

**DIOCESE OF THE CAROLINAS
OF THE
ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA**

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

The Diocese of the Carolinas (the “Diocese”), a member of the Anglican Church in North America (the “Province”) and thereby a participant in the worldwide Anglican Communion and a member of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church (the “Church”), ordains and establishes this Constitution.

Article I

Fundamental Declarations of The Diocese

The Diocese hereby adopts the following Fundamental Declarations:

1. We confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, containing all things necessary for salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.
2. We confess Baptism and the Supper of the Lord to be Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself in the Gospel, and thus to be ministered with unfailing use of His words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
3. We confess the godly historic Episcopate as an inherent part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as integral to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ.
4. We confess as proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture the historic faith of the undivided church as declared in the three Catholic Creeds: the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian.
5. Concerning the seven Councils of the undivided Church, we affirm the teaching of the first four Councils and the Christological clarifications of the fifth, sixth and seventh Councils, in so far as they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures.
6. We receive The Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662, together with the Ordinal attached to the same, as a standard for Anglican doctrine and discipline, and, with the Books which preceded it, as the standard for the Anglican tradition of worship.
7. We receive the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1571, taken in their literal and grammatical sense, as expressing the Anglican response to certain doctrinal issues

controverted at that time, and as expressing fundamental principles of authentic Anglican belief.

The Diocese acknowledges the authority and powers of the Province as set forth in the Constitution and Canons adopted thereby and adopts this Constitution, which is in conformance therewith. All powers not granted to the Province are reserved to the Diocese.

Article II
Order, Governance and Discipline

The order, governance and discipline of the Diocese shall be vested in the Bishop as the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Standing Committee, the Synod, and the Ecclesiastical Trial Court of the Diocese in conformity with this Constitution.

Article III
Authority, Composition, and Organization of the Synod

Section 1. Authority

The Synod is the legislative body of the Diocese with authority to adopt canons, approve resolutions and budgets and take any other action for the conduct of the affairs of the Diocese not in conflict with this Constitution or that of the Province.

Section 2. Composition

(a) The Synod shall be composed of the Lay Order and the Clerical Order.

(b) The Clerical Order shall be composed of the Clergy Delegates comprising the Bishop or Bishops and all of the Presbyters and Deacons canonically resident in the Diocese as well as Presbyters and Deacons under the authority of the Bishop of the Diocese as determined in accordance with the Canons. No member of the Clerical Order while under ecclesiastical discipline shall be entitled to a seat in the Synod.

(c) The Lay Order shall be composed of the Lay Delegates chosen by the member Congregations and Missions, as authorized by canon, and, as authorized by canon, appointed and ex officio members. The elected Lay Delegates shall serve only for the annual meeting of the Synod for which chosen and for any special meeting held before the next annual meeting, unless other delegates are chosen specifically for such special meeting.

(d) Each elected Lay Delegate, each Clergy Delegate and, except as provided by canon, each appointed and ex officio member shall have voice and vote.

Section 3. Meetings

There shall be an annual meeting of the Synod. As provided by canon, there may be special meetings of the Synod.

Section 4. Quorum for the Transaction of Synod Business

In order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at an annual or special meeting, (i) one half of the Congregations and Missions must be represented by at least one delegate, of either Order; (ii) one half of the delegates of the Lay Order with the right to vote, whether elected, appointed or ex officio must be represented; and (iii) one half of the delegates of the Clerical Order must be represented. A meeting may be adjourned by a majority of those delegates present at adjournment.

Section 5. Presiding Officer of the Synod

The Bishop shall preside at all meetings of the Synod but may, while present, assign the role of presiding officer to another member the Synod. In the Bishop's absence, the Standing Committee shall assign the role of presiding officer to a member the Synod.

Section 6. Voting

The Synod shall deliberate and vote as one body and, unless otherwise provided by this Constitution or by canon, the vote of a majority of those voting in person shall be necessary to constitute action by the Synod. The canons may authorize or require a vote by orders.

Article IV **Synod Committees**

The Synod may establish such committees as it deems necessary, and the Bishop, with the advice of the Standing Committee, may appoint ad hoc committees to study and report on particular matters assigned by the Bishop.

Article V **Office of the Bishop**

Section 1. The Calling to the Episcopate – 1 Timothy 3

A Bishop is called by God and the Church to be a shepherd who feeds the flock entrusted to his care. A Bishop is an overseer of the flock and as such is called to propagate, to teach, and to uphold and defend the Faith and Order of the Church, willingly and as God directs. He must not be greedy for money but be eager to serve, not lording the authority of his office or position over those entrusted to his care. He must be a humble, wholesome example to the entire flock of Christ. By the tradition of Christ's

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, Bishops are consecrated for the whole Church and are successors of the Apostles through the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them. They are chief missionaries and chief pastors, guardians and teachers of doctrine, and administrators of godly discipline and governance.

Section 2. Concerning Criteria for Bishops

To be a suitable candidate for Bishop, a person must:

1. Be a person of prayer and strong faith;
2. Be pious, have exemplary morals and exhibit Godly character;
3. Have a zeal for souls;
4. Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit;
5. Possess the knowledge and gifts that equip him to fulfill the office;
6. Be held in high esteem by the faithful;
7. Be a male Presbyter at least 35 years old; and
8. Have demonstrated the ability to lead and grow the Church.

Section 3. Election of Bishops

The election of the Bishop of the Diocese, a Bishop Coadjutor or a Bishop Suffragan, or the selection of two or three nominees for a Bishop of the Diocese, a Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan, shall take place at the annual meeting or any special meeting of the Synod called for the purpose. The Standing Committee shall determine whether a Bishop is to be elected or nominees to be selected and, if nominees are to be selected, whether two or three nominees are to be selected, provided that if the Standing Committee determines that nominees are to be selected but the Synod finds only one suitable candidate, then that candidate shall be elected. The vote shall be by secret ballot and by orders. A majority of the votes cast by each order on the same ballot shall be necessary for election of a Bishop or selection of a nominee. If a Bishop is elected, the Secretary of the Diocese shall immediately forward the name of the Bishop-elect to the College of Bishops of the Province for its consent as provided in the Provincial Canons. If nominees are selected, the Secretary of the Diocese shall immediately forward the names of the nominees to the College of Bishops of the Province with the request that the College of Bishops designate one of such nominees as Bishop. In the event that the Bishop-elect is, or all the nominees selected are, rejected by the College of Bishops, the Bishop or the Standing Committee shall promptly call another meeting of the Synod for the purpose of electing a Bishop or selecting nominees.

Article VI *Vacancy in the Office of the Bishop*

Section 1. Death or Retirement of the Bishop

Upon the death or retirement of the Bishop: (i) the Bishop Coadjutor shall become the Bishop; and (ii) if there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the Standing Committee shall be the

Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese until a new Bishop is elected and consented to or until an Acting Bishop is appointed pursuant to the next sentence. Upon the death or retirement of the Bishop and if there be no Bishop Coadjutor, upon the written request of the Standing Committee, the College of Bishops may appoint an Acting Bishop to serve as Bishop until a new Bishop is elected and consented to.

Section 2. Removal of the Bishop

Upon the removal of the Bishop by deposition or suspension or inhibition for more than one year: (i) the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall become the Bishop; and (ii) if there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese until a new Bishop is elected and consented to or until an Acting Bishop is appointed pursuant to the next sentence. Upon the removal of the Bishop by deposition or suspension for more than one year and if there be no Bishop Coadjutor, upon the written request of the Standing Committee, the College of Bishops may appoint an Acting Bishop to serve as Bishop until a new Bishop is elected and consented to. Upon the removal of the Bishop by suspension or inhibition for less than one year (i) the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, or, if there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the Bishop Suffragan, if there be one, shall assume the duties of Bishop until the term of such suspension or inhibition has expired; and (ii) if there be no Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese until the term of such suspension or inhibition has expired or until an Acting Bishop is appointed pursuant to the next sentence. Upon the removal of the Bishop by suspension or inhibition for less than one year and if there be no Bishop Coadjutor or Bishop Suffragan, upon the written request of the Standing Committee, the College of Bishops may appoint an Acting Bishop to serve as Bishop until the term of such suspension or inhibition has expired.

Section 3. Disability or Impermissible Absence of the Bishop

If the Standing Committee determines upon careful deliberation that the Bishop is under a disability, or has absented himself without permission from or consultation with the Standing Committee for more than two months, it may, with the consent of the Archbishop, declare the Office of the Bishop vacant. In such case, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, or, if there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the Bishop Suffragan, if there be one, shall assume the duties of the Bishop until the Standing Committee, with the consent of the Archbishop, declares the Bishop restored or until a new Bishop is elected and consented to. If there be neither Bishop Coadjutor nor Bishop Suffragan, the Standing Committee shall serve as the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese until the Standing Committee with the consent of the Archbishop declares the Bishop restored or a new Bishop is elected or consented to.

Section 4. Succession of Bishop Suffragan

A Bishop Suffragan may not become the Bishop of the Diocese unless he is elected at a meeting of the Synod and his election be consented to by the College of Bishops.

Article VII **The Standing Committee**

There shall be a Standing Committee of the Diocese that shall perform those duties required by the Constitution and Canons of the Province and of the Diocese. The Standing Committee shall be composed of an equal number of elected clergy and laity and shall be constituted as provided by canon.

Article VIII **Other Committees of the Diocese**

The Synod may establish other committees of the Diocese.

Article IX **The Officers of the Diocese**

In addition to the Bishop, and, if there be such, the Bishop Coadjutor and the Bishop Suffragan, the officers of the Diocese shall be the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Chancellor, and the Registrar, and such other officers as may be provided in the canons, the selection and duties of which shall be prescribed by canon.

Article X **Mission and Worship**

Section 1. The Mission of the Diocese

The mission of the Diocese shall be the mission of the Province. The fundamental agency of mission in the Province and the Diocese is the local congregation.

Section 2. Worship in the Diocese

The worship of Almighty God in the Diocese shall be according to Anglican faith and order and shall be conducted in accord with the Constitution and Canons of the Province and of the Diocese.

Article XI
Ecclesiastical Discipline

Section 1. Ecclesiastical Trial Court Established

There shall be an Ecclesiastical Trial Court of the Diocese for the application of ecclesiastical discipline in accordance with the Provincial Constitution and Canons.

Section 2. Jurisdiction, Composition, Terms of Office and Procedures

The jurisdiction, composition, terms of office and procedures of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court shall be established by canon.

Article XII
Concerning Property of Congregations and Missions

All property, real and personal, owned or held by or on behalf of a Congregation or Mission of the Diocese is and shall be owned by the Congregation or Mission, free of any trust or other claim in favor of the Diocese or the Province.

Article XIII
Reserved Rights of the Diocese

Any property, both real and personal, owned by the Diocese now and in the future is not and shall not be subject to any trust interest in favor of the Province or any other claim of ownership arising out of the canon law of the Province. The Diocese reserves the right to withdraw from the Province at any time with the consent of a majority of the delegates entitled to vote at a meeting of the Synod called for that purpose. Upon withdrawal, the Diocese shall retain all property owned or held by it or on its behalf.

Article XIV
Incorporation

The Diocese may incorporate in accordance with the laws of any State where any of its Congregations or Missions is located. The Bishop shall be the President of the corporation and the Standing Committee its Board of Directors. Operation of the corporation shall be as provided by canon and applicable state law.

Article XV
Amendment

This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote of each order at any duly called meeting of the Synod. If so approved, the amendment shall lie over to the next meeting of the Synod, and, if again approved in the same form and in the same manner, the Constitution shall then stand amended as proposed.