CANON FOUR -- DIOCESAN GOVERNANCE

The Diocesan Bishop

1(1) The Bishop of the Diocese shall be elected or appointed as provided in Canon Three.

1(2) The Bishop of the Diocese has the powers, jurisdiction and authority that are inherent in the office of a bishop of the Church or that are conferred by the Act, the Constitution or by any Canon of the Synod, the Provincial Synod or the General Synod.

1(3) The Bishop is the Chair of the Synod and the Diocesan Council and, when present, may preside at a meeting of any Diocesan committee or other Diocesan body.

1(3.1) Subject to the direction of the Synod or Diocesan Council, the Bishop has responsibility for the temporal affairs of the Diocese and has the powers and duties incidental thereto.

1(4) When the office of Bishop is vacant or during the incapacity of the Bishop, the powers of the Bishop in respect of the temporal affairs of the Diocese or of any parish or of any church in the Diocese shall be exercised by the Coadjutor Bishop, the Suffragan Bishop, the Diocesan Administrator or the Bishop's Commissary, in that order.

1(5) The Diocesan Council may by resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting declare the incapacity of the Bishop from physical or mental infirmity, and where so declared the Bishop may resume the duties and functions of the office when

(a) the Bishop has given to the Bishop’s Commissary written notice of intention to do so, and

(b) the Diocesan Council by resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting has rescinded its resolution declaring the incapacity.

1(5.1) The Diocesan Council shall not adopt a resolution provided for in subsection (5) unless notice of intention to propose the resolution has been given in the notice of the meeting at which it is to be considered.

1(5.2) Notwithstanding any other provision in these canons, and subject to subsection (5.4), where the Diocesan Council has declared the Bishop incapacitated under subsection (5), the Diocesan Council may by resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting declare the office of the Bishop to be vacant.

1(5.3) The Diocesan Council shall not adopt the resolution provided for in subsection (5.2) unless notice of intention to propose the resolution has been given in the notice of the meeting at which it is to be considered.

1(5.4) Immediately following adoption of the declaration referred to in subsection (5.2), the Chair, Vice-Chair or Secretary shall transmit it to the members of the provincial house of bishops. The declaration shall take effect thirty days after such transmittal unless in the meantime a majority of members of the provincial house of bishops (excluding the Bishop) have notified the Secretary in writing of their disapproval of the declaration.

1(5.5) Diocesan Council resolutions referred to in this section are valid without the assent of the Bishop.

1(6) The Bishop may publish guidelines and directives relating to matters that are within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Bishop.

1(7) In furtherance of the Safe Church regime, the Bishop shall require persons holding the Bishop’s licence for ministry to obtain and file with the Bishop and with any relevant parish corporation, mission or the Cathedral of Christ Church a police records check

satisfactory to the Bishop that is directed at work with children, youth or vulnerable adults, and the Bishop may suspend or revoke the licence in the event of non-compliance.

1(8) Anyone holding the Bishop's licence for ministry who is charged with an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada shall notify the Bishop immediately.

The Coadjutor Bishop

2 The Synod, as provided in Canon Three, may elect a Coadjutor Bishop to assist the Bishop.

The Suffragan Bishop

3 The Synod, as provided in Canon Three, may elect a Suffragan Bishop to assist the Bishop.

The Assistant Bishop

3.1 The Diocesan Council, as provided in Canon Three, may join with the Bishop in appointing an Assistant Bishop to assist the Bishop.

The Bishop's Commissary

4(1) The Bishop may appoint a priest of not less than ten years' standing to be the Bishop's Commissary, to serve during pleasure.

4(2) The Bishop's Commissary shall assist the Bishop in administering the affairs of the Diocese, as required by the Bishop or as prescribed by regulation.

4(3) Subject to subsection 4.1(1), when the office of the Bishop is vacant or when the Diocesan Council has declared the Bishop to be incapacitated or absent, and when there is no Coadjutor Bishop and no Suffragan Bishop, the Bishop's Commissary shall administer the Diocese with all of the powers of the Bishop in respect of the temporal affairs of the Diocese or of any parish or of any church.

4(4) For purposes of subsection (3), when the Bishop has not appointed a commissary or the Bishop's Commissary resigns or becomes incapacitated, the Dean shall be Bishop's Commissary, or, if there is no Dean, the Diocesan Council may appoint a priest of not less than ten years' standing to be Bishop's Commissary.

The Diocesan Administrator

4.1(1) Notwithstanding subsections 4(1) and 4(3), when the office of the Bishop is vacant or the Diocesan Council has declared the Bishop to be incapacitated or when, in the opinion of the Diocesan Council, the Bishop has been absent from the Diocese or absent from duties for more than 45 consecutive days, and when there is no Coadjutor Bishop or Suffragan Bishop, the Diocesan Council may by resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting appoint the Metropolitan of the Province of Canada, another bishop or a priest of not less than ten years' standing to be the Diocesan Administrator, with all of the powers of the Bishop in respect of the temporal affairs of the Diocese or of any parish or of any church.

4.1(2) The Diocesan Council shall not adopt the resolution provided for in subsection (1) unless notice of intention to propose the resolution has been given in the notice of the meeting at which it is to be considered.

4.1(3) In appointing a Diocesan Administrator under subsection (1), the Diocesan Council may supersede an appointment of Bishop's Commissary made under subsections 4(1) or 4(3).

4.1(4) Diocesan Council resolutions referred to in this section are valid without the assent of the Bishop.

The Dean of the Diocese

5(1) The Bishop shall appoint the Dean, following consultation with the Cathedral Advisory Committee.

5(2) The Dean has precedence after the Bishop and any Coadjutor, Suffragan or Assistant Bishop, shall be assigned a seat assigned in Choir of the Cathedral marking such precedence, and has the right to use the seat at all times.

5(3) The Dean has the powers and duties set out in the by-laws of the Cathedral Chapter and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing,

(a) has the cure of souls of the Cathedral congregation,

(b) is the chief executive officer of the Cathedral,

(c) may attend ex officio all Diocesan committees and bodies, and

(d) subject to the Constitution and to any other provisions of the Canons, when the office of bishop is vacant and during the incapacity of the Bishop, is the Acting Chair of the Synod and the Diocesan Council.

The Archdeacons

6(1) The Bishop shall appoint Archdeacons to assist the Bishop's ministry of episcopal oversight by exercising territorial or Diocesan supervisory functions.

6(2) The Archdeacons have precedence after the Dean, and shall be installed in seats in the Cathedral, to which they have a right whenever present in Choir of the Cathedral.

6(2.1) Among themselves, Archdeacons have precedence by length of continuous appointment.

6(3) The Bishop may authorize an Archdeacon to assist in the supervision of an Archdeaconry.

6(4) The names and jurisdiction of each Archdeaconry shall be fixed by regulation.

6(5) The Diocesan Council may adopt regulations prescribing the duties and supervisory functions of Archdeacons.

6(6) The Bishop, with the approval of the Diocesan Council, may create additional Archdeaconries or decrease their number.

The Archdeaconry Greater Chapters

7(1) There shall be a Greater Chapter in each Archdeaconry.

7(2) The membership of each Archdeaconry Greater Chapter shall be all clergy licensed for ministry in the Archdeaconry, together with the Church Wardens, and the lay delegates to the Synod and their substitutes from each parish within the Archdeaconry.

7(2.1) The Diocesan Treasurer, the Secretary of Synod, the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor, if laity, shall be additional members of the Greater Chapter that includes the parish in which they are voting members.

7(3) The Diocesan Council may adopt regulations prescribing the objectives and the functions of the Archdeaconry Greater Chapters.

The Regional Deans

8(1) The Bishop may define the composition of a Deanery.

8(2) The Bishop, on nomination by the licensed clergy within a Deanery, shall appoint a Regional Dean.

8(3) The Diocesan Council may adopt regulations prescribing the duties and supervisory functions of Regional Deans.

The Canons

9(1) The Bishop may appoint Canons, who shall be installed by the Dean in seats in the canon stalls of the Cathedral.

9(2) A Canon Residentiary of the Cathedral, who is a Canon employed as a member of the Cathedral staff, shall perform such duties as the Dean assigns.

9(3) As members of the Cathedral Advisory Chapter, Canons shall perform such duties as are prescribed in the Cathedral By-laws, and any particular work the Bishop assigns to them.

The Secretary of the Synod

10 The Diocesan Council shall appoint the Secretary of the Synod**,** who shall remain in office until replaced.

The Treasurer of the Synod

11 The Diocesan Council shall appoint the Treasurer of the Synod**,** who shall remain in office until replaced.

Assistant Secretary and Assistant Treasurer

12 The Synod or the Diocesan Council may appoint an Assistant Secretary or an Assistant Treasurer or an Assistant Secretary-Treasurer**,** who shall hold office during the pleasure of the Synod or of the Diocesan Council.

The Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor

13(1) The Bishop shall appoint a Chancellor and a Vice-Chancellor, each of whom shall be a communicant member of the Church and either a lawyer of at least ten years' standing or a judge of a court of record, to hold office at the pleasure of the Bishop.

13(2) The Chancellor shall advise and assist the Bishop and the Synod.

13(3) The Vice-Chancellor shall assist the Chancellor, and shall act in case of the absence or incapacity of the Chancellor or when the office of Chancellor is vacant.

The Diocesan Registrar

14(1) There shall be a Registrar of the Diocese, who shall be appointed by the Diocesan Council for a renewable term of five years, who shall carry out the functions set out in Canon Five, together with such other functions as may be conferred by the Synod or the Diocesan Council.

14(2) The Registrar shall have a seal of office.

The Diocesan Archivist

15(1) There shall be an Archivist of the Diocese, who shall be appointed by the Diocesan Council for a renewable term of five years, who shall carry out the functions set out in Canon Five, together with such other functions as may be conferred by the Synod or the Diocesan Council.

15(2) Subject to section 14, the Diocesan Archivist shall be the custodian of records of official acts of or affecting the Diocese.

15(3) The Diocesan Archivist shall manage all archival records, and arrange and describe them according to commonly accepted archival principles, in accordance with Canon Five.

The Diocesan Council

16(1) The Diocesan Council shall

(a) as provided in the Constitution, manage and administer the temporal affairs of the Diocese, subject to the Bishop's approval and any limitations prescribed in the Canons,

(b) have special concern for the mission, ministry and program of the Church in the Diocese,

(c) support the work of the Church in Canada and the world,

(c.1) levy financial apportionments and assessments on the Cathedral, parish corporations, and missions in support of the Synod's work,

(d) advise the Bishop,

(e) report its actions to each regular meeting of the Synod, and

(f) adopt regulations, directives and guidelines as required by the Constitution or the Canons or as it deems necessary to fulfil its responsibilities.

16(2) A majority of the members of the Diocesan Council is a quorum.

16(3) The Diocesan Council shall elect one of its lay members to be its Vice-Chair.

16(4) The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence, or at the request, of the Bishop or of the Bishop's Commissary.

16(5) The Diocesan Council shall meet at least three times in each year.

16(6) The Bishop shall appoint the time and place of all meetings of the Diocesan Council but where five members of the Diocesan Council give notice in writing to the Vice-Chair, or where there is no Vice-Chair to the Secretary, to call a meeting of the Council, the Vice-Chair or Secretary shall call a meeting so as to meet within one month of receipt of such notice.

16(6.1) [repealed 2026]

16(7) The Vice-Chancellor may attend meetings of the Diocesan Council, and, if the Chancellor of the Diocese is absent, has the right to vote.

16(8) The Diocesan Council may appoint such committees as it deems necessary and define their responsibilities, including their reporting to the Diocesan Council.

16(9) No member of the Diocesan Council or of its committees shall be present during discussion of any matter or motion concerning which that member or his/her immediate family or that member's parish has a direct financial or material interest.

The Executive Committee

17(1) The Diocesan Council shall appoint an Executive Committee consisting of the Bishop and not less than twelve members of the Diocesan Council, with equal numbers of clergy and lay members.

17(2) The Executive Committee

(a) shall advise the Bishop and the Diocesan Council,

(b) shall exercise such functions and authority as the Diocesan Council delegates to it, and

(c) may, when in its opinion an emergency exists, exercise any authority of the Diocesan Council.

17(3) A majority of the members of the Executive Committee is a quorum.

17(4) The Executive Committee shall report its actions to each meeting of the Diocesan Council and, through the Diocesan Council, to the Synod.

The Finance Committee

18(1) There shall be a Finance Committee of the Diocesan Council that shall carry out the functions set out in Canon Five, together with such other functions as may be conferred upon it by the Diocesan Council or by the Synod.

18(2) The Finance Committee shall consist of

(a) the Bishop,

(b) the Coadjutor Bishop,

(c) the Suffragan Bishop,

(c.1) the Diocesan Administrator,

(d) the Bishop's Commissary,

(e) the Dean,

(f) one territorial Archdeacon, as elected by the Archdeacons,

(g) the Secretary of the Synod,

(h) the Treasurer of the Synod,

(i) the Chancellor, or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chancellor, and

(j) six other members, of whom no fewer than four shall be lay persons, who shall be appointed by the Diocesan Council following each regular meeting of the Synod.

18(3) The lay members of the Finance Committee shall be persons who are voting members of a parish, mission, or the Cathedral.

18(4) Notwithstanding s.20, the appointed members of the Finance Committee shall hold office until their successors are appointed.

18(5) A majority of the Finance Committee, including at least three lay members, is a quorum.

18(6) The Finance Committee shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and secretary from among its members.

18(7) The Finance Committee has the duties prescribed in Canon Five.

18(8) The acts and proceedings of the Finance Committee may be reviewed at any meeting of the Synod or of the Diocesan Council but neither the Synod nor the Diocesan Council may, as against a third party, invalidate anything done pursuant to a resolution validly passed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Bishop.

18(9) The Finance Committee shall report its acts and proceedings at each regular meeting of the Diocesan Council and, if required by the Bishop, the Bishop's Commissary or the Diocesan Council, at any special meeting of the Diocesan Council.

18(10) The Finance Committee shall make a general report of its acts and proceedings at each regular meeting of the Synod.

The Constitution and Canons Committee

19(1) There shall be a Constitution and Canons Committee of the Diocesan Council that shall carry out the functions set out herein, together with such other functions as may be conferred upon it by the Diocesan Council or by the Synod.

19(2) The Diocesan Council shall appoint not fewer than ten persons, including both clergy and laity, to be members of the Constitution and Canons Committee.

19(3) Lay members of the Constitution and Canons Committee shall be qualified to be elected as members of the Synod.

19(4) The Chancellor is an ex officio member and the Chair of the Constitution and Canons Committee.

19(5) The Vice-Chancellor is an ex officio member and Vice-Chair of the Constitution and Canons Committee.

19(6) The Constitution and Canons Committee shall

(a) advise the Synod, the Bishop and the Diocesan Council with respect to legal matters related to the Church and the Diocese, and

(b) make recommendations to the Synod and to the Diocesan Council with respect to the adoption of Canons or the amendment of the Act, the Constitution and the Canons.

Limitation on Length of Service

20(1) Subject to subsection (2), no person who has been an elected or an appointed member of the Diocesan Council, the Finance Committee, the Constitution and Canons Committee or any other committee appointed by the Diocesan Council for six consecutive years is eligible for re-election or re-appointment thereto until a further year has passed.

20(2) No person who has been the chair of the Finance Committee or of any other committee, other than the Constitution and Canons Committee, for six consecutive years, is eligible for re-election or re-appointment as Chair thereof until a further year has passed.

Educational Functions

21(1) The Diocesan Council shall exercise and support the educational functions of the Diocese and, without limiting the generality of this function, shall establish and affirm the relationship between the Diocese and the following educational institutions:

(a) University of King's College, Halifax,

(b) Atlantic School of Theology, Halifax, and

(c) Rothesay Netherwood School, Rothesay.

21(2) Where the Diocese is conferred with the authority to appoint members to the board of governors or other governing body or committee of an educational institution, the Diocesan Council is designated to perform that function.

21(3) The Diocesan Council may enter into an agreement with an educational institution to provide Christian clergy or lay assistance to the Diocese.

Safe Church

22(1) The Diocesan Council shall maintain a regime of prevention, training, and mitigation to promote a safe working, learning, and worshipping environment for:
- (a) participants in church activities, particularly children, youth, and vulnerable adults;
- (b) those interacting with church corporations and their officers, employees, and volunteers; and
- (c) those present on church property.

22(2) Subject to Canon XVIII (Discipline) of the General Synod and to the general law, safe church regulations and policies may bind the Bishop and those holding the Bishop's licence or permission for ministry or function, the Synod and its elected and appointed officers, employees, and volunteers, the Cathedral Chapter and its elected and appointed officers, employees, and volunteers, and parish corporations and missions and their elected and appointed officers, employees, and volunteers.