

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2018
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2018-A092
TITLE: Amend Canons - Reception of Clergy from Churches in Apostolic Succession
PROPOSER: Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons
TOPIC: Canons

Directly Related: (Attached)

2006-A082 Amend Canons in Title III [Ministry]
1997-D035 On the Topic of the Canon on Previously Ordained Clergy of Other Churches (Rejected)

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

1988-A127 Amend and Renumber Canons III.10, 12, 13

Supplemental Documents: (Linked)

(Blue Book) Report to General Convention, [Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons](#), see pages 388-390.

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1976 through 2015, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.

A092 Amend Canons - Reception of Clergy from Churches in Apostolic Succession

Proposer	Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons
Topic	Canons
Endorsed by	
Sponsored by	
Page numbers	Blue Book: p. N/A; Constitution & Canons: p. 103, 105
HiA / Leg. Cttee	/
Current Status	Resolution Filed
Version	Original (as filed)
Review Status	Not yet reviewed

RESOLUTION TEXT

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That Canon III.10.3 is amended to read as follows:
- 2 Sec. 3. Clergy Ordained by Bishops in Churches in the Historic Succession but Not in *Full* Communion with This Church
- 3 (a) When a Priest or Deacon ordained in a Church by a Bishop in the Historic Succession but not in *full* communion with this Church, the regularity of whose ordination is approved by the Presiding Bishop as permitted by *Canon* I.16.3, desires to be received as a Member of the Clergy in this Church, the person shall apply in writing to a Bishop, attaching the following:
- 4 (1) *A nomination in writing for reception from the person's congregation or community of faith in this Church. The Nomination shall include a letter of support by the congregation or community of faith, committing the community to involve itself in the person's preparation for reception to the Priesthood. If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight.*
- 5 (2) *The person, if agreeing, shall accept the nomination in writing, and shall provide the following in writing to the Bishop:*
- 6 (a) *Full name and date of birth.*
(b) *The length of time resident in the Diocese.*
(c) *Evidence that the person is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Congregation of this Church.*
(d) *Whether an application has been made previously for reception in this or any other diocese.*
(e) *A description of the process of discernment the person has undertaken individually and with the nominating congregation or community of faith.*
(f) *A statement of reasons for seeking to enter Holy Orders in this Church.*
- 7 ~~(1) Evidence that the person is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a~~

~~Congregation of this Church.~~

- 8 (3) ~~(2)~~ Evidence of previous Ministry and that all other credentials are valid and authentic.
 - 9 (4) ~~(3)~~ Evidence of moral and godly character; and that the person is free from any vows or other engagements inconsistent with the exercise of Holy Orders in this Church.
 - 10 (5) ~~(4)~~ Transcripts of all academic and theological studies.
 - 11 (6) ~~(5)~~ A certificate from at least two (2) Presbyters of this Church stating that, from personal examination or from satisfactory evidence presented to them, they believe that the departure of the person from the Communion to which the person has belonged has not arisen from any circumstance unfavorable to moral or religious character, or on account of which it may not be expedient to admit the person to Holy Orders in this Church.
 - 12 (7) ~~(6)~~ Certificates in the forms provided in Canon III.8.6 and III.8.7 from the Rector or Member of the Clergy in charge and Vestry of a Parish of this Church.
 - 13 ~~(7) A statement of the reasons for seeking to enter Holy Orders in this Church~~
 - 14 And be it further
 - 15 *Resolved*, That Canon III.10.4 is hereby amended to read as follows:
 - 16 Sec. 4. Clergy Ordained in Churches Not in the Historic Succession
 - 17 (a) If a person ordained or licensed by other than a Bishop in the ~~Historic Succession~~ *historic succession* to minister in a Church not in *full* communion with this Church desires to be ordained, *the person shall apply to a Bishop, attaching a nomination in writing for ordination from the person's congregation or community of faith in this Church. The Nomination shall include a letter of support by the congregation or community of faith, committing the community to:*
 - 18 (1) *Involve itself in the person's preparation for ordination to the Priesthood. If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight.*
 - 19 (2) *The person, if agreeing, shall accept the nomination in writing, and shall provide the following in writing to the Bishop:*
 - 20 (a) *Full name and date of birth.*
(b) *The length of time resident in the Diocese.*
(c) *Evidence that the person is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Congregation of this Church.*
(d) *Whether an application has been made previously for ordination in this or any other*
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diocese.

(e) A description of the process of discernment the person has undertaken individually and with the nominating congregation or community of faith.

(f) A statement of reasons for seeking to enter Holy Orders in this Church.

- 21 ~~(1)~~ The person must first be a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Congregation of this Church;
- 22 (3) ~~(2)~~ The Commission shall examine the applicant and report to the Bishop with respect to:
- 23 (i) Whether the applicant has served in the previous Church with diligence and good reputation and has stated the causes which have impelled the applicant to leave the body and seek ordination in this Church,
- 24 (ii) The nature and extent of the applicant's education and theological training,
- 25 (iii) The preparations necessary for ordination to the Order(s) to which the applicant feels called;
- 26 Subsequent sections should be renumbered accordingly.

EXPLANATION

The beginning of Sections 3 and 4 of this Canon have been changed to reflect being in Full Communion rather than Communion to remain consistent with other canonical changes. Subsection (a) has been changed to bring some consistency with reception of clergy from Churches in Historic Succession but not in full communion with this Church and the discernment process that a lay person in The Episcopal Church may undergo for ordination to the priesthood or diaconate. Having additional similarities in both of these processes would provide a greater consistency in the expectations and credentials and trainings of all of our clergy.



Resolution Number: 2006-A082
Title: Amend Canons in Title III [Ministry]
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

[*Resolved*, that Canon III.10.3 be amended to read as follows:]

Sec. 3. Clergy Ordained by Bishops in Churches in the Historic Succession but Not in Communion with This Church

(a) When a Priest or Deacon ordained in a Church by a Bishop in the Historic Succession but not in communion with this Church, the regularity of whose ordination is approved by the Presiding Bishop as permitted by I.16.3, desires to be received as a Member of the Clergy in this Church, the person shall apply in writing to a Bishop, attaching the following:

- (1) Evidence that the person is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Congregation of this Church.**
- (2) Evidence of previous Ministry and that all other credentials are valid and authentic.**
- (3) Evidence of moral and godly character; and that the person is free from any vows or other engagements inconsistent with the exercise of Holy Orders in this Church.**
- (4) Transcripts of all academic and theological studies.**
- (5) A certificate from at least two Presbyters of this Church stating that, from personal examination or from satisfactory evidence presented to them, they believe that the departure of the person from the Communion to which the person has belonged has not arisen from any circumstance unfavorable to moral or religious character, or on account of which it may not be expedient to admit the person to Holy Orders in this Church.**
- (6) Certificates in the forms provided in Canon III.8.6 and III.8.7 from the Rector or Member of the Clergy in charge and Vestry of a Parish of this Church.**
- (7) A statement of the reasons for seeking to enter Holy Orders in this Church.**

Citation: Canon III.10.3 is excerpted from the Final Text of 2006-A082, which revised Canons in Title III. General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church*, Columbus, 2006 (New York: General Convention, 2007), pp. 583-630.



Resolution Number: 1997-D035
Title: On the Topic of the Canon on Previously Ordained Clergy of Other Churches
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That Canon III.10, Of Christian Clergy Previously Ordained or Licensed in Churches Not in the Historic Succession, be amended as follows:

Add to sec. 1(a) Application shall include evidence of previous Ministry and that all other credentials are valid and authentic, evidence of moral and godly character and that the person is free from any vows or other engagements inconsistent with the exercise of Holy Orders in this Church, transcripts of all relevant academic and theological studies, and a certificate from at least two Presbyters of this Church stating that, from personal examination or from satisfactory evidence presented to them, they believe that the departure of the person from the Christian body to which the person has belonged has not arisen from any circumstance unfavorable to moral or religious character, or on account of which it may not be expedient to admit the person to Holy Orders in this Church. Attachments shall include certificates in the forms provided in Canon III.6 or 7 from the Rector or member of the Clergy in charge and Vestry of a Parish of this Church, and a statement of the reasons for seeking to enter Holy Orders in this Church.

2. Amend sec. 1(b) "The Commission shall examine the applicant and report to the Bishop *and to the Standing Committee* with respect to..."

3. Delete the opening paragraph of sec. 1(c) and substitute the following: "*Upon recommendation of the Commission and of the Standing Committee, and if the applicant furnishes evidence of satisfactory theological training in the previous Christian body and has exercised a ministry therein with good repute and success for at least five years, the Bishop shall certify that the applicant is acceptable as a Member of the Clergy of this Church, subject to the successful completion of the examination; but the applicant shall not be approved for ordination until at least six months after the certification, during which period the applicant shall undertake such studies and training, in a theological school or otherwise, as shall be directed by the Bishop with the advice of the Commission.*"

4. Amend sec. 1(d) "Having fulfilled all the requirements of this Canon, the Bishop may ordain the ~~candidate~~ applicant a Deacon, and no sooner than ~~six~~ four months thereafter, a Priest ."

The Committee on Ministry presented its Report #25 on Resolution D035 (Amend Canon III.10: Clergy Licensed in Churches Not in Historic Succession), moved the resolution, and recommended referral to an interim body.