



# THE AGREEMENT OF UNION:

*The Episcopal Diocese  
of the Great Lakes*

AS PREPARED FOR THE SPECIAL JOINT  
CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESES OF  
EASTERN AND WESTERN MICHIGAN

March 16, 2024 in Grand Blanc, Michigan

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*Published to the dioceses on February 13, 2024*  
*Submitted to the 81st General Convention on March 23, 2024*

*Canon 1.10.6 (the Episcopal Church's canon describing juncture) requires that the Ecclesiastical Authorities and the Standing Committees (and our Standing Committees currently serve in both those capacities) submit to their conventions a resolution commending the Agreement of Union. The vote on this resolution functions as the vote on juncture to become a new diocese.*

# Eastern Michigan - Resolution 1

**Title:** Forming The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes

**Submitted by:** The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan

*Whereas, the Standing Committees and Ecclesiastical Authorities of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan charged the Building Bridges Steering Committee with coordinating a discernment process across both dioceses, advising the Standing Committees regarding "opportunities for collaboration and proposed canonical changes to the structure, governance, and episcopal oversight of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan," and reporting on "matters to be submitted to the 2024 General Convention (e.g. regarding Junction under Canon I.10.6),"*

*Whereas, the Building Bridges Steering Committee completed that process and has recommended that a juncture occur between the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan,*

*Whereas, the Standing Committees of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan have voted to recommend that such juncture occur,*

*Whereas, in accordance with Canon I.10.6, the Agreement of Union and accompanying documents have been prepared by the Building Bridges Steering Committee and presented to the Standing Committees and convention delegates of both dioceses,*

*Whereas, the Standing Committees and Ecclesiastical Authorities of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan now submit the Agreement of Union to this Special Convention, be it*

*Resolved, The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan, meeting at a duly called Special Convention on March 16, 2024, approves the Agreement of Union and agrees to juncture with The Diocese of Western Michigan to form a new diocese, The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes; and be it further*

*Resolved, The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan requests that the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee of the Diocese submit the Agreement of Union to the 81st General Convention meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, June 22nd - June 28th, 2024, for ratification; and be it further*

*Resolved, if the Agreement of Union is ratified by General Convention, The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan requests the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee of the Diocese to call the first Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of The Great Lakes on or about October 18-19, 2024.*

# Western Michigan - Resolution 1

**Title:** Forming The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes

**Submitted by:** The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Western Michigan

*Whereas*, the Standing Committees and Ecclesiastical Authorities of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan charged the Building Bridges Steering Committee with coordinating a discernment process across both dioceses, advising the Standing Committees regarding “opportunities for collaboration and proposed canonical changes to the structure, governance, and episcopal oversight of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan,” and reporting on “matters to be submitted to the 2024 General Convention (e.g. regarding Junction under Canon I.10.6),”

*Whereas*, the Building Bridges Steering Committee completed that process and has recommended that a juncture occur between the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan;

*Whereas*, the Standing Committees of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan have voted to recommend that such juncture occur;

*Whereas*, in accordance with Canon I.10.6, the Agreement of Union and accompanying documents have been prepared by the Building Bridges Steering Committee and presented to the Standing Committees and convention delegates of both dioceses;

*Whereas*, the Standing Committees and Ecclesiastical Authorities of the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan now submit the Agreement of Union to this Special Convention;

*Resolved*, The Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan, meeting at a duly called special convention on March 16, 2024, approves the Agreement of Union and agrees to juncture with The Diocese of Eastern Michigan to form a new diocese, The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes; and be it further

*Resolved*, The Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan requests that the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee of the Diocese submit the Agreement of Union to the 81st General Convention meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, June 22nd - June 28th, 2024, for ratification; and be it further

*Resolved*, if the Agreement of Union is ratified by General Convention, The Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan requests the Ecclesiastical Authority and Standing Committee of the Diocese to call the first Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of The Great Lakes on or about October 18-19, 2024.

# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES

The Diocese of the Great Lakes has been one of our strongest consensus options and one of the first names that was suggested to the Building Bridges Steering Committee which gained significant traction. We love our lakes, and the basin of Lakes Huron and Michigan wraps around us, hydrologically functioning as one large lake. An interesting geographical reality about our congregational distribution is that nearly half of our congregations are clustered within thirty minutes of our 3,224 miles of shoreline on Lakes Michigan and Huron, and the vast majority are an hour or less from that shoreline.

Waters that flow through our communities drain into Lakes Huron and Michigan before eventually making their way down the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River, Lakes Erie and Ontario, and then onward to the St. Lawrence Seaway and eventually, the Atlantic Ocean. In this way, what happens in our communities impacts not just our community, but the whole church and the whole world with which we are connected. Just as we know our God as the one in whom we live and move and have our being, we live and move and have our being in the waters of the Great Lakes. We are people of the Great Lakes.

# ABOUT THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION & CANONS

The draft Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes is part of the *Agreement of Union* submitted to the Special Convention of the Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan. If juncture is approved, the *Agreement of Union* will be submitted to the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church for ratification this summer.

***This Constitution and Canons remain a working draft and would not be implemented until adoption at the First Convention of the new diocese in October 2024. As part of preparation for October's convention, there would be opportunities for further input and revision on this document. Following their submission to the First Convention of the new diocese, the constitution and canons can be amended prior to adoption and at future conventions.***

In the process of drafting these canons, the Governance and Canons Sub-Team of the Building Bridges Steering Committee studied Eastern and Western Michigan's current canons and talked to leaders within both dioceses regarding how current structures were working well and where they needed improvement. We also reached beyond our own dioceses and studied the canons of other dioceses to glean best practices. We looked at the canons of dioceses in processes like ours and those of other healthy, vibrant dioceses whose size and make-up resemble the diocese we would become if juncture is approved.

In November 2023, Building Bridges hosted a leadership day for the Standing Committees, Diocesan Councils, and diocesan staff to receive feedback on draft financial and canonical recommendations. A revised version of those recommendations were distributed throughout the dioceses and over two hundred and fifty lay persons and clergy participated in January feedback sessions.

Every piece of feedback received was considered by a sub-team of Building Bridges. Adjustments, additions, clarifications and other changes were made in every section of the Constitution and Canons included the Agreement of Union based on this feedback from the wider dioceses and our leadership.

In their movement toward “reunification” (the canonical term for dioceses returning back together; “juncture” is the term for dioceses that had not previously been one), the committee leading the Episcopal Trialogue in Wisconsin said in a statement, “If our conventions vote this Spring to reunify, our new diocese will allow us to free up money and human capacity so that we have the space to experiment with new ways of doing ministry, learn from our successes and failures, and try again. The proposal to reunify gives us a place to begin experimenting and innovating—not a final goal or ideal vision of our new diocese.”

It is in that spirit that we present this draft of the Constitution and Canons for the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes. They are a framework from which we can begin as a new diocese, not a final goal nor an ideal vision. While no one document can perfectly describe the “ideal” diocese, we believe we can look forward to the ways in which we can start together, heal together, and grow from this place of beginning again, together. We expect that these canons will be improved and adapted as we learn more fully what is needed to ensure that Episcopal identity, room for innovation, and connections and accountabilities to one another and the larger church are woven deeply into our common life and ministries as the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes.

*This document is a working draft of the Constitution and Canons for the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes. These canons will be offered for adoption at the first Convention of the new Diocese and will be perfected before then.*

## **THE CONSTITUTION AND CANONS OF THE DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES**

**As Adopted by the First Convention of the Diocese**

**(Date)**\_\_\_\_\_

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# **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES**

## **ARTICLE I: ACCESSION TO PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

As a constituent part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, the Diocese of The Great Lakes accedes to, recognizes, and adopts the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and acknowledges their authority.

## **ARTICLE II: TERRITORY OF THE DIOCESE**

The Diocese of The Great Lakes embraces all that part of the Lower Peninsula of the State of Michigan lying within Alcona, Allegan, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Barry, Benzie, Bay, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Clare, Crawford, Eaton, Emmett, Genesee, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Gratiot, Huron, Ionia, Iosco, Isabella, Isle, Kalamazoo, Kalkaska, Kent, Lake, Lapeer, Leelanau, Manistee, Mason, Mecosta, Midland, Missaukee, Montcalm, Montmorency, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oakland (that portion within Holly Township), Oceana, Ogemaw, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Ottawa, Presque Isle, Roscommon, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, St. Joseph, Tuscola, Van Buren, Wexford counties and the islands jurisdictionally attached to any thereof.

## **ARTICLE III: ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY**

The Bishop is the Chief Pastor of the Diocese and may preside and officiate in the worship of the Church within any congregation or mission or elsewhere in the Diocese. The Bishop Diocesan is also the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese, or in the absence of the Bishop Diocesan, the Bishop Coadjutor shall be the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese, if there be one; or in the absence of the Bishop Coadjutor the Bishop Suffragan shall be the ecclesiastical authority, or, if there is no Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, or Bishop Suffragan, the Standing Committee shall be the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese in the absence of a Bishop Diocesan or Bishop Coadjutor. All references to actions by the Bishop in the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention or the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes, in the absence of any Bishop the Standing Committee shall act, unless it is a pastoral or sacramental action or an action under the Disciplinary Canons reserved for Bishops. In that case the Standing Committee shall arrange for the a Bishop to serve in these roles.

## **ARTICLE IV: CONVENTIONS**

An Annual Convention shall be held, and special Conventions may be called and held in this Diocese, as Canon shall provide. The requirements for calling a special Convention shall be prescribed in Canon. The composition, officers, voting and quorum requirements, and the requirements for forfeiture of privileges, shall be prescribed in Canons. Canons not in conflict with this Constitution may be adopted by the Convention to implement the provisions of this Constitution and to prescribe the operation of this Diocese. Such proposed Canons or amendments to it may be adopted, which shall require a two-thirds vote of the members present and eligible to vote at such Convention.

## **ARTICLE V: ELECTION OF A BISHOP**

Canon shall provide the procedure for the election of a Bishop, and the same procedure shall apply to the election of a Bishop Coadjutor or a Suffragan Bishop. At any such election, a motion to go into committee of the whole shall be of the highest privilege after the first ballot and shall be carried by a one-third of each order.

## **ARTICLE VI: AUTHENTICATION AND PRESERVATION OF CONSTITUTION AND CANONS.**

The President and Secretary of the Convention shall certify the Convention's adoption of any Constitutions, Canons, and amendments to it. The Secretary of the Convention shall maintain a document titled "Constitutions and Canons of the Diocese of The Great Lakes," in which such provisions and certifications shall be recorded. The provisions in that book shall be presumed to have been duly adopted and correctly recorded.

## **ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution or any part thereof may be amended in the following manner only: At least ninety days in advance of the annual Convention, the proposal to amend shall be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority in writing, who shall give notice of the substance of the proposed amendment, not less than thirty days in advance of the Convention, to each member of the clergy entitled to seat and vote and to each Community of Faith and Congregation in union with the Diocese. The Bishop shall refer such proposals to an appropriate committee, which shall report to the Convention. After hearing the committee's report, the Convention may consider the amendment and, if approved or approved with change, shall lie over until the next annual Convention. If the amendment is adopted by a majority of each order at the second annual Convention, the Constitution shall stand amended at the close.

# THE CANONS OF THE DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES

## TITLE I: Communities of Faith

A Community of Faith is a group of persons united for the purpose of carrying out the mission of the Church, which the Catechism of the Church says is “to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ”. Communities of Faith pursue the mission of the Church as it “prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.” Communities of Faith in the Canons of this Diocese can be designated as Congregations, Emergent Communities, Companion Ministries, Programmatic Organizations, or Seasonal Chapels,

### Canon 1: Congregations

**Sec. 1.** A Congregation is a Community of Faith that has been admitted into Union with the Convention of the Diocese. A Congregation

- a. Maintains a place of worship, provides the regular engagement of a priest, remains current in payment of its apportionment, and pays all its operating expenses.
- b. Is mission-focused and able to come into alignment with the mission priorities of the Diocese.
- c. Is both inward and outward-looking and seeks to impact its surrounding community.
- d. Has active lay leadership with the skills to manage the programs and property of the Congregation ministry to meet its sense of mission.
- e. Strives to meet the challenges of the community it serves and to provide for the future well-being of congregational life.
- f. Ensures members who by Diocesan Policy are required to be trained on Safe Church and Anti-Racism are trained, and documentation is provided to the Diocesan Office.
- g. Is financially self-supporting and relies mainly on the freewill offering of its members and its resources for its core financial support.
- h. Does not endanger its future well-being by regularly depleting its endowment or capital assets.

**Sec. 2.** A Community of Faith may request recognition as a Congregation and admission into Union with the Convention of this Diocese by submitting, in writing, to the Secretary of the Convention at least sixty days before any Annual Convention, an Application for recognition and admission and also the following:

- a. The minutes of a meeting of the members applying to become a Congregation showing that a majority of the members present have voted in favor of making such application and has elected at least three members to act as incorporators of the congregation;
- b. A certificate from the Bishop acknowledging the intention of said

congregation to incorporate and approve the Application of such congregation.

- c. Proof that the applicable Canons have been met.

The Annual Convention shall vote on recognizing the Community of Faith as a Congregation and admitting them into Union with the Convention of the Diocese.

## **Canon 2: Of the Governance of Congregations**

**Sec. 1.** This Canon supersedes and replaces the By-laws of all Congregations in the Diocese.

### **Sec. 2. Of The Annual Meeting**

- a. In every Congregation, the Annual Congregation Meeting shall be held in January at a time and place designated by the Vestry.
- b. The purpose of this Annual Meeting shall be to elect members to the Vestry; receive reports from the Vestry, Congregation officers, and organizations; receive a budget for the new year; and to transact such other business as may properly come before it.
- c. The Annual Congregation Meeting shall be presided over by the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, if the office is vacant, or if the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader is absent, by the Senior Warden. When the Annual Congregation Meeting is called to order, the qualifications for voters as defined in the Canons of the General Convention shall be read.
- d. A quorum for the transaction of business in the Annual Congregation Meeting shall consist of 25% of the persons entitled to vote if they were present or 25 persons entitled to vote, whichever is less.
- e. No Lay Person shall simultaneously vote or hold office in multiple Congregations.
- f. Each Congregation shall have a Vestry consisting of not less than five nor more than twelve adult Lay Persons in Good Standing elected by the Annual Meeting.
- g. Communicants in good standing shall be eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting and to serve on the Vestry.
- h. In each Congregation, the Vestry may, by resolution, designate the nominating Committee. Otherwise, the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, together with the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden, shall be the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall publish to the Congregation at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting a ballot with sufficient qualified nominees to fill the vacancies on the Vestry for the upcoming year.
- i. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the Annual Congregation Meeting or by other means established in the congregation's by-laws to ensure an open election.
- j. Each Annual Congregation Meeting shall elect persons to serve on the Vestry, replacing those members whose term in office has ended.

- k. The length of one term of office for members of the Vestry shall be three years, with one-third of the members, or as near as may be, elected each year at the Annual Congregation Meeting.

### **Sec. 3. Of Special Congregational Meetings**

- a. A Special Congregation Meeting may be held at any time on the written order of the Ecclesiastical Authority or of the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader,, or by resolution of the Vestry, or on a petition to the Ecclesiastical Authority if such petition be signed by not less than one-third of the number entitled to vote at the last Annual Congregation Meeting. All such orders, resolutions, or petitions shall specify the time and place of such meeting and the business to be considered. No business shall be considered other than that specified in the call at such meeting.
- b. Notice of such meeting shall be distributed throughout the congregation at least two weeks prior to the meeting and read publicly in church at all services (or otherwise disseminated electronically) on two weekends prior to the meeting. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting, the business to be considered, and by whose order the meeting is called.
- c. Such meeting may be presided over by the Bishop. If the Bishop does not preside, the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, shall preside. If there is no Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, the Ecclesiastical Authority may request the Senior Warden to preside.

### **Sec. 4. Of Vestries**

- a. In accordance with the Constitutions and Canons of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, the Vestry shall govern the Congregation and shall manage and be responsible for its property and material affairs; shall further the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Congregation; provide a suitable place of worship and see that it is supplied with all things necessary to the worship of Almighty God; shall select and call a Rector and provide for the remuneration of the Rector; and shall present to each Annual Congregation Meeting a report on its work during the year preceding and a budget for the next year.
- b. Regarding civil matters, the Vestry shall be the corporate Board of Directors. The Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader shall be a member of and preside over the Vestry and is the corporation's President. If there is no Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, then the Senior Warden shall be the President of the Corporation.
- c. The Vestry shall elect Lay Persons in Good Standing to serve as delegates to the Diocesan Convention.
- d. **The Lay Officers of a Congregation** shall consist of the Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clerk, and Treasurer, who shall all be adult Lay Persons In Good Standing of the Congregation and at least 18 years of age. No spouse of a clergy person serving the Congregation may serve as an Officer of the Congregation.

- i. **The Senior Warden** shall be elected annually by the Vestry, upon nomination by the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, from among the members of the Vestry at the first Vestry meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting. If there be no Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, of the Congregation, the Vestry shall nominate a Senior Warden from among the members of the Vestry.
- ii. It is the duty of the Senior Warden to work closely with the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, to advise the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, on all matters pertaining to the Congregation upon which the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, may wish to consult the Senior Warden and to inform the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, of all matters which the Senior Warden feels the Rector needs to know. If there is no Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to assume all the temporal responsibilities of the Rector, including, but not limited to, presiding at Vestry meetings, signing documents, filing reports, and maintaining the Congregation Register. In addition, it shall be the duty of the Senior Warden to provide for the continuation of Divine Worship.
- iii. **The Junior Warden** shall be elected at the first Vestry meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting annually from among their number. In the absence of the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden is to assume the duties of the Senior Warden.
- iv. **The Wardens** shall see that the financial obligations of the Congregation are met and that the buildings belonging to the Congregation are kept in good repair and are adequately insured. Under the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, they shall see that all things needed for the orderly worship of God and the proper administration of the sacraments are provided. They shall prevent or repress all disturbance of Divine Worship. In the absence of a Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, they shall, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, procure suitable supply for the continuance of the services.
- v. **The Clerk** shall be elected annually at the first Vestry meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting. The Clerk shall be responsible for seeing that minutes are taken of all Annual and Special Congregation Meetings and all meetings of the Vestry and shall attest to the same in the Book of Minutes of the Vestry, shall maintain in the said book the annual accounts of the temporal condition of the Congregation, shall keep all original documents, and the list of voters provided for by these Canons. The Clerk shall turn over all books and records belonging to the Congregation to their successor.
- vi. **The Treasurer** shall be elected annually at the first Vestry meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting. Under the authority of the Vestry, the Treasurer is responsible for collecting, receiving, disbursing, and accounting for the funds of the Congregation. Prior to the Annual Congregation Meeting, the Treasurer shall present to the Vestry a full and accurate statement of the financial condition of

the Congregation. At every meeting of the Vestry, the Treasurer shall report the total assets and liabilities of the Congregation and the income and expenses of the general operating funds. As directed, the Treasurer shall report the income and expenses of any other funds. The Treasurer shall furnish a bond, but the Congregation shall bear the cost. The Treasurer shall turn over to his or her successor all books, documents, and funds in his or her possession that belong to the Congregation.

**e. Vacancies**

The Vestry shall fill any midterm vacancies in their number or among the officers of the Congregation by majority vote, so long as the preceding qualifications for membership and office are kept.

**f. Meetings of the Vestry**

Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held at least six times per year. All Vestry members are expected to be present at Vestry meetings. Electronic and hybrid meetings and votes and actions taken within them are valid and acceptable. If any member of the Vestry is absent from three consecutive meetings without due cause, as determined by the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, and the Wardens, that seat shall be declared vacant.

- i. The Vestry shall not transact any business without the presence of the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader of the Congregation, or if the office of Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, is vacant, without the presence of one of the Wardens. A quorum consisting of a majority of the elected members of the Vestry must be present for the Vestry to transact business. No action affecting the rights of the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader shall be taken at any meeting at which the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, has not been given the opportunity to attend.
- ii. Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called at any time at the request of the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader or of any three Vestry members. Notice of such meeting shall be given to the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, the Wardens, and the members of the Vestry with at least three days notice. This notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting and the business to be considered. No other business shall come before such special meeting except with the unanimous consent of the Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Pastoral Leader, and all members of the Vestry.

**g. Indemnification**

- i. No member of the Vestry shall be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken or any failure to take any action unless said person has breached or failed to perform the duties of his office prescribed by these canons. The breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct, or recklessness. The provisions of this section shall not apply to the responsibility or liability of said person pursuant to any criminal statute or for the payment of taxes pursuant to local, state, or federal law.

- ii. The Congregation shall indemnify any Vestry member. It may indemnify any other employee or agent who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to or who is called as a witness in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, including any action by or on behalf of the Congregation by reason of the fact that he is or was a member of Vestry, employee, or agent of the Congregation, against expenses, including attorney's fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding unless the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification is determined by the Court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness. With respect to any such action, the Congregation may participate at its own expense, and the Congregation shall be entitled to assume the defense thereof, with Counsel selected by the Congregation to the reasonable satisfaction of the party being indemnified. After notice from the Congregation to such person of its election to assume the defense thereof, the Congregation shall not be liable to such person for any legal or other expenses subsequently incurred by such person in connection with the defense thereof. Such person shall have the right to employ separate Counsel in such action, but the fees and expenses incurred after a notice from the Congregation of its assumption of the defense thereof shall be at the expense of such person.

### **Canon 3: Of Business Methods in Church Affairs**

**Sec. 1.** In every Congregation, Emergent Ministry, Seasonal Chapel or institution connected with the Diocese of The Great Lakes, the Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs, as issued from time to time by the Church, shall be used as a guide for the conduct of business.

**Sec. 2.** All property, real and personal, held by or for the benefit of any Congregation of this Diocese is held in trust for the Diocese and The Episcopal Church. The existence of this trust, however, shall in no way limit the power and authority of the Congregation otherwise existing over such property so long as the Congregation remains a part of, and subject to, this Church and its General and Diocesan Constitution and Canons.

**Sec. 3.** No mortgage, judgment, voluntary lien, or indebtedness shall be incurred by any Congregation of this Diocese without the consent and approval of the Bishop Diocesan if there be one, and the Standing Committee. If any Congregation learns it is subject to an involuntary lien or judgment, the Rector and/or Senior Warden shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority.

**Sec. 4.** No real property, nor any portion thereof, titled to any Congregation or other institution of this Diocese shall be sold, given away, deliberately destroyed, or otherwise alienated or encumbered without the consent and approval of the Bishop, if there be one, and the Standing Committee.



**Sec. 5.** All Congregations, institutions, and other entities belonging to this Diocese or any of the Congregations of this Diocese shall be adequately insured with property and liability insurance that shall conform to a minimum standard for insurance established by the Diocesan Council and shall provide annually to the Diocese a certificate of insurance.

**Sec. 6.** No Congregation, institution, or other entity belonging to this Diocese shall purchase real estate without the consent and approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

**Sec. 7.** Real property held or administered by the Diocese of The Great Lakes or by institutions, or Congregations connected with it shall be offered for sale, sold, or leased only on a non-discriminatory basis consistent with the applicable laws of the State of Michigan, of the United States of America, and the of the Canons of the General Convention.

**Sec. 8.** Every Congregation shall present the Annual Parochial Report to the Ecclesiastical Authority by the date specified.

#### **Canon 4: Of The Election And Call Of A Priest For A Congregation**

**Sec. 1.** By the Canons of The General Convention, Rectors and Priests-in-Charge are functionally equivalent. The Vestry of the Congregation elects a Rector with approval from the Bishop. The Bishop appoints a Priest-in-Charge in the absence of a Rector. A Rector or Priest-in-Charge has all the duties and responsibilities outlined in the Canons of General Convention.

**Sec. 2.** When the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of a Congregation retires, resigns, becomes incapacitated, or dies, the Wardens shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority and, with the advice of the Ecclesiastical Authority, make due provision for services, the cost thereof to be paid by the Congregation. If the authorities of the congregation shall for 30 days have failed to make provision for services, the Bishop shall take such measures as may be deemed suitable for the temporary maintenance of divine services therein.

**Sec. 3.** In the absence of a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Wardens shall ensure that the church building be kept from all secular and other uses not authorized by the Church. They shall make and certify all entries in the Congregation Register required by Canon and shall make out and present the Annual Parochial Report to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

**Sec. 4.** The Vestry shall elect a priest to be Rector of the Congregation. The said election shall be subject to the following provisions:

- a. It shall be the prerogative of the Ecclesiastical Authority to submit to the Vestry the name or names of priests to be considered by them. The Vestry may also consider people not submitted by the Bishop.
- b. The Vestry in consultation with Diocesan staff shall determine the proper process for the search.
- c. No Congregation may elect a Rector until the names of the proposed nominees have been forwarded to the Ecclesiastical Authority and a time, not exceeding fourteen days, given to the Ecclesiastical Authority to communicate with the Vestry, nor until any such

communication has been considered by the Vestry at a meeting duly called and held for that purpose.

- d. No election shall be had until background checks, according to criteria established by the Ecclesiastical Authority, have been satisfactorily completed.
- e. The election being made, a written notice of the election, signed by the Wardens of the Congregation, a copy of the call to the Rector-elect, and a copy of the letter from the Rector-elect accepting the call shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

**Sec. 5.** The call of the Rector shall be in writing, signed by the Wardens and Clerk of the Vestry for the Congregation. It must express distinctly any special conditions, together with the stipulation of salary or support and provision for residence, which shall conform, at a minimum, with any Diocesan policy regarding minimum salary and benefits.

**Sec. 6.** Rectors shall have a letter of agreement with the Parish setting forth mutual responsibilities, subject to the Bishop's approval.

**Sec. 7.** Any priest appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to minister to a Congregation as the Priest-in-Charge, but not elected by the Vestry thereof, is sent by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon such terms as to financial support, and for such a period of time, as may have been agreed upon by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the priest, and the Vestry of the Congregation. This appointment and agreement shall be in writing.

## **Canon 5: Pastoral Mediation**

**Sec. 1.** Except as provided in the Canons of the General Convention, a Rector may not resign a Congregation without the consent of the Vestry thereof, nor may a rector canonically chosen and in charge of a Congregation be removed therefrom by its Vestry against the Rector's will, except as provided by canon.

**Sec. 2.** If a Rector and the Vestry of the Congregation served are unable to agree on a matter or matters that might lead to a request by either party for dissolution of the pastoral relation, either or both parties shall promptly deliver to the Ecclesiastical Authority a written notice describing their differences and requesting mediation thereof by the Ecclesiastical Authority. Upon receiving such a request, the Bishop shall mediate the disagreement and seek a solution. As part of the mediation process, the Bishop may appoint a committee composed of one presbyter and one layperson, neither affiliated with the Congregation in which the disagreement exists, to investigate and make a written report stating the nature of the dispute and each party's position. This report shall be delivered to the Bishop, the Rector, and the Vestry within 21 days after the committee's appointment. In the absence of the Bishop, the Standing Committee shall exercise the role assigned to the Bishop in this canon.

## **Canon 6: Dissolution of a Pastoral Relationship**

**Sec. 1.** If the pastoral mediation called for by Canon has been exhausted without success and a Rector or the Vestry of the Congregation served wishes to have the pastoral relation dissolved,

each party, within 60 days of the conclusion of the pastoral mediation process, may request final disposition of the dispute by giving written notice thereof to the Ecclesiastical Authority and the other party concerned.

**Sec. 2.** Within 30 days after receiving the written notice provided for in Section 1, the Bishop shall conduct a hearing on the issue. The Bishop shall fix the hearing's date, time, and place, notify the parties affected, and conduct the hearing as ultimate arbiter and judge. In all cases, the Bishop shall consult and seek the advice of the Standing Committee before reaching a decision.

**Sec. 3.** At the Bishop's request, the Standing Committee shall be present at the hearing provided for in Section 2 and shall be permitted to question persons present for the hearing. The Chancellor shall be available to the Bishop for consultation at the hearing.

**Sec. 4.** Each party or their representative may present a position statement and the reasons supporting it. No testimony or other evidence shall be given at the hearing unless exercising discretion. The Bishop shall allow it for compelling reasons in the interests of justice. Oral statements and testimony shall be subject to cross-examination.

**Sec. 5.** The Bishop shall render a decision not later than 15 days following the close of the hearing, and that decision shall be final and binding.

**Sec. 6.** If the pastoral relation is to be dissolved: (a) The Bishop shall set forth the reasons and conditions for the dissolution in writing. A copy shall be provided to each party to the matter at issue, and a copy of the decision shall be available for public inspection. (b) The Bishop shall require just and compassionate compensation or indemnity (if any) and shall undertake to offer such supportive services as may be suitable.

**Sec. 7.** In the event of the failure or refusal of either party to comply with the terms of the decision, the Bishop may impose such penalties as may be provided by the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese and in default of any provisions for such penalties therein, the Bishop may act as follows: (a) In the case of a rector, inhibit such rector from officiating in the Congregation until the decision is complied with. (b) In the case of a vestry, recommend to the Diocesan Convention that the congregation's union with the Convention cease until the Congregation complies with the decision.

**Sec. 8.** Statements made during the proceedings under this Canon are not admissible in any proceeding under Title IV of the Canons of the General Convention. However, this rule does not require excluding evidence in proceedings under the above Canons of the General Convention, where evidence is otherwise discoverable and admissible.

## **Canon 7: Distressed Congregations**

### **Sec. 1. Conditions for Review Status**

This Canon is intended to address the case of a Congregation that appears to be in jeopardy, such that a degree of episcopal intervention or oversight is needed to restore the health of the

Congregation. This Canon is not intended to diminish the right and responsibility of Congregations in the Episcopal Church to govern themselves under applicable law but to recognize situations where the Congregation is no longer operating under the definitional standards of a Congregation provided in these canons. A Congregation may be declared to be a Congregation Under Review when one or more of the following conditions exist, as determined by the Bishop with the consent of the Standing Committee:

- a. The Vestry or Rector of a Congregation requests the Bishop declare it a Congregation Under Review.
- b. The Congregation no longer meets the definition of Congregation provided in these Canons.
- c. The Congregation has violated the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese or the Constitution or Canons of the General Convention, including employing a member of the clergy under ecclesiastical censure or process, permitting a church edifice to be used for purposes incompatible with its consecration, or engaging in any persistent course inconsistent with the doctrine, discipline, or worship of the Church;
- d. The Congregation has refused or neglected to elect a Vestry, or failed to provide representation at any Annual Convention of this Diocese, or refused or neglected to pay its Diocesan Apportionment;
- e. The Congregation has failed to provide the services of a clergyperson without having made reasonable efforts;
- f. The Congregation has failed to comply with the provisions of the Canons of this Diocese or the General Canons of this Church pertaining to Business Methods in Church Affairs or the Church Pension Fund;
- g. The Congregation has repeatedly violated the requirements of the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) in the State of Michigan, or any successive such legislation, in taking more than what the act would consider a reasonably prudent draw from endowment accounts or evidenced substantial financial instability.

## **Sec. 2. Congregations at Risk**

Conditions for At Risk Status. If the conditions set forth above shall persist for more than one year, or if conditions warrant immediate action, the Bishop, with advice and consent of the Standing Committee, may declare the Congregation to be a Congregation at Risk and establish a Restoration Plan, which may require the application of one or more of the following measures to restore health to the Congregation:

- i. Appointment, by the Bishop, of three (3) to five (5) persons, some or all of whom may be adult communicants of the Congregation, to govern the affairs of the Congregation as the Vestry, replacing the current Vestry, notwithstanding any other provisions for such governance or the election of a Vestry in the Canons of this Diocese;

- ii. Designation of the Rector as Vicar;
- iii. Conveyance of title of all property to the Diocese;
- iv. Such other measures which the Bishop, with the concurrence of the Standing Committee, determines to be appropriate.

### **Sec. 3. Restoration to Congregational Status**

- a. At least every six months, the Bishop (together with such other persons or Committees as the Bishop may designate) and the Vestry will evaluate the progress toward correcting the conditions that led to the Congregation being declared at risk, including, but not limited to, the issues and guidelines listed in the Restoration Plan.
- b. When the conditions that led to the decision to declare a Congregation at risk have been substantially ameliorated, the Congregation may petition the Bishop to restore the Congregation to regular canonical status.
- c. The Bishop, with the advice of the Standing Committee, shall decide whether or not to approve the petition.
- d. If a Congregation at Risk shall remain in such status for more than four (4) years without extension of its Restoration Plan, then a special meeting of the Congregation at Risk shall be called by either the Bishop or the Wardens of the Congregation, and by majority vote thereof, it shall be determined whether such Congregation at Risk shall petition to be restored to full and regular Congregation status, or take other actions, or shall ask to be merged, or closed.
- e. With the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, the Bishop shall decide not less than four months after the vote on such requested action whether to restore the Congregation, take other actions, or merge or close the Congregation.
- f. Any decision to close a Congregation shall be taken in accordance with the Canons of this Diocese.

## **Canon 8: The Dissolution of a Congregation**

**Sec. 1.** Whenever any congregation shall choose to dissolve or be determined by the Bishop and Diocesan Council to be no longer viable after steps have been taken to restore congregational health, the Convention may vote to remove it from union with the Diocese by a vote at Convention, but without prejudice to a subsequent application for readmission.

**Sec. 2.** A service for the celebration of the life and ministry of the Congregation shall be scheduled and announced to the Diocese, and, if appropriate, a rite for secularizing a consecrated building shall be included.

**Sec. 3.** In such case, the real estate and invested funds that shall be held by the Diocese for the benefit of the general missionary work of the Diocese or leased, mortgaged, sold, or otherwise disposed of by the Bishop and the Diocesan Council. All property and funds in the custody of

the treasurer of the congregation shall be turned over to the Treasurer of the Diocese to be used under the direction of the Bishop and the Diocesan Council for the general missionary work of the Diocese.

## **Canon 9: Emergent Community of Faith**

**Sec. 1. Definition** An Emergent Community of Faith is a new community that begins as a ministry of the Diocese or of a Congregation of the Diocese and is in a period of initial formation and incubation.

**Sec. 2.** To be designated as an Emergent Community of Faith, members:

- a. Participate in a discernment process overseen by the Diocesan Council
- b. Following approval by Council, the community works with representatives of the Diocesan Council to reach an Emergent Community of Faith Agreement.
- c. The purpose of the Agreement is to clarify expectations and accountabilities. It includes such details as financial support, if any, from the diocesan operating budget, the pattern of reporting, leadership relationship to the diocese, staff accountability, the timeframe of the Agreement, and its renewal process.
- d. The Bishop, Diocesan Council, and Standing Committee must approve the Agreement.

## **Canon 10: Companion Ministry**

**Sec. 1. Definition** A Companion Ministry is an organization that is a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is in alignment with the overall vision and mission purposes of the diocese and provides a ministry within the diocese. By its designation as a Companion Ministry of the Diocese, Companion Ministries receive tangible and intangible benefits from the diocese, while the diocese benefits from the mission and ministry possibilities these organizations offer.

**Sec. 2.** To be designated a Companion Ministry, the organization or representatives must:

- a. Participate in a discernment process overseen by the Diocesan Council
- b. Following approval by Diocesan Council, the organization applying for Companion Ministry designation works with representatives of the Diocesan Council to reach a Companion Ministry Agreement adapted from the Diocesan template.
- c. The purpose of the Agreement is to clarify expectations and accountabilities. It includes such details as financial support, if any, from the diocesan operating budget, the pattern of reporting, leadership relationship to the diocese, staff accountability, the timeframe of the Agreement, and its renewal process.
- d. The Bishop, Diocesan Council, and Standing Committee must approve the Agreement.

## **Canon 11: Programmatic Organization**

**Sec. 1. Definition** A Programmatic Organization is an established ministry of the diocese that is accountable to and run by diocesan leadership or a specific appointee but is significant enough to function as its own subset of the diocesan budget and staffing structure.

**Sec. 2.** As a program of the Diocese evolves into a Programmatic Organization, a Programmatic Organization Agreement is developed and approved by the Bishop, Diocesan Council, and the programmatic director (or lead staff person) of the programmatic organization, detailing its financial, administrative, accountability, and management detail.

## **Canon 12: Seasonal Chapel**

**Sec. 1.** A Seasonal Chapel is a community of faith that functions like a congregation but does not gather year-round. A Seasonal Chapel has a Bishop's Committee instead of a Vestry and is under the authority of the Bishop.

**Sec. 2.** The Bishop, as Rector of each Seasonal Chapel, supervises and directs all Missionary activity of any Seasonal Chapel. It is solely the Bishop's prerogative to appoint Clergy to all Seasonal Chapels.

**Sec. 3. Officers** The responsibilities of the Bishop's Wardens, the Bishop's Committee, and the Officers of a Seasonal Chapel shall, as far as applicable, be those of the Wardens, the Vestry, and the officers of a Congregation but subject to the interpretation of the Bishop in cases of doubt.

### **Sec 4. The membership of the Bishop's Committee:**

- a. The number of members of the Bishop's Committee is determined by the Bishop, who may increase or decrease the number at any time.
- b. Qualifications for the Bishop's Committee members are those prescribed by Canon for members of the Vestry of a Congregation except as the Bishop otherwise directs.
- c. The Bishop may accept or reject any or all nominations made by members of the Seasonal Chapel and may appoint others and at any time remove from office any member or members of the Bishop's Committee and appoint others.
- d. The Wardens and other Officers of the Bishop's Committee are nominated in the same manner as Wardens and officers of a Congregation.
  - i. The Wardens, Secretary, and Treasurer perform the duties pertaining to those offices in a Congregation.
  - ii. The Treasurer must be bonded in an amount and by a surety approved by the Bishop.
  - iii. The Bishop accepts or rejects any or all nominations for Wardens, Secretary, and Treasurer and appoints others, and may at any time remove any or all of such officers and may appoint others.

- e. The Bishop has exclusive authority to fill vacancies in the membership of the Bishop's Committee.

## **Sec. 5. Bishop's Committee Meetings and Responsibilities**

- a. The Priest-in-Charge has the right to vote and preside at all Bishop's Committee meetings. If the Priest-in-Charge does not preside at a meeting of the Committee, then the senior Warden, or if the senior Warden is absent, then the junior Warden presides.
- b. No action may be taken at the Bishop's Committee meeting unless the Priest-in-Charge, Warden, or other person appointed to the Bishop's representative is present.
- c. Every Bishop's Committee must adopt an annual budget for the seasonal chapel, and the finances of the Seasonal Chapel must be administered consistent with that budget. The annual budget and any subsequent material amendment to it are subject to the written approval of the Bishop and the Diocesan Council.
- d. The requirement of paying diocesan apportionment applies to Seasonal Chapels (unless the Bishop has waived in writing this requirement). Diocesan Apportionment must be part of each annual budget, and the Seasonal Chapel is obligated to the Diocese for the regular monthly payments of the apportionment. If in any budget, the Seasonal Chapel does not include the apportionment to the Diocese (unless the requirement of the apportionment is waived in writing by the Bishop), or if it does not make monthly payments on their apportionment, then the Bishop may discontinue services of the Vicar or other Priest-in-Charge if the Council concurs in that action, or the Bishop may take further action, including dissolution of the Seasonal Chapel, at the Bishop's discretion.

## **Sec. 6. Annual Meeting**

- a. An Annual Meeting of the Seasonal Chapel shall be held at the time and place described in a notice issued by the Bishop's Committee or at another time or place prescribed by the Bishop.
- b. The Vicar or other Priest-in-Charge, ex officio, chairs the Annual Meeting, and in the Vicar's absence, the senior Warden is Chair pro tempore.
- c. If the Vicar or other Priest-in-Charge and the senior Warden cannot serve, the Bishop designates a Chair pro tempore.
- d. At the Annual Meeting, persons are nominated to serve on the Bishop's Committee. The qualifications of voters and conduct of the election of nominees to the Bishop's Committee shall conform to the Canons describing the election of members of a Congregation Vestry. Names of nominees and a description of other actions taken at the annual meeting must be posted in a conspicuous place available to the membership and sent to the Bishop within seven days of the annual meeting.
- e. At the Annual Meeting, delegate(s) and alternate(s) to the Convention of the Diocese shall be elected in the same manner as in a Congregation.



## **Sec. 7. Requirements and Reports**

- a. In every Seasonal Chapel, a register conforming to the requirements of Congregational registers must be kept by the Priest-in-Charge, if there is one, or else by a Warden or Secretary.
- b. The Priest-in-Charge of a Seasonal Chapel must submit reports of activities as required by the Bishop or the Council.

## **Sec. 8. Closure of a Seasonal Chapel**

The Bishop may close a Seasonal Chapel temporarily or permanently at any time and for any reason with the agreement of the Diocesan Council.

# **TITLE II: Communities of Faith in Covenant Relationship**

## **Canon 1: Clusters**

**Sec. 1. Definition.** A cluster consists of two or more Congregations organized under the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, which have entered into a covenant to work together in a regional ministry for a period of at least three years. Each participating Congregation retains its own identity, Vestry or other governing body, budget, property, and representation in the Convention of the Diocese.

**Sec. 2. Formation of a Cluster.** A Cluster may be formed, with the consent of the Bishop, upon an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Vestry or other governing body of each participating Congregation. Thereafter, a Congregation may join the Cluster, with the consent of the Bishop, upon an affirmative vote of three-fourths of its Vestry or other governing body and an affirmative vote of a majority of the Cluster Council.

## **Sec. 3. Cluster Governance and Leadership**

- a. **Cluster Council.** There shall be a Cluster Council consisting of at least two confirmed adult communicants in good standing from each participating Congregation. The clergy serving participating congregations shall be members of the Cluster Council with seat and voice but no vote.
- b. **Cluster Bylaws.** The cluster council may adopt bylaws that include provision for the election of a president, a secretary, and a treasurer from among those lay persons eligible to serve on the Cluster Council and the establishment of an annual budget. A copy of the bylaws and each amendment thereto adopted by the Cluster Council, certified by the secretary, shall be filed within 30 days thereafter with the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese for approval.
- c. **Cluster Ministry Team.** There shall be a cluster ministry team, which shall include the clergy serving participating congregations and lay missionaries designated by the cluster council.

**Sec. 4.** Withdrawal from a Cluster. A participating Congregation may withdraw from a Cluster at the end of a calendar year, with the consent of the Bishop, upon six months' notice, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of its Vestry or other governing body, and an affirmative vote of a majority of the Cluster Council.

## **Canon 2: Cooperatives**

**Sec. 1.** Definition: A Cooperative is two or more congregations served by the same member of the clergy who choose to enter into a Covenant to work together and share governance for a period of at least three years. Each participating congregation retains its own identity and representation in the Convention of the Diocese.

**Sec. 2. Formation of a Cooperative:** A Cooperative may be formed, with the consent of the Bishop, upon an affirmative vote at an annual meeting of each congregation. Upon the Cooperative's formation, each congregation's vestries will be disbanded, and the authority of each vestry will be ceded to the Cooperative Committee. The Cooperative Committee shall have the authority of a vestry in each of the congregations of the Cooperative as described in the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and of the Diocese of the Great Lakes.

### **Sec. 3. Cooperative Governance and Leadership**

- a. Cooperative Committee. There shall be a Cooperative Committee consisting of not less than three nor more than six enrolled confirmed adult communicants in good standing from each participating congregation elected at the congregation's Annual Meeting. The clergy serving participating congregations shall be members of the Cooperative Committee with seat, voice, and vote.
- b. The Cooperative Committee shall elect one member from each congregation as Warden of that congregation.
- c. Cooperative Committee Bylaws. The Cooperative Committee may adopt bylaws that include provisions for the election of a president, a secretary, and a treasurer from among those lay persons eligible to serve on the Cooperative Committee and establishing an annual budget for the Cooperative. A copy of the bylaws and each amendment thereto adopted by the Cooperative Committee, certified by the secretary, shall be filed within 30 days with the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese for approval.
- d. The Cooperative may have individual congregation Annual Meetings or a Cooperative Annual Meeting. If a Cooperative Annual Meeting is chosen, it shall comply with all of the requirements for congregational annual meetings in the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and the Diocese of The Great Lakes. It shall be considered the Annual Meeting for each member congregation.
- e. The Cooperative Committee may approve an annual budget covering all the revenues and expenses of all member congregations and present it to the Annual Meeting of each congregation or the Cooperative Annual Meeting.

**Sec. 4. Withdrawal from a Cooperative:** A participating congregation may withdraw from a Cooperative, with the consent of the Bishop, upon six months' notice, an affirmative vote at an annual meeting of the congregations, and an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Cooperative Committee.

### **Canon 3: Mission Regions**

**Sec. 1. Composition** The Diocese shall be divided into at least four Mission Regions, which the Bishop will determine in consultation with the Standing Committee or appointed Committee. The clergy and members of the Communities of Faith in the Region are members.

**Sec. 2. Purpose** The Mission Region provides a vehicle for Congregations, Emergent Communities, Companion Ministries, Programmatic Organizations, and Seasonal Chapels in proximity to each other to offer mutual support, share best practices, and collaborate on program, projects and activities in furtherance of their respective missions and the mission and vision of the Diocese.

## **TITLE III: The Diocese**

### **Canon 1: The Association of the Diocese**

**Sec. 1. Status** The Diocese of The Great Lakes is a non-profit, non-stock ecclesiastical trustee corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Michigan. It is the custodian for the collection, holding, investment, and management of:

- a. All property and permanent funds of the Diocese except such as are or may be held by the Bishop as discretionary funds.
- b. All property and funds which may be conveyed to and held by it in trust for specified Communities of Faith, societies, groups, or committees.
- c. All property and funds conveyed to it in trust for the furtherance of any religious, educational or charitable purpose of this Church.

**Sec. 2. Title of Property** All conveyances shall be made to, and title to all property belonging to the Diocese shall vest in the Diocese, to be held for such purposes as its articles provide or as the Convention may direct by Canon or resolution, or as may be provided in any will, trust instrument, or valid order of a court of competent jurisdiction, A Congregation, Emergent Community, Seasonal Chapel, or other entity of the Diocese must obtain the approval of both the Bishop and the Standing Committee before acquiring or disposing of real property, whether by purchase, gift, bequest, or otherwise. Title to real property shall be held in trust for the Diocese of The Great Lakes, except as the Bishop and the Standing Committee. otherwise directed.

**Sec. 3. Securities and Contracts** The Diocese shall have full authority to buy and sell investments, securities, notes, and mortgages and to enter into leases and other contracts upon the approval of the annual Convention or Diocesan Council.

**Sec. 4. Diocesan Funds** The Diocesan Council shall determine the use of Diocesan funds.

**Sec. 5. Extension of Agency Service to Vestries and Others**

If any Vestry, society, guild, circle, or board of any Community of Faith of this Diocese shall desire to avail itself of the services of the Diocese as an agency for the safekeeping and management of funds or securities, it may do so under such form of agency agreement as may be approved by the Diocesan Council. Application for such service shall be pursuant to resolution of the governing body of the applicant and shall have the written approval of the Rector.

**Canon 2: The Convention of the Diocese**

**Sec. 1.** The Diocese will hold an Annual Convention. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall determine the date, time, and place.

**Sec. 2.** The Ecclesiastical Authority shall have the power to call special conventions. It shall do so when requested in writing by any five members of the Standing Committee and shall give the Secretary of the Convention reasonable notice as to the proposed date, time, place, and purpose of such Special Convention.

**Sec. 3. Notice of Convention**

- a. The Secretary of the Convention shall give written notice of the date, time, and place of any Convention, annual or special.
- b. Notices may be transmitted electronically.

Notices will be sent to the lay delegates of the Communities of Faith in union with the Convention and to all clergy canonically resident in the Diocese and resident in the State of Michigan.

- c. Notices of Annual Conventions must be transmitted at least sixty days prior to the Convention date. Notices of a Special Convention must be sent at least thirty (30) days prior to the Convention date and shall contain the purpose for which the Convention is being called. Notices of a Special Convention for the election of a Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor must be sent at least sixty (60) days prior to the Convention date and contain the purpose for which the Convention is being called.
- d. Notice of an annual Convention shall be accompanied by a form for reporting the election of lay delegates and alternates, which is to be completed and signed (actually or electronically) by the Rector, Pastoral Leader, Priest-in-Charge, or warden and by the secretary of the Vestry or the secretary of the annual meeting at which they were elected, and transmitted to the Diocesan Secretary in accordance with the instructions therefore.

#### **Sec. 4. Composition Of Convention**

The Annual Convention shall be comprised of clerical and lay delegates as follows:

- a. The Bishop;
- b. Each member of the clergy canonically resident and resident in the State of Michigan and having pastoral charge or engaged in work requiring the exercise of clerical duties;
- c. Each member of the clergy canonically and resident in the State of Michigan but not exercising clerical duties solely by reason of age or sickness;
- d. Each member of the clergy who is a member of a denomination in full communication with the Episcopal Church and serving a congregation in the Diocese.
- e. Each member of the clergy canonically resident in this Diocese but who is on active duty in the Chaplain's Corps of the Armed Forces of the United States of America;
- f. Each abbot, prior or acting head of a monastic community who is canonically resident and resident in the Diocese;
- g. Professed and ordained members of a monastic community canonically and actually resident in the Diocese and having pastoral charge of a congregation in the Diocese;
- h. Each Congregation, Emergent Ministry, Companion Ministry, and Seasonal Chapel not otherwise represented by delegates shall have one seat with voice and vote at the convention. The Community of Faith shall determine who their representative shall be.
- i. Each Congregation in union with the Convention shall be entitled to two lay delegates who are adult communicants in good standing chosen as prescribed by the congregation's bylaws.
- j. Each congregation with an average Sunday attendance greater than seventy-five, as reported on the most recent parochial report, shall be entitled to one additional lay delegate.
- k. Eight youth delegates appointed by the Bishop with nominations from throughout the diocese.
- l. A majority of the clergy entitled to vote and a majority of the qualified lay delegates entitled to vote, duly assembled in Convention shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the voting members present may adjourn the Convention from time to time.
- m. Otherwise qualified people may be given seat with voice but without vote, as the convention allows.

#### **Sec. 5. Functions Of Convention**

A convention, whether annual or special, except as limited by Constitution or Canon, has power to:

- a. Prescribe its own rules of procedure;

- b. Amend the Constitution;
- c. Enact, amend, or repeal Canons;
- d. Elect a Bishop Diocesan in case of vacancy;
- e. Elect a Bishop Coadjutor or a Bishop Suffragan as provided by Constitution or Canon;
- f. Elect officers and confirm appointments as provided by Constitution or Canon;
- g. Appoint commissions, committees, agencies, ecclesiastical or other corporations, and boards, ad hoc or otherwise, as necessary for the business of the Convention and to define their duties;
- h. Admit a congregation into union with the Convention in the manner prescribed by Canon, and to terminate such union;
- i. Receive, order filed, or reject reports of officers and other instrumentalities;
- j. Approve budgets; and
- k. Approve resolutions

### **Canon 3: Diocesan Officers**

#### **Sec. 1. Qualifications**

- a. To be eligible to serve as an officer of any Convention, member of the Standing Committee or Diocesan Council, deputy to the General Convention or Provincial Synod, any member of the clergy or lay person must be a communicant in good standing, except that a lay person may be elected who has not previously been elected a delegate to the annual Convention.
- b. Diocesan officers (except for the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council) provided for in this Canon may be nominated by the Ecclesiastical Authority and, if there be no other nominations, elected by acclamation by the Convention.
- c. All people who want to participate in this Church's life, worship, and governance shall be encouraged regardless of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age, except as otherwise specified by Canons. Every effort shall be made in every election or appointment process to include members of underrepresented groups. Every effort will also be made to include geographic and congregation size diversity in every election or appointment process.

#### **Sec. 2. Presiding Officer**

The President and Presiding Officer of the Convention shall be the Bishop, or in the Bishop's absence, the Bishop Coadjutor, or in the absence of both the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor, if any, the President of the Standing Committee. In the absence of all the previous, the senior presbyter (by length of time in canonical residence in this Diocese present shall call Convention to order, and the Convention shall elect a President pro tempore. The Presiding Officer shall have no vote except in case of a tie.

### **Sec. 3. Secretary**

The annual Convention shall elect the Secretary for a term of one year and shall have the duty to:

- a. Attend to the giving of all notices of a Convention and shall perform all duties assigned by the presiding officer by the Convention or by Canon,
- b. File and preserve all certificates of election of lay delegates and all written reports laid before the Convention;
- c. Preserve in permanent form complete minutes of the proceedings of the Convention and all its records;
- d. Deliver to the Bishop such documents of historical value as the Bishop may request;
- e. Prepare, proofread, and cause promptly to be published the Journal of the Annual Convention and shall transmit or disseminate a printed or electronic copy thereof throughout the Diocese, at the direction of the Diocesan Council.
- f. The Secretary may appoint an Assistant Secretary or secretaries with approval of the annual Convention.

### **Sec. 4. Treasurer**

- a. The annual Convention shall elect the Treasurer for one year. Before engaging in office duties, the Treasurer shall give bond as required by Canons of the General Convention. Such bond shall be deposited with the Bishop.
- b. The Treasurer or the Diocesan Financial Officer shall have the duty to:
  - i. Receive and safely preserve and account for all monies and other things of value which come into the Treasurer's possession or control, and to make disbursement therefrom when, as, and only to the extent duly authorized;
  - ii. Maintain in books belonging to the Diocese an accurate record in detail of all receipts and disbursements of money or other things of value and maintain a separate complete account of each fund;
  - iii. Obtain and keep on file proper receipts and vouchers evidencing all disbursements;
  - iv. Present to the annual Convention and deliver to the Diocesan Council, upon request, a detailed report of the receipts and disbursements of each fund and the balance on hand;
  - v. Cause an audit satisfactory to the Diocesan Council to accompany the annual report;
  - vi. Exercise diligence in the collection of all funds due and payable to the Diocese;
  - vii. Deliver promptly to a duly elected and qualified successor in office all monies and other things of value which have come into the Treasurer's hands or control and

which have not been lawfully disbursed, together with all books, records, files, documents, receipts, vouchers, and correspondence pertaining to the office of the Treasurer.

#### **Sec. 5. Assistant Treasurer**

An Assistant Treasurer may be elected and shall give bond in the same manner as the Treasurer and shall assist the Treasurer as requested and perform the duties of Treasurer in case of absence or disability of the Treasurer.

#### **Sec. 6. Registrar**

The annual Convention shall elect the Registrar for a term of one year and shall be the custodian of all diocesan documents and records not in the hands of the Bishop or required by Canon to be in the custody of some other officer.

#### **Sec. 7. The Chancellor and Vice Chancellors**

- a. The Ecclesiastical Authority may appoint a suitable person learned in Ecclesiastical and Civil law, who shall be a communicant of this Church, a resident of this Diocese, and a member of the Michigan State Bar, as Chancellor of the Diocese. The appointed person may retire from office at any time and shall be subject to removal by and at the pleasure of the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- b. The Chancellor shall be the legal advisor to the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Convention, the Diocesan Council, and the Standing Committee in all cases and upon all questions in which each requests the Chancellor's advice in its official capacity.
- c. The Chancellor shall serve as the parliamentarian to the meetings of the Convention and other governing bodies of the Diocese upon request and is the Chair of the Committee on Constitution and Canons.
- d. Upon request and approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Chancellor may advise and assist the Congregations and other Institutions of the Diocese.
- e. In fulfilling the duties enumerated above, the Chancellor, with the approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority, may call on the services of one or more Vice Chancellors.

#### **Sec. 8. The Bishop Coadjutor**

The Bishop Coadjutor, if any, shall be ex-officio a member of all Diocesan commissions of which the Bishop Diocesan is ex-officio a member. In the absence or disability of the Bishop Diocesan to act, the Bishop Coadjutor shall possess all the powers and perform all the duties of the Bishop Diocesan prescribed in these Canons

### **Canon 4: Elections**

**Sec. 1.** A Committee on Elections, consisting of lay and/or clergy members, shall be appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority. The Committee will provide for and manage the procedure of



elections at Conventions of the Diocese and report on the results of the same in a manner consistent with these Canons and as approved by the Convention or the Standing Committee.

**Sec. 2.** In all elections, other than the election of a Bishop, the first ballot for an election shall contain the names of all persons as nominated by the appropriate Committee. Any person(s) receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected.

**Sec. 3.** Should fewer than the necessary number of persons to fill the positions of an office be elected receive a majority of the votes cast in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be prepared. The names of the remaining unelected nominees receiving the most votes shall, in order of most votes received, be placed on the second ballot in sufficient numbers to provide only twice the number of names as positions to be elected. Any person(s) receiving a majority of the votes cast in the second ballot shall be declared elected. Should fewer than the necessary number of persons to fill the positions of an elected office be elected on the second ballot, a third ballot shall be prepared and taken as provided in this Section for the second ballot.

**Sec. 4.** Should an election by a majority vote be inconclusive after a third ballot, a deadlock shall be declared. Any persons elected on the first, second, and third ballots shall be declared elected, and the remaining unfilled positions shall be filled as provided for in the Canons. Should that vacancy be required to be filled by election at an Annual Convention of the Diocese, that vacancy shall hold over and the next subsequent Annual Convention or Council meeting shall fill that vacancy by election; the person(s) then elected shall serve the unexpired remainder of the original term.

#### **Sec. 5. Election Of A Bishop**

- a. The election of a Bishop Diocesan, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Bishop Suffragan shall be made at a Convention, either annual or special, as described by these Canons. If such election occurs at an annual Convention, it shall be required that notice of the Convention include notice of the intent to elect a Bishop and that such notice be distributed to Convention delegates not less than 60 days prior to the Convention. Notification of a Special Convention called for the purpose of electing a Bishop Diocesan, a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Bishop Suffragan shall be distributed to Convention delegates not less than 60 days prior to the special Convention, and such notice shall state the purpose of the special Convention.
- b. The election of a Bishop Diocesan, or a Bishop Coadjutor, or a Bishop Suffragan shall be in the following manner:
  - i. Nominations shall only be made as follows to the Standing Committee no later than the date specified by the Standing Committee:
  - ii. By the Search Committee appointed as directed by the Standing Committee; and
  - iii. By petition, the form of which shall be determined by the Standing Committee, signed by no less than three (3) clergy members and by no less than three (3) lay members in good standing. The person nominated must indicate such person's

willingness to be nominated and consent in writing to the standard background checks no later than the date specified by the Standing Committee.

- c. All nominees whose nomination has been made as set forth above shall be eligible for election, and no nominations may be made from the floor of the Convention.
- d. In accordance with the canons of the General Convention, the members of the clergy and lay delegates to the Convention shall vote by ballot and by orders. A concurrence of a majority of both orders shall be necessary for an election. If in either order less than 60 percent of all entitled to vote are present, two-thirds of the votes of those present in that order shall be necessary to determine the election. Absent non-stipendiary members of the clergy and absent retired members of the clergy shall not be counted in determining the majority of clergy.
- e. In case of failure to elect upon any ballot as herein provided, the Convention shall continue to ballot until an election occurs or the Convention adjourns.

## **Canon 5: Committees of the Diocese**

### **Sec. 1. The Standing Committee**

- a. There shall be a Standing Committee to perform the functions and duties prescribed by the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and this Diocese.
- b. The Standing Committee shall present to the Annual Convention each year a report of its work and activities during the preceding year, except such as pertain to the exercise of its function as The Council of Advice to the Bishop.
- c. **Composition** The Standing Committee shall comprise ten persons: four laypersons, four clergy members serving three-year terms, the current vice chair of the Diocesan Council, and one other Diocesan Council member appointed by Council. Each year, sufficient members of the clergy and sufficient confirmed adult communicants shall be elected by the annual Convention for three-year terms. No person in the ordination process may serve on the Standing Committee. Vacancies shall be filled at the next annual Convention by-election for the remainder of the unexpired term, in addition to the positions elected as provided above.
- d. **Organization** The Standing Committee shall meet within 30 days of the end of the Annual Convention to elect a member to be President, a member to be Vice-President, and a member to be Secretary. The Standing Committee shall determine the specified date, time, and place of its regular meetings. Meetings may be in person or virtual. Such dates, times, and locations shall be posted at the diocesan office and on the Internet. The Secretary of the Standing Committee shall notify all members of these regular meetings, date, time, and place. A majority shall constitute a quorum. Additional meetings of the Standing Committee may be called at any time by the Bishop, the President of the Standing Committee, or any three members.
- e. **Expenses** All necessary expenses incurred by members of the Standing Committee in attending its sessions shall be paid by the Treasurer from the General Fund.

- f. **Powers** During the interval between annual Conventions, the Standing Committee, by and with the approval of the Bishop, shall have the power to fill, by appointment, any vacancy in any elective or appointive office of the Diocese, except as otherwise provided by Canon. Such an appointment will be for the unexpired portion of the term.
- g. **Duties** The Standing Committee shall have the duty to:
  - i. Call a special Convention when there is no Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Coadjutor, or Bishop Suffragan.
  - ii. Investigate and make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding any matter of difference arising between a member of the clergy and a congregation or Vestry, which matter is first referred to the Standing Committee by the Ecclesiastical Authority. Such recommendation shall be binding upon the Bishop's approval.
  - iii. Preserve in a book belonging to the Diocese, correct minutes of all proceedings of the Committee, which shall be signed by the Secretary and countersigned by the President. Such record shall be subject to inspection by the Ecclesiastical Authority. A summary thereof shall be presented at the following annual Convention.
  - iv. Within 30 days following a meeting of the Standing Committee, a copy of the minutes of that meeting (whether yet approved as presented or corrected) shall be provided to each member of the Diocesan staff and each member of the Diocesan Council. These minutes may be provided by electronic means.
- h. **Recusal** The clergy or any member of a Congregation involved in any matter pending before the Standing Committee shall recuse himself or herself from discussion and vote on that matter. In addition, no clergy or layperson connected to a Congregation implementing a plan to restore congregational health or linked to a congregation undergoing a dissolution will be eligible for election/appointment to the Standing Committee. Their resignation is required if that designation occurs during a member's term.

## **Sec. 2. The Diocesan Council**

- a. The Diocesan Council shall function as the executive committee of the Diocese acting with the authority of and in the name of the Diocese between meetings of the annual Convention and in accordance with such direction and limits as may be set forth by the Diocese in its articles of incorporation or by such resolutions or canons that may be passed by the Convention.
- b. The Diocesan Council shall function as the governing authority of the Episcopal Diocese of The Great Lakes, a Michigan ecclesiastical corporation. It shall prepare and adopt the annual financial budget of the Diocese.

- c. Composition and Presiding Officers of Diocesan Council
  - i. Diocesan council shall be composed of 14 members, six laypersons and six clergy elected by convention. The Standing Committee President and a second member of the Standing Committee appointed by the Standing Committee are also members of Council. Elected members shall serve three-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms.
  - ii. The Bishop shall normally serve as presiding officer. The Council shall annually elect a Vice Chair from its ranks. A Secretary, who need not be a member of the Diocesan Council, may be likewise elected.
- d. Meetings and Reporting of The Diocesan Council
  - i. The Diocesan Council meets on sufficient occasions during the year on the call of the presiding officer to enable it to carry out its function and duties.
  - ii. Within 30 days following a meeting of the Diocesan Council, a copy of the minutes of that meeting (whether or not yet approved as presented or corrected) shall be provided to each member of the Diocesan staff and each member of the Standing Committee. These minutes may be provided by electronic means.
  - iii. All meetings of the Council shall be held in open session, with time, date, and place being announced by appropriate means to the entire Diocese, and members thereof, clerical and lay, shall be invited and urged to attend such meetings. Executive sessions shall be permitted upon a two-thirds vote of all Council members present and voting for the considerations of budget matters related to personnel or staffing. The ultimate resolution of such budgetary personnel matters shall be reported and ratified by vote in an open meeting.
- e. Responsibilities and Powers of The Diocesan Council
  - i. There shall be a Diocesan Council to administer the secular affairs of the Diocese pursuant to the statutes of the State of Michigan and to perform the various functions and duties prescribed by the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese.
  - ii. The Diocesan Council shall have full powers over all property conveyed or transferred to it, in trust or otherwise, or held or received by it, for or in connection with the work and business of the Church and the Diocese, or elsewhere, and to collect, pay out, and dispose of all income received or held by it for any such purpose aforesaid, subject, however, to the terms of the trust or trusts under which any such property or money may have been received by it.
  - iii. The Diocesan Council shall develop strategy and policy, in conjunction with the Bishop and in collaboration with other leadership bodies and agencies of the Diocese;
  - iv. The Diocesan Council oversees the discernment and designation processes for Emergent Communities of Faith, Companion Ministries, and Programmatic Organizations of the Diocese.

- v. The Diocesan Council oversees the discernment and covenanting processes for Clusters and Cooperatives in the Diocese.
- vi. The Diocesan Council may create commissions, task forces, committees, and boards to carry out its work. These entities will be accountable to and operate under guidelines and time frames established by the Diocesan Council with consent of the Bishop. Any committee, board, etc. created by the Diocesan Council can also be terminated by Diocesan Council with the consent of the Bishop.
- vii. The Diocesan Council shall appoint an Endowment Committee to serve as advisory to Diocesan Council. The Endowment Committee composed of five members, plus a liaison from Diocesan Council, and the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer of the Diocese if there be one, serving as ex officio members. The term of members is four years with two consecutive terms possible and at least one year following the second term for eligibility to serve again. The Endowment Committee is charged with oversight of endowment distributions and is to make recommendations to Diocesan Council regarding the annual draw based on established guidelines and policy. The Endowment Committee shall meet at least quarterly and report to Diocesan Council at least quarterly.
- viii. The Diocesan Council shall provide the following review, approval or disapproval: no Congregation that receives financial aid from the Diocese or which requires the permission of the Bishop acting with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Council to encumber property to finance any construction project shall erect any new building or make changes in existing buildings until the plans for such erection or alteration shall have been approved by the Diocesan Council. Any such congregation that fails to comply with this provision shall render itself liable to the forfeiture of its aid and/or liable to the disapproval of the Diocesan Council to encumber the property.
- ix. The Diocesan Council shall monitor compliance with the requirements related to the Church Pension Fund of the Canons of the General Convention in a timely and effective manner and work to resolve any deficiencies in that compliance.
- x. The Diocesan Council shall present to the Annual Convention report its work and activities during the preceding year each year. All rules and by-laws of the Diocesan Council shall be published annually in the Journal of the Convention.

#### **Sec. 4. The Commission on Ministry**

- a. The purpose of the Commission will be to advise and assist the Bishop in implementing Title III of the Canons of the General Convention.
- b. The Commission shall consist of at least ten members appointed for three-year terms. Membership shall include at least four laypersons, four priests, and two deacons. No person in the ordination process may serve on the Commission on Ministry.

- c. The Commission on Ministry shall be appointed by the Bishop and confirmed by a vote at the Convention.
- d. The Commission may create committees or task forces to help carry out its work. These committees report directly to the Commission and must have a Commission member serving as liaison to the Commission.

## **Sec. 5. The Committee on Nominations**

- a. The Bishop shall appoint members of a Nominating Committee subject to confirmation by the Diocesan Council to assist in nominating persons for appropriate offices, to be elected by the annual Convention, and to assist in the conduct and tally of elections and voting at a Convention. The term of office for members of the Nominating Committee shall be from the time of appointment until the conclusion of the next subsequent annual Convention. No one who is a candidate for elective office shall serve on the Nominating Committee.
- b. All people who want to participate in this Church's life, worship, and governance shall be encouraged regardless of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age, except as otherwise specified by Canons.
- c. Every effort shall be made in every election or appointment process to include members of underrepresented groups.
- d. Every effort will also be made to include geographic and congregation size diversity in every election of the appointment process.

## **Sec. 6. The Committee on Resolutions**

- a. The Bishop shall appoint a Resolutions Committee which shall consist of at least three persons, at least one ordained person and one lay person, responsible for presenting to the Convention those resolutions offered to the Convention for consideration.
- b. Resolutions will be submitted to the Convention through the Resolutions Committee in the following manner:
  - i. Resolutions may originate in the Diocesan Council, in the Standing Committee or in a petition from at least four lay delegates to the Convention and four ordained persons canonically and actually resident in the Diocese.
  - ii. All proposed resolutions must be received by the Resolutions Committee no later than sixty days before the date of the Convention, unless such Resolution arises out of the address of the Presiding Officer of Convention.
  - iii. For each proposed resolution, the Resolutions Committee will determine that the resolution complies with this Section as to origination and timeliness and ensure that it is in the proper form and style (not altering its intent nor content, nor combining it with other resolutions without consent of the originators), and present it to the Convention for action.

- iv. The Resolutions Committee shall submit its report to the Secretary of the Convention at least thirty-five (35) days before the Convention. The Secretary of the Convention shall forward this report to the lay delegates and clergy at least thirty (30) days before the Convention.
- v. The Resolutions Committee shall submit a written report to the Convention of the title of proposed resolutions not received in a timely fashion according to this Section.

## **Sec. 7. The Convention Planning Committee**

The Convention Planning Committee shall consist of the Bishop, a representative of the Standing Committee, a representative of the Diocesan Council, a representative of the worship team, a designated staff member, and others appointed by the Bishop as necessary to properly plan for the Convention.

## **Section 8: Convention Credentials Committee**

The Bishop shall appoint a Credentials Committee shall consist of one or more persons, lay or ordained, responsible for certifying the lay delegates and clergy.

## **Sec. 9. The Committee on Constitution and Canons**

- a. The Bishop shall appoint a Committee on Constitution and Canons to consist of such persons, clergy or lay, as the Bishop deems necessary. The Chancellor or a Vice-Chancellor shall serve as chairperson of the Committee. The members of the Committee shall serve a term commencing upon appointment by the Bishop and running through the close of the next subsequent annual Convention or until their successors are appointed.
- b. The Committee on Constitution and Canons shall review proposed revisions to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese referred to it by the Bishop. Such review shall be to determine the canonical propriety of said revision and the compatibility of the proposed revision with the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese and any other documents that may be relevant. The Committee shall report the results of such review to the Bishop, the Diocesan Council, and the annual Convention.

**Sec. 10.** The Bishop may establish committees whose duties, membership, and duration shall be designated from time to time by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the Diocesan Council.

## **Sec. 11. Accountability**

Except for staff groups accountable directly to the Bishop, all commissions, committees and departments created by Diocesan Council shall be directly responsible to the Diocesan Council. The Diocesan Council shall provide supervision, interpretation, clarification, and direction to such groups as the Diocesan Council may deem necessary.

## **Sec. 12. Commission Reports**

Each commission shall report annually and in writing to the Diocesan Council; at other times, the Council deems reports necessary. Copies of these reports shall also be sent to the Bishop as Presiding Officer. The Bishop and the Council shall submit in writing an annual report of their work to the annual Convention, including the annual report of the Treasurer.

## **Sec. 13. Report to Convention**

The Diocesan Council shall report each year to the annual Convention on the Administrative Plan, providing the names, mission, membership, and budget for each commission, committee, and department which it has created to meet the mission and ministry needs of the Diocese.

# **Canon 6: Indebtedness of Communities of Faith**

## **Sec. 1. Limitations on Debt**

No indebtedness shall be incurred by any Congregation or Seasonal Chapel without the approval of both the Bishop and the Standing Committee, except:

- a. Indebtedness for permanent improvements, replacement, or additions to real estate or equipment, where the amount of such indebtedness, plus indebtedness of every kind already existing, shall not exceed 150% of the average annual receipts of such congregation during the three years then last preceding;
- b. Indebtedness for current expenses where the amount of such indebtedness, plus all indebtedness heretofore incurred for current expenses and still existing, shall not exceed 20% of the total current receipts of such congregation during the preceding fiscal year; and the payment of all such indebtedness shall be provided for in the budget of the next ensuing fiscal year with a reasonable expectation of its payment out of the receipts of the next two years; or,
- c. Indebtedness incurred to finance existing loans, provided the total amount thereof be not increased. In computing receipts under subsections (a) and (b) hereof, income from endowments, devises and bequests available for general purposes may be included; but principal and income not available for payment of debts, and receipts earmarked for non-parochial purposes shall be excluded.

## **Sec. 2. Plan of Payment Required**

Where approval of proposed indebtedness is required, the application, therefore shall be accompanied by a plan of payment, and such approval shall not be granted in any event unless such a plan is deemed feasible by the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

## **Sec. 3. Existing Indebtedness**

This Canon shall not apply to the refinancing of existing indebtedness, provided the total existing indebtedness is not increased.



## **Canon 7: Audits and Insurance**

### **Sec. 1. Audits**

As soon as possible after the close of each fiscal year, the accounts of all officers handling funds, whether of the diocese or its auxiliaries, or of Congregations and their auxiliaries, or of all Emergent Communities and Seasonal Chapels shall be audited in accordance with the Episcopal Church Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs and The Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes Policy "Annual Audit of Congregations." Copies of audit reports shall be submitted to the Diocesan Treasurer for review by September 1, following the close of the fiscal year. Congregations, Emergent Communities, and Seasonal Chapels who fail to complete and submit an Annual audit by September 1 will be referred to the Treasurer and, if needed, Diocesan Council, for assistance in completing the audit. Diocesan Council may appoint an Audit Committee to assist in this work. The requirements for what satisfies this requirement shall be determined as a Policy of Diocesan Council and approved by the Chancellor.

### **Sec. 2. Insurance**

- a. All buildings and tangible personal property owned or held in trust by the Diocese or by any Congregation, Emergent Community or Seasonal Chapel shall be insured under the Diocesan Insurance program; including but not limited to hazards to be insured against, amount and sufficiency of such insurance for each congregation, and insurance carrier or carriers, shall be as prescribed by the Diocesan Council. Each Congregation, Emergent Community or Seasonal Chapel insured under this program shall pay to the Treasurer its fair share of the cost of the total Insurance program, which fair share shall be determined by the Diocesan Council.
- b. Each Congregation, Emergent Community and Seasonal Chapel shall follow the Diocesan policy regarding the provision of healthcare for clergy and lay staff.

## **Canon 8: Minimum Compensation for Clergy**

### **Sec. 1. Establishment of Standards**

There is hereby established a minimum standard of compensation for all members of the clergy exercising a full-time, parochial, stipendiary ministry in the Diocese of the Great Lakes. Compensation is defined as stipend, housing/housing allowance, and utilities. The establishment of a minimum compensation standard is not meant to prevent a congregation from providing additional forms of compensation.

### **Sec. 2. Adoption, Scale**

The Diocesan Council shall adopt an annual Clergy compensation minimum for the ensuing fiscal year. For those ordained more than one year, the minimum standard shall be increased by an amount determined by the Diocesan Council for each year of ordained ministry beyond the first year to a limit of ten years.

### **Sec. 3. Failure to Compensate**

In any case, where the compensation provided is below the minimum standard, the position will be regarded as less than a full-time position. The Bishop, or the Bishop's representative, shall assist in negotiating a mutually agreeable solution.

### **Sec. 4. Other Benefits**

Consideration for adequate reimbursement shall also be given by vestries in the areas of:

- a. Reimbursement of automobile expenses;
- b. Continuing education; and
- c. Other professional expenses.

## **Canon 9: Of the Administration of Ecclesiastical Discipline**

The Diocese of the Great Lakes adopts by reference Title IV (Ecclesiastical Discipline) of the Canons of the General Convention, as adopted in 2009, effective July 1, 2011, and as amended from time to time, applicable to the Ecclesiastical Discipline of Priests and Deacons, and as it pertains to the practices and procedures set forth. To the extent, if any, that any of the provisions of this Title are in conflict or inconsistent with the provisions of Title IV (Ecclesiastical Discipline) established by the General Convention, the Canons of the General Convention shall govern.

### **Sec. 1. Disciplinary Board**

- a. The Board shall consist of not fewer than seven persons, the majority of whom shall be priests or deacons but by no more than one.
- b. The Bishop shall appoint the members of the Board with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee. The ordained members of the Board must be canonically and geographically resident in the State of Michigan. The lay members of the Board shall be adult communicants in good standing and geographically resident in this Diocese. Members shall be appointed for a three-year term, beginning on the first day of the year following their appointment. Membership on the Board shall meet the limitations set forth in the Canons of the General Convention.
- c. The Bishop shall fill vacancies on the Board with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, upon notice by the President of the Board of such vacancy.
  - i. Persons appointed to fill vacancies shall complete the vacated term and shall be of the same order as the Board member replaced.
  - ii. Should a vacancy occur as a result of a challenge, a replacement Board member shall serve only for the proceeding for which the regular Board member is not serving as a result of the challenge and shall be of the same order.
- d. The Board shall elect a President and one or more Vice Presidents from its members. The Board shall also appoint a Clerk, who shall be custodian of all records and provide

administrative services as needed by the Board. The Clerk may be a member of the Board.

- e. The Reference Panel shall be composed of an Intake Officer, the Bishop Diocesan, and the President or a Vice-President of the Disciplinary Board. The Reference Panel shall review the Intake Report to determine how to refer to the Report for further consideration. All deliberations shall be confidential, except as required by the law or as deemed pastorally appropriate by the Bishop.
- f. A Hearing Panel of three members of the Disciplinary Board, selected by the President of the Board shall serve as the body before which a hearing is held, as provided by the Canons of the General Convention.

## **Sec. 2. Personnel**

- a. **Intake Officer.** An Intake Officer shall be appointed from time to time by the Bishop after consultation with the Board. The Bishop may appoint one or more Intake Officers according to the needs of the Diocese. The Bishop shall publish the names and contact information of the Intake Officer(s) throughout the Diocese, with methods and means of reporting information concerning alleged offenses. All communications shall be confidential, except as required by law or as deemed pastorally appropriate by the Bishop.
- b. **Investigator.** The Bishop shall appoint an Investigator, in consultation with the President of the Board. The Investigator may, but need not be, a member of the Church. The Investigator shall be skilled and able to conduct investigations under this Title.
- c. **Church Attorney.** Within 60 days following each Annual Convention, the Bishop and Disciplinary Board shall appoint an attorney to serve as Church Attorney for the following calendar year. The person selected must be a member of the Church and a duly licensed attorney but need not reside within the Diocese. The Church Attorney will represent the Church in proceedings under this Title. Multiple Church Attornies may be appointed to meet the needs of the process.
- d. **Pastoral Response Coordinator.** The Bishop may appoint a Pastoral Response Coordinator, to serve at the pleasure of the Bishop in coordinating the delivery of appropriate pastoral responses provided for in Title IV, Canon 8 (Of Pastoral Response) of the Canons of the General Convention and this Title. The Pastoral Response Coordinator may be an Intake Officer but shall not be a person serving in any other appointed or elected capacity under this Title.
- e. **Advisors.** In each proceeding under this Title, the Bishop shall appoint an Advisor= each for the complainant and the respondent. A person serving as an Advisor shall hold no other appointed or elected position provided for under this Title and shall not include persons serving as Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, or Assistant Chancellors of this Diocese, or any person likely to be called as a witness in the proceeding. An Advisor shall be available for purposes of support, assistance, consultation, and advice regarding the process provided in this Title and the pertinent rights, responsibilities, consequences, and alternatives.

- f. **Conciliator.** The Bishop shall appoint a Conciliator to assist in reconciling the parties and issues involved. The Conciliator shall be skilled in dispute resolution and without conflict of interest in the matter.

### **Sec. 3. Of Inter-diocesan Agreements**

This Diocese may agree with one or more of the Dioceses to develop and share resources necessary to implement this Canon, including all boards, panels, personnel, and administrative and financial support for proceedings under this Canon. With the advice and consent of the Bishop, such agreement may be established by the Diocesan Council, subject to such changes to this Canon as may be necessary to implement such an agreement fully.

## **Canon 10: The General Fund**

### **Sec. 1. Purpose**

The General Fund shall include all unrestricted funds of the Diocese and shall be used for the share of the Diocese in the General Church Program of The Episcopal Church as adopted by the General Convention, support of Communities of Faith and Commissions, the stipend and expenses of the Bishop, and the salaries and expenses of the Diocese.

### **Sec.2. Sources, Receipts, and Disbursements**

The General Fund shall be derived from income from designated and unrestricted endowment and trust funds and from the apportionments of each congregation. All monies due or accruing to the Fund shall be paid to the Treasurer, who shall pay no monies therefrom which have not been provided for by the Budget adopted at the annual Convention, unless authorized to do so by the Diocesan Council, or by the Bishop for expenditures under \$1,000.

## **Canon 11: The Budget**

### **Sec. 1. Apportionment**

The Budget of the Diocese, including its obligation to The Episcopal Church and Province V, shall be funded, in part, by an annual apportionment of each Congregation and Seasonal Chapel. The apportionment shall be a percentage, not to exceed 14%, of each Congregation's and Seasonal Chapel's Net Operating Income. A Congregation's Net Operating Income shall be the average Net Operating Income appearing on the last three Parochial Reports. The proposed apportionment set by the Diocesan Council may be a tiered flat rate for each Congregation and Seasonal Chapel or a graduated rate determined by the Net Operating Income of each Congregation and Seasonal Chapel. The proposed apportionment rate for a given year will be attached to the proposed budget of the Diocese and submitted to Convention for approval. The apportionment rate of a congregation shall not increase more than 2% from one year to the next.

## **Sec. 2. Budget**

The balanced Budget with the proposed apportionment percentage shall be adopted by the Diocesan Council and submitted to the Diocesan Convention for approval not less than 30 days before the Diocesan Convention. Any proposed amendments to the Budget during the Diocesan Convention must be balanced. This means any increase or decrease in a line must be offset by an equal increase or decrease.

## **Sec. 3. Notification of Apportionment**

The Diocesan Office will promptly inform each Congregation and Seasonal Chapel of its apportionment. Each Congregation and Seasonal Chapel will have a maximum of 45 days to respond in writing. If a Congregation or Seasonal Chapel believes itself unable to meet the apportionment, it must indicate in writing why that is so. By a majority vote, the Council shall have the authority to waive a portion of the apportionment for any given year.

## **Sec. 4. Apportionment Review Committee**

The Apportionment Review Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Diocesan Council charged with working with Congregations and Seasonal Chapels that are unable to meet their apportionment.

- a. The committee members shall be appointed by the Bishop and approved by the Diocesan Council.
- b. Upon notice by a Congregation or Seasonal Chapel that they cannot meet their apportionment, the Committee will work with the Rector, Vestry, or Bishop's Committee to determine an appropriate amount of support for the Diocese and a plan to meet the apportionment in a set timeline. The Committee will then recommend waiving a portion of the apportionment for that year to the Executive Council.
- c. If a Congregation or Seasonal Chapel will not work in good faith with the Apportionment Review Committee and the supportive groups within the Diocese to strengthen the Congregation or Seasonal Chapel and meet the apportionment goal, the Bishop and the Standing Committee will have the option of prescribing a course of action for the health of the Congregation or Seasonal Chapel, pursuant to the Congregational Health Canon

## **Sec. 5. Stewardship**

In accordance with the Canons of the General Convention, each congregation shall institute a stewardship education program (including the biblical history and theology of tithing and our church's teaching on giving) designed to emphasize and ensure that stewardship is a continuing mission embracing all aspects of the Church's life.

**Sec. 6.** The Bishop, or the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, may directly appeal to the congregations and members of the Diocese for response to emergency needs in extreme or unusual circumstances.

## **Sec. 7. Episcopal Church Assessment**

The Diocesan Council shall:

- a. Advise the Episcopal Church Executive Council of the amount the Diocese intends to pay towards the Episcopal Church Program that year; and
- b. Have the authority during the year to expend all funds covered by the budget and modify the budget approved by the Annual Convention in any manner necessary to balance expenditures with anticipated resources.

## **TITLE IV: The Diocese as Member of The Episcopal Church**

### **Canon 1: Deputies To General Convention and Provincial Synod Representatives**

#### **Sec. 1. Election Of Deputies And Alternates To General Convention**

The annual Convention shall elect by ballot, not later than the next year preceding any General Convention, eight deputies to the General Convention, four members of the clergy, and four adult lay communicants in good standing together with an equal number of alternate deputies having similar qualifications. The four members of the clergy and four adult lay communicants in good standing, first receiving a simple majority of the votes cast, shall be declared elected deputies. The four members of the clergy and laity receiving the highest number of votes in the final election for deputies shall be declared alternate deputies in the order of votes received.

#### **Sec. 2. Deputies to the Provincial Synod**

- a. The Convention shall elect by ballot Deputies to represent the Diocese in the Provincial Synod, as provided for in the ordinances of the Province.
- b. If the Convention fails to elect such Deputies, those last previously chosen shall serve until their successors have been elected. Should a Deputy no longer wish to continue in such service, the Ecclesiastical Authority may appoint a replacement with the consent of the Standing Committee.

## **TITLE V: General Provisions**

### **Canon 1: Of Additions and Amendments to the Canons**

**Sec. 1.** All proposed amendments or additions to the Canons shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Convention at least sixty days before the Convention at which they are to be considered.

- a. The Secretary of the Convention shall then file them with any committee as determined by Canon, which committee, if any, shall report on the proposed amendments, with or without recommendation, to the Secretary of the Convention at least 30 days before the date of the Convention.

- b. The Secretary shall submit copies of the proposed amendments or additions, including any such report, to the lay delegates and clergy of the Convention at least thirty days before the date of such Convention and shall report the same to the Convention.
- c. The Convention shall consider no amendment or addition to the Canons unless so reported to it by the Secretary.

**Sec. 2.** When any proposed amendment or addition is before the Convention for consideration, changes may be made by a majority vote during the debate and before the final vote. An amendment or addition to the Canons shall be finally adopted and approved by two-thirds of the members present.

**Sec. 3.** New canons, deletions of whole canons, and additions to, amendments of, and deletions from existing canons, unless otherwise expressly ordered, shall take effect on the first day following the adjournment of the Convention at which they were enacted or made.

## **Canon 2: Construction**

These Canons, and this Diocese and its organizations, are subject to the Constitution and Statutes of the United States of America, the Constitution, and Statutes of the State of Michigan, and the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church in the United States, as the same may, from time to time, be amended or changed, and these Canons should be construed as being consistent therewith; anything herein to the contrary Notwithstanding.

**Sec. 1.** The table of contents, index, cross-reference tables, catch line headings, and comments to the extent published with these Canons are not part of the text of the Canons and are not to be used in the construction of these Canons.

**Sec. 2.** Should any court of competent jurisdiction, whether civil or ecclesiastical, determine that any provision of these Canons is contrary to any governing law, such provision shall be null, void, and of no effect from such point forward, but such determination shall have no effect on any remaining Canon. Each Canon is severable from the remainder and shall continue in force until repealed or amended.

## **Canon 3: Validity of Electronic Meetings**

Any meeting of a Diocesan Body, or Body of a Community of Faith, may be held electronically as long as each member has the ability to hear and be heard by all other members. Leadership of Diocesan Committees or the Committees of Communities of Faith may make limited use of email polling for questions that need to be addressed before the next meeting of the committee. Email polling must allow for all members to view the votes and comments of all other members. Decisions made by email polling must be ratified at the next official meeting of the committee.

## **Canon 4: Parliamentary Authority**

**Sec. 1.** The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority at all meetings of the Diocese and any of its Congregations and organizations unless they are inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and of this Diocese or the rules of order of the Convention.

**Sec. 2.** An Annual Convention, from time to time, may adopt, alter, or delete permanent rules of order not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and of this Diocese for itself and subsequent Annual and Special Conventions.

**Sec. 3.** At any meeting of the Diocese and any of its Congregations and organizations, a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote, provided that a quorum has been determined to be present, may vote to suspend or modify the Rules of Order for that meeting only; and, provided that the suspension of the Rules shall not interfere with the ability of the meeting to adjourn.

## **Canon 5: Presumption Against Conflict of Interest**

No contract of the Diocese, or any Congregation or constituent organization of the Diocese made with any member of the Diocese or any Congregation or constituent organization of the Diocese, or with a partnership or other group or association of which any such member shall be a member or with any corporation of which such member may be a member or director and no contract between this Diocesan corporation and any other corporation having common directors shall be invalid because of such facts alone.

## **Canon 6: Representation of Position of Diocese**

No public statement respecting a position on any issue attributed to the Diocese, any Congregation in the Diocese, or any organization of the Diocese may be made unless in full compliance with the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, and the prior approval of the Bishop. The Bishop has the authority to issue blanket approvals or to delegate this power by written authorization.

## **TITLE VI - Transitional Canons**

### **Canon 1: Leadership Body Membership**

#### **Sec 1. Standing Committee and Diocesan Council**

The 2024 Convention shall elect one-third of the membership of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council, ensuring the proper allocation of clergy and lay persons as new members of the body. The 2024 Convention shall also elect two-thirds of the membership of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council from the existing membership of that body for the Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan, assigning each to a term of two or one year. Each leadership body shall determine the members nominated for election at the 2024 Convention,



assuring the proper allocation of clergy and laypersons and even ensuring division between members from the previous dioceses. Members serving on the either body of the previous dioceses who are not nominated for election at the 2024 Convention shall be eligible for nomination for any newly elected offices.

## **Sec 2. Commission on Ministry**

The members of the Commission on Ministry for the Dioceses of Western Michigan and Eastern Michigan shall constitute the Commission on Ministry for the Diocese of the Great Lakes until the Annual Convention held in 2025 notwithstanding the Canons herein on the Commission on Ministry. Sixty days prior to the 2025 Annual Convention, the Commission shall report to the Eccestical Authority suggesting the continued membership of the Commission.

## **Canon 2: Apportionment**

The Diocesan apportionments shall be calculated using the original formula of each diocese. The lesser amount of either that calculation or the apportionment amount calculated for 2024 shall be applied.

# DETERMINING A BISHOP DIOCESAN

The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of the Great Lakes will establish a process for conversation, learning, and discernment regarding the ministry of the episcopate, including our local recent and historic experience with this office and the mission and vision of this new diocese. These processes will be structured to flow into the search and election of a new bishop diocesan with the expectation that the election will take place no later than 2026.

The Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan are currently served by the Joint Standing Committee as ecclesiastical authority and an assisting bishop and neighboring bishops who are providing sacramental and pastoral support. The ongoing process of transition and the actual timeline for the election of a new bishop diocesan will be established and overseen by the Standing Committee.

# Building Bridges – Stewardship of Resources

## 2025 Draft Transitional Budget & 2026 Draft Model Budget

The current budgets of the Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan are large and complex documents, through which we organize our resources for mission and ministry according to our sense of God's call. In preparing this summary of a possible **Transition Budget** for 2025, along with a **Model Budget** of a joined and fully staffed diocese, we have analyzed and combined over 500 budget lines. While this report does not give us all of the answers as to what the future life of a joined diocese would look like (that is up to our diocesan leaders under the prayerful guiding of the Holy Spirit), it does give us a sense of some of the questions we will be asking as we look to the future we believe God has for us and the resources we have available for that work to be done well.

To be clear about the process, neither of these budgets are finalized, nor have they been approved by the diocesan council who exercise the fiduciary responsibility of each diocese. They are offered, instead, to give us a picture of what might be and to help us see what decisions would lie in front of us if juncture is approved. We needed to create two budgets for this work: one as a possible **transition** budget for the first year of the new diocese in 2025 and a second to confirm that there is a **model** which could be balanced for that second year of 2026 when we are fully staffed with a diocesan bishop.

- **Transition Budget** — If juncture is approved at the March Special Convention, then the finance committees and diocesan councils of each diocese would in collaboration use the *Transition Budget*—along with your feedback—as a basis to build a budget for 2025 that could be presented to the First Convention of the new diocese (fall of 2024).
- **Model Budget** – This model won't reach a final version until the fall of 2025. It will undergo several revisions as we simplify our systems and adapt staffing. But it could be used as the starting point for creating the 2026 budget to be presented to the Second Convention of the new diocese. It shows us where everything *currently* stands in our shared expenses and looks at various models for apportionment that would be required if no changes are made to current structures.

The current model, as you will see, is not terribly sustainable without a significant increase in revenue across all dioceses or decrease in overall expenditures. This is actually one of the reasons why we are recommending juncture; the current budgets in both dioceses

are simply not sustainable on their own. We believe that together, combined, we not only have “more” but can steward those resources and our communities of faith better than we are able separately. In Eastern Michigan, the model of a lean diocese resulted in significant struggle for smaller churches and budget-modeling that cannot balance without increasing reliance on endowments. In Western Michigan, the model of three full-time canon missionaries and a diocesan bishop was not sustainable without evolving that model as originally intended. It remained financially sustainable in this form only because of the transitions in the episcopate, resulting in cost savings. We have benefited from having canon missionaries in place through those upheavals and have heard from many, especially smaller congregations, regarding the value of the ministry provided through those regional staff members. However, as our structures evolve and our financial picture becomes more clear we need to ask how best to provide those and other needed ministries while remaining good stewards of our finances.

Next steps will involve us seeking together the best ways to provide pastoral, programmatic, and resource support for all congregations—especially the development and support our smaller congregations need—through the ministry of the episcopate and diocesan staff, both centralized and dispersed. It can be done. There are good models in other dioceses for us to learn from and adapt to this time and this place. Thus, if juncture is approved, we must engage in sustained conversation with the leadership of the new dioceses (a finance committee and diocesan council) about what the future of The Episcopal Church in our area of Michigan will look like. ***Neither Eastern nor Western can solve these questions alone. To be clear, this conversation must happen regardless of whether or not juncture is approved. If juncture is approved we have not only “more” but better ways of stewarding these resources. We believe these questions are best engaged together as we find a new way of being the Episcopal Church in our time and in our way.***

Furthermore, the challenges ahead are not insurmountable. The increase in income (or decrease in expenses) needed to meet the model budget is only \$145,685 more than the sum of our 2024 budgets, which is only a 5% change in either direction. So, while it is clear that we will have to collectively make changes to our approaches to apportionment and other revenues and/or the way we structure our diocesan ministries, those changes would not be groundshaking. Also, recent market growth would suggest that endowment income could increase somewhat under the prudent draw model. Some smaller expenses will be trimmed and saved as duplicative systems are removed. All of these puzzle pieces together can get us to where we need to be. And, once more, ***if juncture is approved we will have well over 18 months to figure all of this out together as the model budget will not become the proposed budget to the new diocese until the fall of 2025.***

If you want to dig deeper and review the details of the modeling used to create these figures, you can go to <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Transition> to view the details of the Transition Budget. Similarly, you can go to <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Model> to view the details of the Model Budget. If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to either diocesan treasurer. You may reach the Rev. Brian Chace, Treasurer of Eastern Michigan at [brianchace@gmail.com](mailto:brianchace@gmail.com). You may reach the Rev. Jared Cramer, D.Min, Treasurer of Western Michigan at [rector@sjegh.com](mailto:rector@sjegh.com).

## Draft Budgeted Income

While the values of endowment funds for our two dioceses are very similar, the Diocese of Eastern Michigan relies more on endowments for operating income than the Diocese of Western Michigan. By contrast, the Diocese of Western Michigan relies more on parish apportionments.

- The **Transition Budget** freezes 2025 apportionments at the level they are at in 2024. What that means is that when 2025 apportionments are calculated using the original formula of each diocese, if the apportionment amount in 2025 would be *smaller* than what was calculated in 2024, then the smaller apportionment would be used. ***This means no parish will see an increase in their apportionment in 2025.*** The numbers used in this budget are the 2024 numbers, though they may decrease slightly once parochial reports are submitted—however, the current anticipated surplus should be able to absorb that shift.
- The **Model Budget** was developed using a few different apportionment models:
  - *Apportionment Model One* used Eastern’s flat 10% along with Western’s principle of backing out the previous year’s apportionment. This resulted in a deficit of roughly \$170K.
  - *Apportionment Model Two* was developed using a graduated apportionment model, similar to the one currently used in Western Michigan, but with larger brackets. However, backing out the prior year’s apportionment still resulted in a deficit, so in this model the previous year’s apportionment would not be backed out of the calculation.

## Apportionment Model Two in Practice

The brackets in this model are: 10% of the first \$100,000, 12% of the second \$100,000, 14% of the third \$100,000, and then 16% of any amount over \$300,000. ***It is essential to remember that in a bracket system, all parishes are assessed 10% on their first \$100,000, then those parishes with a budget above that amount are assessed only for each next bracket at that rate.*** So, the effective rate will be different than *the bracket* a parish falls in. As an example, to the right is the apportionment calculation of a larger parish in Western Michigan. **As you can see, though this parish is in the 16% bracket, their effective apportionment would be 13%.**

Year	Total Operating Revenues (per parochial report)	Prior Three-Year Average Net Operating Income
2020	\$ 420,258	
2021	\$ 380,309	
2022	\$ 429,778	\$ 410,115
Use smaller of: Prior 3-year ave -OR- Prior Year Amt		\$ 410,115
2022 apportionment paid to diocese		\$ -
Base Amount for apportionment		<b>\$ 410,115</b>
<b>Apportionment Calculation</b>		
10% of the first \$100,000 =		\$ 10,000
12% of the second \$100,000 =		\$ 12,000
14% of the third \$100,000 =		\$ 14,000
16% of any amount above \$300,000 =		\$ 17,618
		<b>\$ 53,618</b>
Percent of operating revenues		13.07%
		<b>Monthly \$ 4,468.00</b>

Using this possible model and applying it to all our current congregations would result in the following impact:

- Of congregations currently in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan, twenty-nine congregations would have their apportionment remain within 5% of the current level, with four seeing an increase of more than 5% (the average increase in those instances would be a 24% increase). **The average effective apportionment would be 11.26% and the largest effective apportionment in a parish would be 12.49%.**
- In Western Michigan, five congregations would have their apportionment remain within 5% of the current level, with forty-nine seeing an increase of more than 5% (the average increase in those instances would be a 14% increase). **The average effective apportionment would be 11.92% and the largest effective apportionment in a parish would be 14.73%.** The draft canons would limit the highest effective apportionment to 14%, so that would be brought down a bit if those canons are approved.

Our team recognizes that this change might be a challenge for some congregations. But, once more, this model budget is simply a starting place. As noted earlier, Apportionment

Model One retained the principle in Western Michigan of backing out the previous year's paid apportionment from the calculation. That model resulted in almost all congregations remaining within 5% of their current level, and several seeing a decrease in apportionment amounts. However, that apportionment model would require cutting roughly \$150K in expenses or finding another way to increase income. Our team believes that would be possible with the restructuring opportunities of juncture, and given that we do not have to have that balance determined until the Fall of 2025, were juncture approved, there is time to determine what sort of structure we need to support our mission and then what sort of apportionment would be needed to support that structure.

You can go to <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Apportionment> to find your own parish and see how this particular model would impact your community. ***It is essential to remember that a final apportionment model would be developed in the summer of 2025 and that there would be a canonical limit placed on apportionment (the effective rate cannot exceed 14%).***

***Apportionment levels would be reviewed by the new Diocesan Council in the fall of 2025, and then would require approval of the Second Convention of the diocese in the fall of 2025 before coming into effect in 2026.*** There may be other apportionment principles that could be included in the future—for example, limiting the annual increase to no more than 10%, so that congregations that are growing would not be hobbled by an increasing apportionment. All of these are decisions we would make together as a new diocese under new canons.

## Draft Budgeted Expenses

The expenses for each diocese, when placed together, are very similar in the **Transitional** and the **Model** budget because they are both based on *current staffing and systems*. In the new diocese staff costs would make up the largest share of expenses (55% in the Transition and 56% in the Model), with diocesan ministries making up the next largest share (31% in the Transition and 30% in the Model) and our churchwide support making up 14% of all expenses in the Transition and 13% in the Model. The biggest difference is that while the transitional budget only includes a part-time assisting bishop, the model budget includes a full-time diocesan bishop (using median compensation standards for our region, as published by the Church Pension Group).

When we look at the portion that makes up staff costs, we can see that roughly half of all staff costs come from the bishop diocesan and the three regional canons as currently configured (46% in the Transition and a little more than 49% in the Model). About a quarter goes to administrative staff costs (26% in the Transition and 24% in the Model), with the remainder split closely between Evangelism and Networking (16% in the Transition and 15% in the Model) and Children and Youth ministries (13% in the Transition and 12% in the Model).

In the programmatic ministry costs, the percentages in this area are the same in the *Transition Budget* as they are in the *Model Budget* given we don't yet know what changes will be made.

The largest portion goes to ministry formation (both for clergy and laity), at a little more than 31%. The next highest is administrative costs of running our diocesan system (26%). Then the area of Building Beloved Community (our ministries of justice work) is close to 20%. Children and youth ministry is at about 11% and congregational development work is at about 9%.

Finally, 3.5% goes to our mission work in the Dominican Republic.

### Transition Budget Summary

TOTAL DIOCESAN INCOME	\$ 2,679,076
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,656,703
NET	\$ 22,373

### Model Budget Summary

TOTAL DIOCESAN INCOME	\$ 2,796,619
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,788,340
NET	\$ 8,279

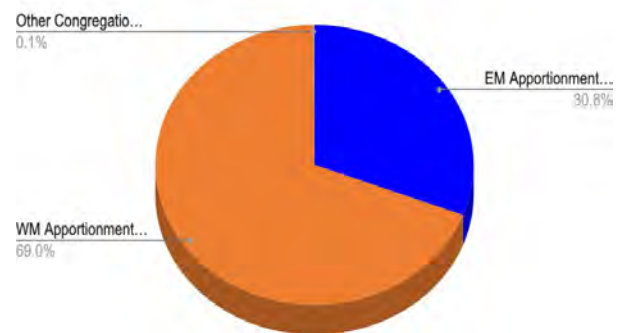


## Transition Budget Income Summaries

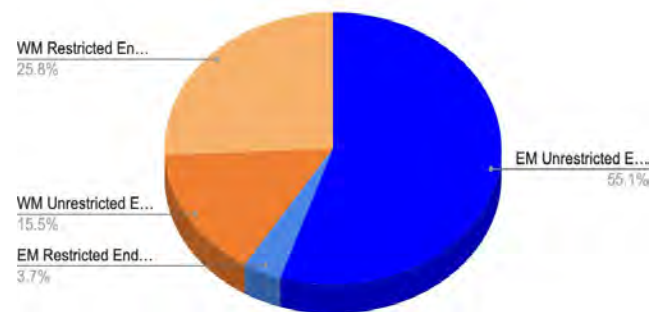
Details and Full Budget Information at <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Transition>

JOINT DIOCESAN INCOME 2025	
EM Apportionment Income	\$ 435,615
WM Apportionment Income	\$ 974,439
Other Congregational Giving	\$ 2,000
<b>Total Apportionment &amp; Other Congregational Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,412,054</b>
EM Unrestricted Endowment Income	\$ 483,347
EM Restricted Endowment Income	\$ 32,569
WM Unrestricted Endowment Income	\$ 135,847
WM Restricted Endowment Income	\$ 226,152
<b>Total Endowment Income</b>	<b>\$ 877,916</b>
EM Restricted Receipts (McElroy, C/G)	\$ 192,350
EM Other Restricted Income	\$ 132,256
WM Other Restricted Income	\$ 59,050
EM Other Receipts	\$ 5,450
<b>Total Other Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 389,106</b>
<b>TOTAL JOINT DIOCESAN INCOME 2025</b>	<b>\$ 2,679,076</b>
<b>Apportionment &amp; Congregational</b>	<b>\$ 1,412,054</b>
<b>Endowment Income</b>	<b>\$ 877,916</b>
<b>Other Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 389,106</b>
<b>By Originating Diocese</b>	
Eastern Income	\$ 1,281,587
Western Income	\$ 1,397,489

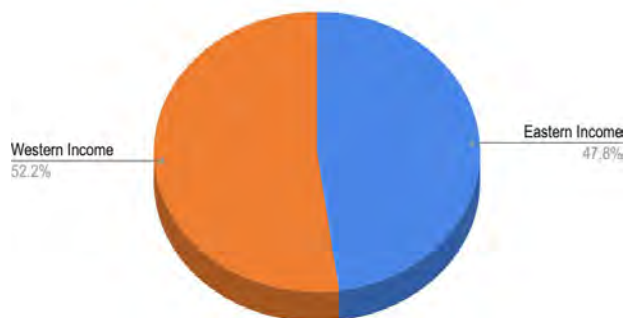
2025 Apportionment Income



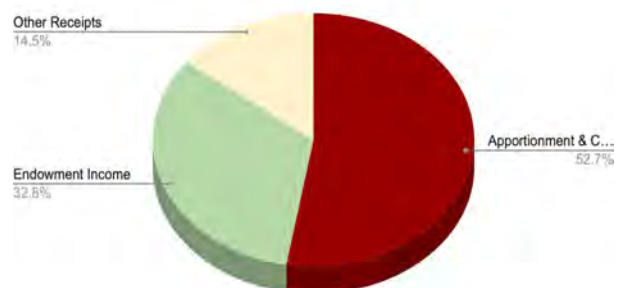
2025 Endowment Income



2025 Share of Diocesan Income



2025 Total Diocesan Income



## Transition Budget Expense Summaries

Details and Full Budget Information at <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Transition>

*\*Note: A portion of the Southern Canon's salary comes from "Academy for Vocational Leadership," so her salary is indeed equal to the other canons when that is included.*

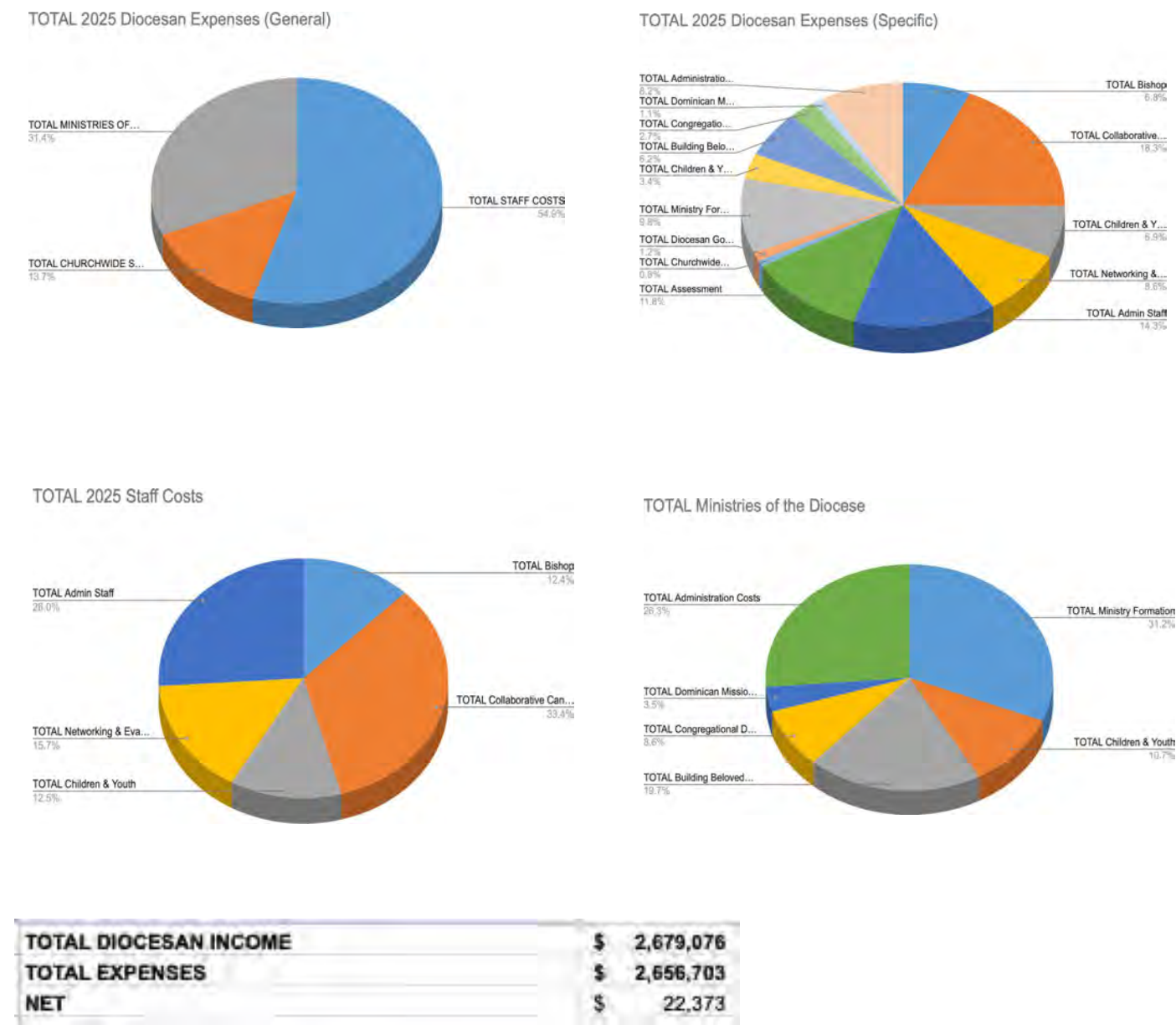
STAFF COSTS	
Assisting Bishop (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 131,637
Assisting Bishop (Ministry Costs)	\$ 48,958
<b>TOTAL Bishop</b>	<b>\$ 180,595</b>
Southern Canon (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 138,411
Southern Canon (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,567
Central Canon (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 167,345
Central Canon (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,567
Northern Canon (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 167,345
Northern Canon (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,567
<b>TOTAL Collaborative Canons</b>	<b>\$ 486,802</b>
Children & Youth Director (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 122,396
Children & Youth Director (Ministry Costs)	\$ 17,950
4 Youth Missioners (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 33,349
4 Youth Missioners (Ministry Costs)	\$ 8,700
<b>TOTAL Children &amp; Youth</b>	<b>\$ 182,395</b>
Canon Networking & Evangelism (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 123,235
Canon Networking & Evangelism (Ministry Costs)	\$ 21,500
Admin Assist Networking & Evangelism (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 13,094
Admin Assist Database Management (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 71,014
<b>TOTAL Networking &amp; Evangelism</b>	<b>\$ 228,843</b>
CFO (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 130,782
CFO (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,500
Finance Assistant (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 71,819
Finance Assistant (Ministry Costs)	\$ 1,000
Bishop's Assistant (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 89,584
Bishop's Assistant (Ministry Costs)	\$ 2,250
Diocesan Administrator (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 77,402
Diocesan Administrator (Ministry Costs)	\$ 2,500
<b>TOTAL Admin Staff</b>	<b>\$ 379,836</b>
<b>TOTAL STAFF COSTS</b>	<b>\$ 1,458,472</b>

CHURCHWIDE SUPPORT & GOVERNANCE	
Assessment to The Episcopal Church	\$ 309,435
Province V	\$ 2,744
<b>TOTAL Assessment</b>	<b>\$ 312,179</b>
Province V Synod Travel & Registration	\$ 2,600
General Convention Deputation	\$ 18,000
<b>TOTAL Churchwide Governance</b>	<b>\$ 20,600</b>
Diocesan Convention	\$ 25,000
Ecumenical Officer	\$ 1,750
Diocesan Council	\$ 3,000
Dio/Nat Committee Travel	\$ 2,000
<b>TOTAL Diocesan Governance</b>	<b>\$ 31,750</b>
<b>TOTAL CHURCHWIDE SUPPORT &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>\$ 364,529</b>

MINISTRIES OF THE DIOCESE	
1% Fund for Theological Education	\$ 3,393
Education for Ministry	\$ 1,800
Deacon Training	\$ 2,000
Clergy Conferences & Retreat	\$ 15,000
McElroy Expenses	\$ 5,000
G&I Expenses	\$ 17,673
Commission on Ministry	\$ 7,050
Seminarian Formation Grants	\$ 44,300
Academy for Vocational Leadership / CG School	\$ 145,814
Licensed Lay Leader Training	\$ 3,000
Archdeacon	\$ 2,000
Networking Events	\$ 7,000
Diocesan Programming	\$ 6,000
<b>TOTAL Ministry Formation</b>	<b>\$ 260,030</b>
Children & Youth Programmatic Ministry	\$ 28,000
Safe Church Training (Salary & FICA)	\$ 2,756
Plainsong Farm Camp Ministry	\$ 10,000
Camp Chick Support from Investments	\$ 4,812
EYC Camp Expenses	\$ 44,050
<b>TOTAL Children &amp; Youth</b>	<b>\$ 89,618</b>
Creation Care	\$ 6,000
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Cooperating Ministry - Plainsong Farm	\$ 20,000
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<b>TOTAL Building Beloved Community</b>	<b>\$ 163,986</b>
Congregational Development Grants	\$ 23,312
College for Congregational Development (Program)	\$ 26,000
College for Congregational Development (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 22,034
<b>TOTAL Congregational Development</b>	<b>\$ 71,346</b>
Dominican Development Group Grant	\$ 10,000
Deacon for Dominican Development	\$ 3,000
Dominican Mission Trip Expenses	\$ 16,550
<b>TOTAL Dominican Mission Support</b>	<b>\$ 29,550</b>
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Financial Reviews / Support to Parishes	\$ 12,000
Diocesan Center (Assume Relocation to One)	\$ 58,045
Diocesan Center Expenses (Copier, IT, Supplies, Legal, etc.)	\$ 33,600
Capital Expenses & Reserves Transfer	\$ 7,500
EDEM Restricted Fund Transfers	\$ 17,673
Other Misc Expenses	\$ 750
<b>TOTAL Administration Costs</b>	<b>\$ 219,172</b>
<b>TOTAL MINISTRIES OF THE DIOCESE</b>	<b>\$ 833,702</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 2,656,703</b>

Transition Budget Expense Summaries

Details and Full Budget Information at <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Transition>



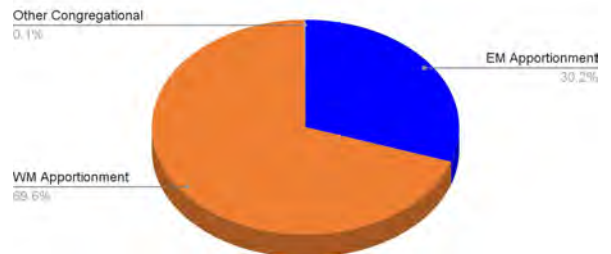


## Model Budget Income Summaries

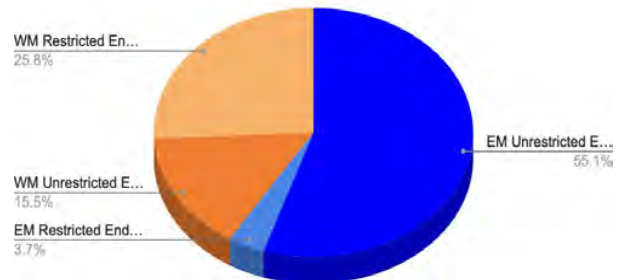
Details and Full Budget Information at <http://tinyurl.com/EMWM-Model>

<b>JOINT DIOCESAN INCOME 2025</b>	
EM Apportionment Income	\$ 461,786
WM Apportionment Income	\$ 1,062,924
Other Congregational Giving	\$ 2,000
<b>Total Apportionment &amp; Other Congregational Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,526,710</b>
EM Unrestricted Endowment Income	\$ 483,347
EM Restricted Endowment Income	\$ 32,569
WM Unrestricted Endowment Income	\$ 135,847
WM Restricted Endowment Income	\$ 226,152
<b>Total Endowment Income</b>	<b>\$ 877,916</b>
EM Restricted Receipts (McElroy, C/G)	\$ 192,350
EM Other Restricted Income	\$ 132,256
WM Other Restricted Income	\$ 59,050
EM Other Receipts	\$ 5,450
<b>Total Other Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 389,106</b>
<b>TOTAL JOINT DIOCESAN INCOME 2025</b>	<b>\$ 2,793,732</b>
<b>Apportionment &amp; Congregational</b>	<b>\$ 1,526,710</b>
<b>Endowment Income</b>	<b>\$ 877,916</b>
<b>Other Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 389,106</b>
<b>By Originating Diocese</b>	
Eastern Income	\$ 1,307,758
Western Income	\$ 1,485,974

2025 Apportionment Income



2025 Endowment Income



2025 Share of Diocesan Income



2025 Total Diocesan Income



## Model Budget Expense Summaries

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<b>STAFF COSTS</b>	
Diocesan Bishop (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 208,613
Diocesan Bishop (Ministry Costs)	\$ 48,958
<b>TOTAL Bishop</b>	<b>\$ 257,571</b>
Southern Canon (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 138,411
Southern Canon (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,567
Central Canon (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 167,345
Central Canon (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,567
Northern Canon (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 167,345
Northern Canon (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,567
<b>TOTAL Collaborative Canons</b>	<b>\$ 486,802</b>
Children & Youth Director (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 122,396
Children & Youth Director (Ministry Costs)	\$ 17,950
4 Youth Missioners (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 33,349
4 Youth Missioners (Ministry Costs)	\$ 8,700
<b>TOTAL Children &amp; Youth</b>	<b>\$ 182,395</b>
Canon Networking & Evangelism (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 123,235
Canon Networking & Evangelism (Ministry Costs)	\$ 21,500
Admin Assist Networking & Evangelism (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 13,094
Admin Assist Database Management (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 71,014
<b>TOTAL Networking &amp; Evangelism</b>	<b>\$ 228,843</b>
CFO (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 130,782
CFO (Ministry Costs)	\$ 4,500
Finance Assistant (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 71,819
Finance Assistant (Ministry Costs)	\$ 1,000
Bishop's Assistant (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 89,584
Bishop's Assistant (Ministry Costs)	\$ 2,250
Diocesan Administrator (Salary & Benefits)	\$ 77,402
Diocesan Administrator (Ministry Costs)	\$ 2,500
<b>TOTAL Admin Staff</b>	<b>\$ 379,836</b>
<b>TOTAL STAFF COSTS</b>	<b>\$ 1,535,448</b>

<b>CHURCHWIDE SUPPORT &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>	
Assessment to The Episcopal Church	\$ 309,435
Province V	\$ 2,744
<b>TOTAL Assessment</b>	<b>\$ 312,179</b>
Province V Synod Travel & Registration	\$ 2,600
General Convention Deputation	\$ 18,000
<b>TOTAL Churchwide Governance</b>	<b>\$ 20,600</b>
Diocesan Convention	\$ 25,000
Ecumenical Officer	\$ 1,750
Diocesan Council	\$ 3,000
Dio/Nat Committee Travel	\$ 2,000
<b>TOTAL Diocesan Governance</b>	<b>\$ 31,750</b>
<b>TOTAL CHURCHWIDE SUPPORT &amp; GOVERNANCE</b>	<b>\$ 364,529</b>

<b>MINISTRIES OF THE DIOCESE</b>	
1% Fund for Theological Education	\$ 3,393
Education for Ministry	\$ 1,800
Deacon Training	\$ 2,000
Clergy Conferences & Retreat	\$ 15,000
McElroy Expenses	\$ 5,000
G&I Expenses	\$ 17,673
Commission on Ministry	\$ 7,050
Seminarian Formation Grants	\$ 44,300
Academy for Vocational Leadership / CG School	\$ 145,814
Licensed Lay Leader Training	\$ 3,000
Archdeacon	\$ 2,000
Networking Events	\$ 7,000
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<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 2,788,340</b>

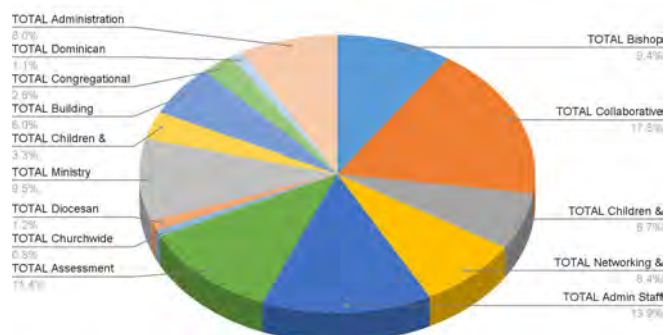
## Model Budget Expense Summaries

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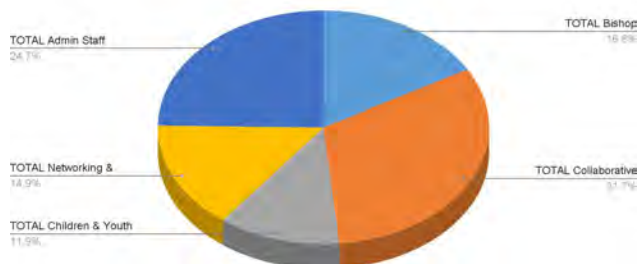
TOTAL 2025 Diocesan Expenses (General)



TOTAL 2025 Diocesan Expenses (Specific)



TOTAL 2025 Staff Costs



TOTAL Ministries of the Diocese



## Conclusion

Through our work and the listening we have done throughout both dioceses, it became abundantly clear to the Stewardship of Resources Team as well as the larger Building Bridges Steering Committee that neither diocese can simply continue business as usual. Through juncture, new ways open up for us all to approach this reality with greater collective resources, skills, experience, and perspectives. Prayerful conversation is needed about how we fund our shared life as well as what sort of diocesan structure would best enable the flourishing of every congregation and, especially, the support for and development of our smaller congregations. To wit, we cannot simply combine two unsustainable diocesan budgets, neither of which accurately reflect even our current needs. But if juncture is approved, we have a clear sense of the current resources we have for ministry, along with the challenges and opportunities in front of us; both of which we believe we can engage and grow into better together than apart.