribe and make, in the Bishop's presence, the following Declaration:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Episcopal Church."
10. The Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, may make rules and regulations prescribing how

persons who will retain secular occupations may be ordained to the Diaconate; the nature of the person's assignment and eligibility for ordination to the Priesthood.

CANON IX ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

1. No person shall be ordained Priest until such person is at least twenty-four years of age.
2. No person shall be ordained Priest until such person has been a Deacon one full year unless the Bishop deems it necessary for good cause, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, to shorten the time; nor within two years from admission as a Candidate for Holy Orders, unless the Bishop deems it necessary for good cause with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, to shorten the time. But in no case shall a person be ordained Priest within less than one year from admission as a Candidate for Holy Orders, or at least six months from admission as a Deacon.
3. No Deacon shall be ordained Priest unless recommended to the Bishop by the Standing Committee.
4. The Deacon shall lay before the Standing Committee the following:
 - (i) An application in writing, signed by the Deacon stating the Deacon's date of birth.
 - (ii) A certificate from the Bishop declaring that the terms of Postulancy and Candidacy and the time of service in the Diaconate have been completed. Evidence satisfactory to the Committee may be presented if the Certificate cannot be had.
 - (iii) A Certificate from the Minister and Vestry of the Parish where the Deacon resides.
 - (iv) Should the Parish be without a Minister, it shall suffice that the Certificate be signed by some Presbyter of the Diocese in good standing, with the reason for the substitution being stated.

- (v) Should there be no organized Parish at the place of residence of the Candidate, should it be impracticable, because of circumstance not affecting the Deacon's moral and religious character to obtain the signatures of the Minister and Vestry of the Vestry, it may suffice if the Certificate is signed by at least one Presbyter of the Diocese in good standing and six Lay Persons, Communicants of the Church in good standing.
5. When the Standing Committee is satisfied, after receipt of the Certificates, that all other canonical requirements have been complied with and that there are no valid objections of any kind against the Deacon, it may, at a duly convened meeting, by majority vote, recommend the Deacon to the Bishop for ordination in a Testimonial as may be prescribed by the Bishop.
 6. The Testimonial, having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objections on any ground, the Bishop may make order for ordination; and at the time of ordination the Bishop shall require the Deacon to subscribe and make, in the Bishop's presence, a Declaration in the words stated in Canon VIII, Section 9.
 7. No Deacon shall be ordained Priest until the Deacon shall have been appointed to serve in some Parochial Cure within the jurisdiction.
 8. Before the ordination of a Priest, the Bishop shall require the applicant to submit to a thorough examination, covering both mental and physical conditions, by licensed professionals selected by the Bishop. The reports shall be sent also to the Standing Committee.
 9. Sections 1 and 2 of Canon VIII are equally applicable to Canon IX.
 10. The Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, may make rules and regulations prescribing how a Deacon, ordained under Canon VIII Section 10, may be advanced to the Priesthood; and how Ministers ordained in churches, not in communion with this Church, may be accepted into the Ministry of the Church. The Bishop shall also prescribe the manner by which Ministers ordained in churches, in communion with this Church, may function in the Diocese.
 11. The Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, shall determine the conditions under which the Priest under Canon IX, Section 9, may change status from non-stipendiary to regular priest.

**CANON X
EXAMINING CHAPLAINS**

1. There shall be a Board of Examining Chaplains consisting of at least two Presbyters who shall be appointed by the Bishop for a term of three (3) years.
2. When the Board makes an examination of a person or persons for Holy Orders, the Board shall make a separate report in writing, to the Bishop on the results of such examination held by them on each person examined in the following form:

Date: _____

To: The Right Reverend:

Bishop of Liberia (We, having been assigned as) Examiners of

_____ hereby testify that we have

examined the said _____ upon subjects

covering

_____ sensible of our responsibility,

we give our judgment as follows:

(Specify the proficiency or deficiency of

In the subject matter appointed as became apparent from the examination).

Signed: _____

The Bishop shall furnish the Standing Committee with a copy of the Report.

CANON XI ORGANIZED MISSIONS

1. Missions may be organized or dissolved by the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.
2. The government of an Organized Mission shall be in the Bishop, who shall appoint as the Bishop's representative a Vicar, who shall conform to the Bishop's instructions, and be responsible to the Bishop.
3. The Bishop shall appoint a Bishop's Committee, which shall consist of the Vicar; who shall be Chairman and Committee members in number at the Bishop's discretion.
4. The Bishop's Committee shall provide for the stipend of the Vicar, or such part thereof as it shall agree with the Bishop to assume; also, for the repair of the Vicarage, if any, and for the repair and lighting of the Church or other place of meeting. It shall not undertake anything beyond such ordinary business without instructions from the Bishop.

CANON XII CONGREGATIONS

1. Twenty or more baptized persons of legal age, at least fifteen of whom shall be communicants of the Church, desiring to organize a Congregation, may make a written application to the Bishop, stating that they are residents of the Diocese of Liberia, and Indicating their desire to establish and maintain a Congregation in the Diocese in conformity with the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church of Liberia, subject to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese and promising conformity to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Church, and to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Liberia.
2. A Parish may organize a Congregation provided it follows the same procedure outlined in Section 1.
3. Upon receipt of such application, the Bishop, with consent of the Standing Committee, if the Bishop believes that the organization of such a Congregation will be in the interest of the Diocese, may give

the authorization, but its admission into union with the Diocese shall be subject to approval by the next ensuing Diocesan Convention.

4. After the Congregation has been organized, the Bishop may appoint a Preliminary Committee of three (3) Communicants to represent the Congregation until it is received in union with the Diocese. The Bishop shall appoint a Committee of three (3) or more persons to represent the Ecclesiastical Authority in the management of the Congregation.

CANON XIII PARISHES

1. There shall be two kinds of Parishes in this Diocese - Autonomous Parishes and Aided Parishes.
2. The authority to form Parishes shall be vested in the Bishop, acting with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Standing Committee,
3. An Autonomous Parish shall be a self-supporting congregation with a suitable church or chapel which it shall agree to light at all proper times, and to keep in repair. It shall also ensure payment of a sufficient salary and pension to a Rector or Priest-in-Charge. If there shall be a Parish House or Guild Room, it shall be kept in repair and lighted at all proper times.
4. Each Autonomous Parish shall have a Vestry, which shall be the representative of the Parish in matters concerning its corporate property. It shall be elected annually by the congregation. *The Vestry of an Autonomous Parish shall elect its Rector in Conference with the Bishop. An elected Rector shall enter into a written contract with the Parish. The contract shall specify the terms and conditions of the Rector's service and shall be signed by a majority of the Vestry and approved by the Bishop.*¹
5. An Aided Parish shall comprise of two or more congregations in an area that shall be approved by the Bishop with the advice of the Diocesan Standing Committee. It shall be placed in the charge of a Vicar or Minister-in-Charge, and others elected by the congregations.
6. Each Aided Parish shall have a Parish Council of which the Vicar or Minister-in-Charge shall be Chairperson. There shall be two

¹ Italics reflect amendment approved at General Convention held in February 2018.

Wardens, one appointed by the Vicar or Minister-in-Charge, and the other elected by the congregation.

7. Each Parish Council shall comprise a number of persons, which shall be approved by the Bishop, and shall be elected annually. It shall have functions similar to that of a Vestry in an Autonomous Parish.
8. Should there be a desire in a Congregation or any Organized Mission or Missions to attain Parish status, any number of persons, but not less than ten males and females, 19 years or older, of whom three at least shall have been Confirmed, may present to the Bishop a petition in the form as may be prescribed by the Bishop.

**CANON XIV
RECTORS, VICARS OF PARISHES, OTHER
MINISTERS-IN-CHARGE
OF CHURCHES AND THEIR DUTIES**

1. The spiritual affairs of the Parish or the Church are vested in the Rector, the Vicar or in the Minister-in-Charge of the Church, subject to the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, and the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese and the Godly council, advice and direction of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. The Rector, the Vicar or the Minister-in-Charge of the Church shall have full and free discharge of all functions and duties pertaining thereto, and at all times, shall be entitled to the use and control of all buildings and grounds of the Parish or of the Church, by whatever name they may be designated. They are to be regarded as under the authority of the Rector, the Vicar or of the Minister- in-Charge of the Church.
2. The Vestry of a Parish shall elect its Rector, in conference with the Bishop, and no election of a Rector shall be completed without the Bishop's approval.
3. The Rector must be a Presbyter in good standing and, if not already canonically resident in the Diocese, must be transferred thereto within sixty (60) days of acceptance of the call.
4. No Rector shall be obliged to receive into the Parish as a regular Communicant, any person who does not lodge with the Rector a certificate showing such person to be a Communicant in good standing in some other Parish or Congregation, signed by the Rector of such other Parish or Priest-in-Charge as the case may

be; or if there be no such Priest, by one of the Wardens, or if not signed by the Rector, Vicar, Priest-in-Charge or by one of the Wardens thereof, by the Bishop of the Diocese.

5. If the authorities of a Parish shall for thirty (30) days fail to make provision for services, it shall be the duty of the Bishop to take measures as the Bishop shall deem expedient for the maintenance of Divine Services therein.
6. All reports required to be sent to the Bishop's Office shall be delivered there not later than the fifteenth day of January of each year.
7. The provisions of Sections 3, 4, 5, and 6 shall be applicable, where relevant, to all Ministers of Churches in the Diocese by whatever name they are designated.

CANON XV DISSOLUTION OF THE PASTORAL RELATION

1. Upon attaining the age of 65 years, every Minister of this Church, with the exception of Bishops, occupying any position in this Church, shall resign the same and retire from active service, and such resignation shall be accepted. Thereafter, the Minister may accept any position in the Church, except the position from which the Minister has resigned, provided that: (a) the tenure in such position shall be for a period of not more than one year, which may be renewed from time to time; and (b) service in such position shall be with the express approval of the Bishop, acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocese. This provision will also apply if a Minister opts for retirement before the age of 65 years. A Minister who has served in a non-stipendiary capacity in a position before retirement may, at the Diocesan Bishop's request, serve in the same position for six months thereafter, and this period may be renewed from time to time.
2. A Minister may not resign the Parish without the consent of the said Parish or its Vestry, whichever may be authorized to act in the premises; nor may any Rector canonically or lawfully elected and in charge of any Parish be removed therefrom by said Parish or Vestry or Parish Council against the Minister's will except as hereinafter provided.
- 3.(a) If, for any reason, a Rector or Minister or the body authorized to elect a Rector or Minister, shall desire a separation and dissolution

of the Pastoral Relation, and the parties be not agreed respecting a separation and dissolution, notice in writing may be given by either party to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. The Bishop, in case the difference is not settled by the Bishop's Godly judgment, shall ask the advice of the Diocesan Standing Committee, and proceeding with its aid and counsel, shall be the ultimate arbiter and judge.

- (b) The judgment shall be either that the Pastoral Relation between the parties shall cease and determine at a time and upon terms therein specified, or that the said relation shall not be terminated; and such judgment shall be binding upon both parties. In the event of the failure or refusal of either party to comply with terms of such judgment, the Bishop may: (a) in the case of the Rector or Minister, suspend such Rector or Minister from the exercise of priestly office until the Rector or Minister shall comply with said judgment; (b) in the case of the Vestry or other such body, recommend to the Diocesan Convention that the union of the Parish or Mission with the Convention shall cease until they have complied with the Bishop's judgment. If the See is vacant the Ecclesiastical Authority, if it be a Suffragan Bishop, shall act as the Diocesan Bishop with full force and effect. However, if there is no Suffragan Bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority, that is the Diocesan Standing Committee, shall hold the matter in abeyance and the parties shall maintain the status quo until the See is filled.
5. In case of a regular and Canonical dissolution of the connection between a Rector or Minister and a Parish or Church, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall direct the Secretary of the Convention to record dissolution of that connection.

CANON XVI THE DUTIES OF THE WARDENS

1. There shall be two Wardens in each Parish, who shall always be Communicants in good standing, and who shall be distinguished as Senior and Junior, although all duties belong equally to both, for every duty which may be assigned to the Senior Warden devolves, in Senior Warden's absence or disability, on the Junior Warden, and both shall be held responsible for the performance of the duty.
2. The Wardens shall see that the Church is duly provided with a Standard Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments and the other Books commonly call the Apocrypha, and Prayer Books of proper size and of standard editions for the Lectern, Prayer Desk,

and Altar. It shall be their duty to provide fair linen, and Elements of bread and wine meet for the Celebration of the Holy Communion, and all vessels and vestments necessary to the conduct of public worship; together with the alms and other offerings of the people, in decent basins provided for that purpose, and reverently bring same to the Clergy.

3. The Wardens shall provide a Parish Register and all necessary record and registration books and, if there be no Minister, they shall make or cause to be made all registrations required by the Canons of the Church or the Diocese.
4. The Wardens shall take care that the Church buildings be kept from all secular or other uses not authorized by or especially named in the Constitution and Canons, and that at all times they be kept in good repair: and clean as befitting the House of God, and that the premises around it be in the proper order.
5. It is the duty of the Wardens to preserve order and decorum in and around the church buildings on all occasions whatever, and especially during the time of public worship, and to admonish persons guilty of any unseemly levity or rudeness.
6. In case there shall be any Clergy of the Church residing within the Parish who shall act in a manner contrary to the rules of the Church and unbecoming of the office of Clergy, the Warden shall, in writing, give notice thereof to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

CANON XVII VOTING RIGHTS

1. Persons entitled to vote at any meeting of a Parish or Mission shall be:
 - (i) At least 18 years of age²;
 - (ii) Of good moral character;
 - (iii) Baptized and Confirmed;
 - (iv) Adherents of the Protestant Episcopal Church;
 - (v) Regular attendants at the service of the Parish or Mission for six (6) calendar months before the meeting;

² *An earlier circulated version of the Canons contained a typographical error of 13 instead of 18 years of age. That error is here corrected.*

- (vi) Regular contributors for the same period to the current expenses of the Parish or Mission. A record of regular contributors shall be maintained by the Treasurer, with the dates of their contributions. Such record shall be sufficient evidence as to the qualification of a voter with respect to the last preceding requirement;
- (vii) Persons entitled to hold office in any Parish or Mission or to be elected a Delegate or Alternate to the Diocesan Convention from a Parish or Mission shall be qualified voters of a Parish or Mission. A Warden and a Delegate or Alternate Delegate to the Diocesan Convention shall be a Communicant in good standing in addition to being a qualified voter.

In any case where it shall be expedient, the Bishop upon the advice of the Diocesan Standing Committee, or if the Episcopate be vacant, the Diocesan Standing Committee may establish the boundaries of Parishes and Missions of this Diocese. An opportunity to be heard shall be first granted to the various representatives of any Parish or Mission, which may be affected by the establishment of such boundaries. Parish boundaries thus established shall be valid for Canonical purposes and also for fixing the Parochial Connection of all persons desiring or entitled to the Ministration of the Church, who have not by some act of their own, become attached to a Parish; and for defining for each Rector the extent of the Rector's responsibility for the cure of souls.

CANON XVII OFFICERS OF THE VESTRY

1. A Secretary and a Parish Treasurer, who need not be members of the Vestry, shall be annually elected by the Vestry and shall serve until their successors in office are chosen and have been duly qualified.
2. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to attend all meetings of the Vestry, take minutes of its proceedings and enter and attest to the same in the Minutes Book; to preserve the journals and records; to attest the acts of the Vestry except where such attestation is otherwise provided for by Canons, and perform such other duties as may be legally assigned. The Secretary shall deliver to the incoming secretary all the books and papers relative to affairs of the Parish that may be

in the possession or under the control of the outgoing Secretary.

3. It shall be the duty of the Parish Treasurer to receive all monies collected under the authority of the Vestry or donated; the reception or donation of which is otherwise provided for; and in case there be no collector appointed by the Vestry, the Treasurer shall act as collector.
4. No monies, except regular contract bills, fixed in amounts, shall be paid by the Treasurer, except on an order from the Vestry made in Vestry Meeting. Regular contract bills may be paid in the manner provided by Resolution of the Vestry. The Treasurer shall present to the Vestry prior to the Annual Parish Meeting, a full and accurate statement, accompanied with vouchers, of all monies received and paid by the Treasurer for the fiscal year.
5. The Treasurer shall faithfully carry out instructions in all matters pertaining to the duties of the office, and be ready to answer all questions pertaining to the state of the treasury. The Treasurer's books and papers shall be at all times subject to the inspection of Chapter, Wardens and Vestry in session; and at the expiration of the Treasurer's term of office, the Treasurer shall deliver to the incoming treasurer all monies, books, and papers that may be in the possession or under the control of the outgoing Treasurer.

CANON XIX ANNUAL MEETINGS

1. There shall be an annual meeting of every Parish and every Organized Mission on the first Tuesday in January or on some other date as may be designated by the Vestry or Bishop's Committee for the election of members of the Vestry; for receiving reports; and for such other business as it may lawfully transact. The Senior Warden shall be nominated by the Rector, the Junior Warden, by the Congregation.
- 2.(a) Special Meeting of the Congregation may be called by the Bishop, Rector or Vicar, or any two Vestrymen or Committee members. Announcement of the time, place and purpose of all meetings of the Congregation, and of the qualification of voters at such meetings shall be given at one or more public

services of the Church next preceding such meeting, unless shorter or other notice be directed by the Bishop.

- (b) A Special Meeting of the Congregation shall be held on the First Sunday in December or not later than the Third Sunday in December each year, for the election of Delegates to the Annual Convention.
- 3. The Bishop, Dean, Rector, Vicar or Minister-in-Charge shall preside at all such meetings of the Congregation. If one such person be not present, then a Warden, a Vestryman or Committee member, selected in order of seniority, shall preside.
- 4. A Parish meeting may adopt By-Laws of itself, consistent with the Constitution, Canons and Resolutions of the Diocesan Convention.

CANON XX REGULATIONS RESPECTING THE LAITY

- 1. All persons who have received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism according to the Rites of the Episcopal Church of Liberia, whose Baptism have been duly recorded in this Church, are members.
- 2. All persons within this Church who shall celebrate and keep the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, by regular participation in the public worship of the Church and by other acts of devotion and works of charity, to be deemed donations, using all Godly and sober conversation, are members of the Church in good standing.
- 3. All such members in good standing who have been confirmed by a Bishop of this Church or a Bishop of a Church in communion with this Church, or who have been received into this Church by a Bishop of this Church, and who shall have, unless for good cause presented, received Holy Communion at least thrice during the next preceding year and contributed to the support of the Church, are Communicants in good standing.
- 4. (a) A Communicant or Baptized member in good standing, who moves from one Parish or Congregation to another, shall be entitled to a Certificate addressed to the Rector or Minister to which removal is desired stating that the person is duly

registered or enrolled as a Communicant or Baptized member in the Parish or Congregation from which that person desires to be transferred. If the Communicant or Baptized member fails to produce a Certificate through no personal fault, the authorities of that Parish or Congregation to which removal is desired may receive other evidence, the sufficiency of which shall be determined by them. Notice of transfer made herein shall be sent to the authorities of the Parish or Congregation from which the Communicant or Baptized member is removed.

- (b) It shall be the duty of the Rector or Minister of every Parish or Congregation learning of the removal of any member of the Parish or Congregation to another one without having secured a Certificate or letter of transfer, as herein provided, to transmit to the minister of such Parish or Congregation a letter of advice informing thereof.

CANON XXI SOLEMNIZATION OF HOLY MATRIMONY

1. Every Minister of this Diocese shall conform to the laws of Liberia governing the creation of the civil status of marriage, and also to the laws of the Church governing the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony.
2. No Minister of this Diocese shall solemnize any marriage unless the following conditions are complied with:
 - a) The Minister shall have ascertained the right of the parties to contract a marriage according to the laws of Liberia.
 - b) The Minister shall have ascertained that both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind and will, and with the intent that it be lifelong.
 - c) The Minister shall have ascertained that both parties freely and knowingly consent to such marriage, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to identity of a partner, or mental reservation.

- d) The Minister shall have ascertained that at least one of the parties has received Holy Baptism.
 - e) The Minister shall have instructed both parties on the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony or have ascertained that they both received such instruction from persons known by the Minister to be competent and responsible.
3. No Minister of this Diocese shall solemnize any marriage unless the following procedures are complied with:
- a) The intention of the parties to contract marriage shall have been signified to the Minister at least thirty (30) days before the Service of Solemnization; provided that, for weighty cause, the Minister may dispense with this requirement, if one of the parties is a member of the Minister's congregation, or can furnish satisfactory evidence of responsibility. In case the thirty-day notice is waived, the Minister shall report the action in writing to the Bishop without delay.
 - b) There shall be present at least two witnesses to the solemnization of the marriage.
 - c) The Minister shall record in the proper register the date and place of the marriage, the names of the parties and their parents, the age of the parties, their residences, and their church status. The Minister and the witnesses shall sign the record.
 - d) The Minister shall have required that the parties sign the following Declaration:

"We, A.B., and C.D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church. We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society, and we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto"

4. It shall be within the discretion of any Minister of this Church to decline to solemnize any marriage.

CANON XXII
REGULATIONS RESPECTING HOLY MATRIMONY

1. When marital unity is imperiled, it shall be the duty of either or both parties, before contemplating legal action, to lay the matter before a Minister of this Church; and it shall be the duty of such Minister to labor that the parties may be reconciled.
- 2.(a) Any member of this Church whose marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a civil court may apply to the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese for a judgment as to his or her marital status in the eyes of the Church. Such judgment may be recognition of the nullity or of the termination of the said marriage; provided that no such judgment shall be construed as affecting in any way the legitimacy of children or the civil validity of the former relationship.
- (b) Every judgment rendered under this section shall be in writing and shall be part of the Archives of the Diocese.
3. No Minister of this Church shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has been the husband or wife of any other person then living; nor shall any member of this Church enter into a marriage when either of the contracting parties has been the husband or wife of any other person living, except as hereinafter provided:
 - (a) The Minister shall have satisfied himself or herself by appropriate evidence that the prior marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a final judgment or decree of a civil court of competent jurisdiction.
 - (b) The Minister shall have instructed the parties that continuing concern must be shown for the well-being of the former spouse, and of any children of the prior marriage.
 - (c) The Minister shall consult with and obtain the consent of the Bishop prior to, and shall report to the Bishop, the solemnization of any marriage under this section.
4. All the provisions of Canon XXI shall apply to all cases.

**CANON XXIII
ANNUAL REPORTS**

1. At the Annual Meeting of every Parish, Congregation or Organized Mission, a report of the state of the Parish, Congregation or Organized Mission, which shall also be submitted to the Bishop, shall be made by the Dean, Rector, or Vicar according to the form provided for reports to the Bishop. Reports of receipts and disbursements for the year shall be made by the Treasurer of each organization of the Parish, Congregation or Organized Mission.
2. It shall be demanded that all funds contributed by the congregation, or otherwise received shall be publicly accounted for to the congregation, and shall be audited by a committee appointed at the Annual Parish Meeting.

**CANON XXIV
ALIENATION OF PROPERTY**

1. No Property of a Parish or Organized Mission shall be sold, alienated or mortgaged without the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.

**CANON XXV
OVERSIGHT OF PAROCHIAL ORGANIZATIONS**

1. The Rector of each Parish and the Vicar of each Mission shall be head or advisor of every organization of the Parish or Mission
2. No organization shall be formed within a Parish or Organized Mission of the Diocese without the consent of the Rector or Vicar.

**CANON XXVI
CHURCH RECORDS**

1. Great care shall be taken to preserve Church Records. The Rector or Vicar shall be custodian of the Parish Register. If Rector or Vicar vacates his or her Cure, (s)he shall deposit the Register with the Senior Warden of the Parish or with the senior member of the Bishop's Committee.
2. A record of all public services shall be kept in which shall be noted the place, date, and nature of each service; the number of attendants, the offering, if any, and, if the service be the Holy Communion, the number of persons communing.
3. Minutes of all meetings of Congregations at which business is conducted, and all meetings of every Vestry and Bishop's Committee shall be properly kept and preserved in appropriate Minutes Books.

CANON XXVII BENEVOLENT FUND

1. There shall be established in the Annual Budget of the Diocese an appropriation to be designated as Benevolent Fund, which shall be used for such charitable, benevolent and relief purposes as the Diocesan Bishop may deem proper.
2. The Fund may be supplemented by special contributions or special designated offerings.

CANON XXVIII BUSINESS METHODS IN THE DIOCESE

In every Parish, Mission, and Institution connected with the Diocese, proper business practices are to be observed. Among them:

1. Record shall be made and kept of all properties, real, personal and mixed, which belong to the Parish, Mission or Institution; and wherever possible, deeds, leases and evidence of gifts shall be secured in safe deposit boxes or banks or in safes provided by the organization.
2. Treasurers and custodians of such properties shall be adequately bonded, except where the funds or other

properties do not exceed two hundred and fifty United States dollars at any one time during the fiscal year.

3. Books of account shall be kept in accordance with proper accounting principles so as to provide the basis for adequate auditing.
- 4.(a) All account of Parishes, Missions or other Institutions shall be audited annually by an independent Certified Public Account, or by an independent Licensed Public Accountant, or approved by the Department of Finance of the Diocese.
- (b) All reports of such audits together with the summary of action taken or proposed to be taken to correct deficiencies or implement recommendations, shall be filed with the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority not later than thirty (30) days following the date of such report, but not later than September 1 of each year
5. All buildings of the Parish, Mission and other Institutions shall be adequately insured.
6. The Department of Finance of the Diocese may require copies of any and all accounts described in this Canon to be filed with it and shall report annually to the Diocesan Convention about its administration of this Canon.
7. The fiscal year of every Parish, Mission or Institution connected with this Diocese shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

CANON XXIX DISCIPLINE OF THE CLERGY

1. There shall be in the Diocese of Liberia a court to be known as "The Ecclesiastical Court". It shall consist of three judges, all of whom shall be Presbyters canonically resident within the Diocese.
2. The Bishop of the Diocese, when this Canon is adopted, shall appoint one Presbyter for one year, one Presbyter for three years and one Presbyter for five years, respectively, from the same date. After this initial organization, each judge shall serve for a term of five years, and may be eligible for reappointment at the discretion of the Bishop.

3. At the annual session of the Diocesan Convention, when the term of a judge has expired, the Bishop shall fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Court.
4. The members of the Court shall elect from amongst its membership, its presiding officer; and the Court may, whenever necessary, elect a Clerk of said Court to serve at its pleasure.
5. Whenever five Communicants of this Church, at least two of whom shall be Presbyters, shall desire to present any Clergy member of this Diocese for trial, for conduct unbecoming a Cleric, or for any offense against the Doctrine, Discipline, or Worship of this Church, the procedure outlined below shall be followed:
 - a. They shall lay before the Bishop in writing over their signatures the nature of the charges that they wish to bring against such Clergy member.
 - b. The Bishop shall submit such charges to the clerical members of the Diocesan Standing Committee to investigate the accusation. If, in the judgment of three of the clerical members of the Standing Committee, the evidence is sufficient to justify a trial, they shall present such Clergy member for trial before the Ecclesiastical Court of the Diocese.
 - c. The Standing Committee shall thereupon submit to the Ecclesiastical Court, through one of its members, a Presentment together with a list of names of the witnesses for the prosecution so far as then known.
 - d. The Ecclesiastical Court shall set the time and place for the trial of said Clergy member, and serve notice upon such witnesses for the prosecution requesting them to be present at said trial.
6. At this time the Bishop shall appoint a Cleric as Church Advocate, whose duty it shall be to conduct the trial on behalf of the Diocese. The accused Clergy member may also employ as counsel any Communicant of this Church.

The Church Advocate may use as an assistant a lawyer who is a Communicant of this Church.

7. At any time before the day set for trial, the accused may, for cause, challenge any of the judges of said Court giving notice thereof to the Bishop. Should the Bishop determine that the cause given is reasonable, the Bishop may appoint another Presbyter or Presbyters, or may request the remaining judge or judges to select other Presbyter or Presbyters to fill the vacancy or vacancies. If the challenges for cause to all three judges are successful, the Bishop shall appoint three new ad hoc judges for the particular trial. Two of the judges shall constitute a quorum and the concurrence of all the judges participating in the trial shall be necessary for a conviction.
8. The Court after it is organized, upon its, own motion or upon the application of the Church Advocate, may appoint not less than two nor more than three Lay Communicants of this Church, learned in the law, not related by blood or marriage to the accused or accusers to be present at all sessions and deliberations of the Court. It shall be their duty to give to the Court an opinion upon any question that may arise in the course of the trial, upon which the Court or any member thereof, or the accused, or the Church Advocate may request, but they shall have no vote in the decision of any question.
9. The law of evidence in use in the civil courts of the Republic of Liberia shall be the law of evidence of the Ecclesiastical Court of this Diocese, but no charge shall be considered as proven, except upon the testimony of two credible witnesses, or one of such Witnesses corroborated by relevant circumstances.
10. If, at any time before the meeting of the Court, the accused shall make to the Bishop, in writing over the accused's signature, a confession of the crime or offense with which the accused is charged, the Bishop, with the advice of the majority of the Clerical members of the Standing Committee, shall proceed to impose such punishment as the Bishop may deem just and proper.
11. If, during the trial, the accused makes a confession to the charges, the Court may dispense with the hearing of further evidence and may proceed to recommend to the Bishop the punishment that the Court feels should be imposed.

12. In case the accused shall fail to appear before the Court at the time and place appointed, without giving satisfactory reasons for being absent, the Court may nevertheless proceed as if the accused were present, unless for good cause, they shall see fit to adjourn to another day certain.
13. Upon conclusion of the trial, the Court shall declare in writing signed by the members, its decision on the charges contained in the Presentment, indicating whether the accused is guilty, or not guilty of such charges, respectively. If the accused is found guilty, the Court shall recommend to the Bishop the punishment to be imposed.
14. A copy of such decision shall be communicated without delay to the accused and the original decision together with the proceedings and findings, which shall include the evidence adduced at the trial, shall be promptly delivered to the Bishop, who shall publicly pronounce such canonical as shall appear to the Bishop to be proper, provided the same shall not exceed in severity the sentence recommended by the Court.
15. The accused may submit exceptions to the proceedings to the Bishop in writing, or the Bishop, on the Bishop's own volition, if the Bishop considers it necessary after reviewing the proceedings, may order a new trial. In such case, the Bishop shall appoint new Presbyters to constitute the Ecclesiastical Court.
16. The accused shall also have the right to appeal to any review tribunal created in the Church of the Province of West Africa.
17. The expenses of the Court in the trial of a Clergy member, except the accused's own expenses, shall be paid by the Treasurer of the Diocese upon the order of the Bishop.
18. In the absence of the Bishop or in case of the Bishop's inability to act, all the duties of the Bishop under this Canon may be performed by the Bishop Coadjutor, if there is one, or by a Suffragan Bishop, if there is one appropriately authorized to act for the Diocesan; and if not, by the Diocesan Standing Committee, except that the sentence of disposition may be pronounced only by a Bishop.

**CANON XXX
DISCIPLINE OF THE LAITY**

1. Every member of this Church is subject to the laws of the Church as contained in the Book of Common Prayer, in the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, and in the Constitution and Canons of the Church of the Province of West Africa.
2. The Dean of the Cathedral, the Rector of a Parish, the Vicar or the Minister-in-Charge of a Congregation may place under censure any Communicant or Baptized person whom the Dean of the Cathedral, the Rector of a Parish, the Vicar or the Minister-in-Charge deems to have offended against the provisions of Section I of this Canon, and shall so inform the Communicant or Baptized person that (s)he has been placed under censure together with the reasons therefor.
3. Every Communicant so placed under censure shall have the right to appeal to the Bishop for a review of the matter. The decision of the Bishop shall be final.

**CANON XXXI
INSTITUTIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE DIOCESE**

1. Any institution, society or other organization by whatever designation heretofore or hereafter organized, representing itself to be an institution, society or other organization of the Diocese of Liberia for any purpose whatever, may do so only on condition that:
 - i. It shall not be operated for profit and its charter, institution or By-Laws shall specify its purpose.
 - ii. Its officers or governing body shall be members in good standing of a congregation in union with the Diocesan Convention, or Presbyters canonically resident herein. In case it receives funds collected under the authority of the Convention or otherwise, it shall elect or appoint to its governing body at least one member of the Diocesan Council other than the Bishop; although the Bishop shall also be an ex-officio member of all such institutions, societies or other organizations;

- iii. It shall not sell, alienate or encumber real property belonging to it without the approval of the Diocesan Council.
 - iv. It shall file with the Secretary of the Diocesan Council certified copies of its Charter, Constitution, By-Laws, and all amendments to such documents.
 - v. It shall make a written annual report to the Diocesan Council in December of each year setting forth the names of members of its governing body and its financial transactions and other activities during the previous year.
 - vi. It shall comply with the provisions of Canon XXVIII: "Business Methods in the Diocese".
 - vii. It shall permit the Bishop or the Bishop's nominees to visit it and examine its books, minutes, records and affairs, to determine whether it conforms and continues to conform to provisions of this Canon, and whether its standards and performance of work and service warrant continued recognition. If, in the opinion of the Bishop, it shall fail to meet such requirements, the Bishop may report same to the Diocesan Council, whereupon the Council may take such action as it deems appropriate to correct the wrong conditions or to end its status as a Diocesan institution, society or agency.
2. The Secretary of the Diocesan Council shall file annually with the Diocesan Convention; a list of names of all institutions, societies or other agencies, which the Council shall recognize as Diocesan and such list shall be published in the Journal.

CANON XXXII AMENDMENTS

- 1. At each Annual Convention there shall be appointed by the Bishop at a convenient time early in the Session, a Committee on Constitution and Canons consisting of five members of the Convention, who shall serve until the next Annual Convention. Vacancies in the interim may be filled by the Ecclesiastical Authority.

2. Unless unanimous consent is given for amendments to the Canons, no such amendment shall be considered unless it is submitted by its proponent to the Committee on Constitution and Canons at least thirty days before the Convention. In such case the Committee on Constitution and Canons shall transmit a copy of such proposed amendment to the Secretary of the Convention, who in turn shall distribute copies thereof to each person entitled to receive notice of the meeting of the Convention.
3. All amendments to the Canons, shall take effect immediately upon their adoption unless otherwise provided.

CANON XXXIII INTERPRETATION

In the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, unless the contrary intention appears, words importing the masculine gender shall include the feminine gender; words in the singular shall include the plural; and words in the plural shall include the singular.