

**THE CONSTITUTION
FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH IN THE
DIOCESE OF QUINCY**

[First Reading at the 144th Synod, 2021 *in Special Session*]

[Adopted by the 145th Synod, 2022]

PREAMBLE

In the Name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

We, the Bishop, Priests, and Deacons, and the Laity by their elected representatives of the Church in the Diocese of Quincy, now assembled in Synod, hereby make the following Solemn Declaration:

We are Anglican Christians united by our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures. We know ourselves to be members of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

The Diocese of Quincy is a diocese of affinity, welcoming churches and clergy seeking a diocese with a long history of commitment to the Anglican expression of the faith handed down from the apostles. "Affinity", as used in this Constitution, shall mean a desire to enter into ecclesiastical relationship with this diocese, and to assent to the Constitution, Canons, Ecclesiastical Authority, and catholic heritage of this diocese.

We are rooted in Jesus Christ our Lord, missional in action, and compassionate in our commitment to reach out to the poor, the marginalized, and the needy in our communities.

We believe that this Constitution is faithful to that call and consistent with the Historic Faith and Order of the Church, and we invite the prayers of all faithful Anglicans as we seek to be obedient disciples of Jesus Christ our One Lord and Savior. To that end, therefore, we do solemnly declare and establish this Constitution of the Church in the Diocese of Quincy.

ARTICLE I

FUNDAMENTAL DECLARATIONS OF THE DIOCESE

As the Diocese of Quincy, being a part of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ (denoting unity, sacred, universal, and following the teachings of the apostles), we believe and confess Jesus Christ to be as He declared, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” He also said, “No one comes to the Father but by Me.” We identify the following as characteristics of the Anglican Way and essential for membership:

Section 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.

Section 2. We confess Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, also referred to as the Lord’s Supper, to be the Sacraments established by Christ Himself in the Gospel, and thus to be administered with unfailing use of His words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him

Section 3. We hold there are five other Sacramental Rites, which were not ordained by Christ as necessary to salvation but arose from the practices of the apostles and the Early Church. God clearly uses them as means of His grace and mercy. These are Confirmation, Ordination, Marriage, Reconciliation, and Unction (Anointing) of the sick.

Section 4. We acknowledge the godly historic Office of Bishop as an essential part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as indispensable to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ, the Church.

Section 5. We confess, as proven through the Holy Scripture, the historic faith of the undivided church as stated in the three Catholic Creeds: The Apostles,' the Nicene, and the Athanasian.

Section 6. Concerning the seven Councils of the undivided Church, we acknowledge the teaching of the first four Councils and the Christological clarifications of the person, nature, and role of Jesus Christ of the fifth, sixth and seventh Councils.

Section 7. We are bound to seek unity of faith with the whole Church, particularly those parts with whom we share in the historic succession of bishops and the threefold Order of the Church; and we are moreover bound not to depart from the historic faith of the Church as it has been handed down to us, nor from the consensus of the Church Catholic in matters regarding our shared faith and order, including a male-only presbyterate and episcopate.

ARTICLE II

IN REFERENCE TO PROVINCIAL CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

Section 1. The Diocese shall seek, by affiliation with a recognized and faithful province in the Anglican tradition, to be and remain in full communion with all Anglican churches, dioceses and provinces that hold and maintain the historic faith, doctrine, sacraments and discipline of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church; provided that the Diocese may realign itself at any time when, in the judgment of the Synod, realignment is necessary to maintain our primary goal to serve God in the world.

Section 2. Subject to the continuing approval of Diocesan Synod and consistent with this Constitution, the church in the Diocese consents to the Constitution and Canons of that Anglican Communion province with which this Diocese is affiliated.

Section 3. Provincial membership shall be established, or changed, by a concurrent two-thirds majority vote in both the Lay and Clergy orders at any regular or special synod and shall become effective upon the adjournment of that synod.

ARTICLE III

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE DIOCESE

- Section 1. Since our founding in 1877, The Diocese of Quincy (hereinafter called the “Diocese”) has comprised that portion of the State of Illinois lying south of the southern boundaries of the Counties of Whiteside and Lee, west of the western boundaries of the Counties of LaSalle and Livingston, north of the northern boundaries of the Counties of McLean and Tazewell and west of the Illinois River, and later Woodford County.
- Section 2. In 2008, the Diocese of Quincy realigned with a faithful province of the Anglican Communion, and in so doing, recognized the needs of other churches to do the same. While the Diocese continues to be based in central and western Illinois, it has responded to the needs of the faithful in other places, and includes and welcomes congregations and clergy outside the historical boundaries of the Diocese. The Diocese is now and shall be a diocese of affinity, welcoming congregations, and clergy, not necessarily constrained by geographical location.
- Section 3. Parishes or missions may be admitted into the Synod upon meeting all requirements set forth in this Constitution and in the Canons of this Diocese.

ARTICLE IV

THE MISSION OF THE DIOCESE

- Section 1. The Diocese of Quincy is committed to making and nurturing disciples of Christ, as commissioned by our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Section 2. First, we are ROOTED in Jesus Christ our Lord, anchored in the Holy Scriptures, as handed down from the apostles and the early church fathers. We base our mission and teaching on the foundation of the Holy Scriptures, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Catholic Creeds (Apostles, Nicene, Athanasian), and such sound principles as do not oppose the Holy Scripture and are in agreement with the Universal Church.
- Section 3. Second, we are MISSIONAL: Christ left us with the Great Commission, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* (Matthew 28:19–20) We gather together to worship and give thanks to God, to hear the Word of God proclaimed and preached, to receive the sacraments, and to fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Our mission then becomes carrying our love of Christ out into the world and proclaiming that Word to everyone.
- Section 4. Three, we are COMPASSIONATE: We are committed to reach out to the poor, the marginalized, the least, the lost, the lonely, and the needy.

ARTICLE V

The Ecclesiastical Authority

- Section 1. The bishop is the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. He shall have original jurisdiction in all ecclesiastical causes and in religious or benevolent organizations within the Diocese, except as shall be reserved by civil or canon law to other authority.
- Section 2. Consistent with canonical and civil law the bishop shall have the ultimate responsibility and authority to arbitrate and adjudicate, within the limits of this Constitution and canonical provisions, all controversies within the diocese including, but not limited to, disputes between members of the clergy, between a parish and its vestry or rector, or between a vestry and its rector.
- Section 3. The bishop may on occasion authorize a representative or representatives to act in his stead, provided that such authorization is not in conflict with the provincial or diocesan constitution and canons.
- Section 4. In the event of the death of the diocesan bishop or his inability to exercise his authority, then in accordance with the provincial canons, authority shall pass to the Bishop Coadjutor. If there is not a Bishop Coadjutor, the Standing Committee shall exercise authority on behalf of the Diocese.

ARTICLE VI

SYNOD

- Section 1. There shall be a synod of the church in this diocese (Hereinafter, the "Synod") to act upon all matters presented to it consistent with the faith and order of the church. With continuing existence, such synod shall be convened each year at a place and time set by the bishop or other ecclesiastical authority, acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee.
- Section 2. The ecclesiastical authority shall have power to call the Synod into special session, whenever the welfare of the church in this diocese so requires. The time, place, and purpose of the special session of the Synod shall be designated by the ecclesiastical authority issuing the call, and no business other than that stated in the call shall be transacted except by consent of a three-fourths majority.
- Section 3. The Secretary of the Synod shall give written notice of the convening of the Synod in either annual or special session, and such notice shall specify the time and place of the session, not less than sixty days before the first day of the annual session and not less than thirty days before the first day of a special session, to each member of the clergy canonically resident in this diocese and to the clerk of each parish and organized mission in union with the Synod.

Section 4. Membership of Synod.

- A. A member of the clergy canonically resident in this diocese shall be entitled to a seat, voice, and vote in the Synod, according to the canons. A member of the clergy actively engaged in the work of the ministry within the diocese under license from the bishop, but who is not canonically resident in the diocese, shall be entitled to a seat and voice, but not a vote in the Synod.
- B. Parishes, Organized Missions, and Parochial Missions which have been admitted into union with the Synod of this Diocese shall be entitled to lay representation with seat, voice, and vote in this Synod, subject to disciplinary action provided for by the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese. Deputies and their alternates shall be selected by the parishes and missions, the number set by the Canons of the Diocese.
- C. Lay Deputies shall be qualified electors, as defined by canon, of the congregations they represent and shall be elected as prescribed by canon.

Section 5. The Registrar and the Secretary of Synod of the Diocese shall be members of the Synod ex officio, but shall not vote unless otherwise qualified. The Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor (if there is one) and the Treasurer of the Diocese shall be members of the Synod ex officio, but without vote.

Section 6. No person under ecclesiastical censure, whether a member of the clergy or a layperson, shall be entitled to a seat in the Synod.

Section 7. If, for whatever cause, a Parish or Organized Mission of this Diocese is not represented in any Synod, or in any of the sessions thereof, such parish or mission shall nevertheless be bound by all the acts of the Synod the same as if fully represented.

Section 8. A seat and voice may be granted to any person at a session of the Synod by its consent on recommendation of the Committee on Credentials. The privilege of the floor may be granted to any person by the Chairman of the Synod, the foregoing notwithstanding

ARTICLE VII

OFFICERS OF THE DIOCESE AND THE SYNOD

- Section 1. The bishop of the Diocese shall be president of the Synod and shall have every right of membership in the same, and may speak to any issue on the floor immediately prior to the casting of a ballot. In the absence of the bishop or other proper ecclesiastical authority, the senior active diocesan priest in attendance shall call the Synod to order, and a president shall then be elected.
- Section 2. The Secretary of the Synod (hereinafter the "Secretary") shall be appointed annually by the ecclesiastical authority, with the approval of the Synod, and shall discharge the duties appropriate to that office and such others as may be imposed by canon or by action of the Synod. An assistant may be appointed by the Secretary with the approval of the Synod. Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of Secretary, the duties thereof shall become the responsibility of the assistant, or if there is none, upon the Secretary of the Standing Committee.
- Section 3. The Treasurer of the Diocese shall be appointed annually by the ecclesiastical authority, with the approval of each annual Synod, and shall serve ex officio as the treasurer of the Synod. The Treasurer shall discharge the duties imposed by canon or by the action of the Synod and shall make an annual written report to the Synod of all moneys entrusted to the Treasurer's care. The Treasurer shall serve ex officio as a member of the Department of Finance and the Trustees of Funds and Property without office or vote.

Section 4. The Registrar of the Diocese shall be appointed annually by the ecclesiastical authority, with the approval of each annual Synod. The Registrar shall discharge the duties imposed by canon or by the action of the Synod.

Section 5. The Chancellor of the Diocese shall be appointed annually by the ecclesiastical authority, with the approval of each annual Synod. The Chancellor shall be a lay communicant of the Diocese in good standing and shall be licensed to practice law in the State of Illinois. The Chancellor shall be the legal advisor to the bishop and the Synod and shall discharge any duties imposed by canon. A Vice Chancellor equally qualified may be appointed annually subject to the provisions of this Constitution.

Section 6. These officers may be removed from office at any time by the bishop with the approval of the Standing Committee.

Section 7. The terms of office of the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Registrar, the Chancellor, and the Vice Chancellor (if there is one) shall begin immediately upon appointment, and shall terminate upon removal or when their successors shall have been duly appointed and approved. In the event of a vacancy in these offices, the bishop, with the approval of the Standing Committee, may fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE VIII

CONDUCT OF THE SYNOD

- Section 1. The Holy Eucharist shall be celebrated at every Synod. The ecclesiastical authority shall direct this and any other liturgies.
- Section 2. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be as defined in the Canons. A smaller number may adjourn the Synod if a quorum is not present.
- Section 3. When the word "majority" is used in reference to votes of Synod, it shall mean a simple or designated fractional majority of those deputies who have been certified by the Committee on Credentials as entitled to seat, voice, and vote in the Synod and who have properly registered prior to commencement of each session of Synod.
- Section 4. At meetings of the Synod, the clergy and the lay deputies shall deliberate and vote as one body, with the following exceptions:
- A. At the election of a bishop, or the election of Representatives or Members for the Provincial Assembly or Provincial Council, or upon amendment of this Constitution, the concurrence of both orders shall be necessary.

B. At the request of any four members of the clergy entitled to vote, or of any four lay deputies representing two or more different congregations, the vote shall be taken by orders. When a vote is taken by orders, the concurrence of both orders shall be necessary for affirmative action.

ARTICLE IX

Admission and Assessment of Missions and Parishes

Section 1. The Synod shall prescribe by canon the qualifications by which a congregation may be recognized as an Organized Mission, Parish or Parochial Mission of the Church in this Diocese and admitted to its Synod.

Section 2. No mission shall be established within the bounds of any existing parish which shall be within a radius of five miles from the altar of that parish, without the consent of the rector and vestry, previously given in writing. In the event consent is refused and if the bishop wishes to pursue the formation of a new mission, he shall refer the matter to the Standing Committee for their advice and consent, and may proceed if he receives the consent of a majority of all the members. The advice and consent of the Standing Committee shall be given only after a hearing of any conflicts existing, and at which representatives from both the existing Parish and the proposed mission shall be permitted to present full evidence for their positions.

Section 3. The Synod shall have power to raise money by assessment on the parishes and missions of the Diocese, by canon or resolution, for the necessary and proper expenses of the Diocese. Special assessments for purposes not provided for by canon nor included in the budget canonically adopted shall require a two-thirds majority consent of the Synod.

Section 4. The Synod shall have power, subject to the Canons, to impose such penalty for neglect to pay assessments as it may deem appropriate, provided that such penalties are consistently applied.

ARTICLE X

The Standing Committee

Section 1. There shall be a Standing Committee of the Diocese which shall be a council of advice to the bishop, and shall, along with the bishop, constitute the Board of Directors of the Diocesan Corporation. If there is no bishop canonically authorized to act, the Standing Committee shall be the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese and it shall have such other rights and duties as provided by the Provincial and Diocesan Constitution and Canons. It shall consist of three priests and three laypersons to serve three-year terms; a priest and a layperson being elected annually.

Section 2. The members of the Standing Committee shall be elected from among the priests of the Diocese who are qualified members of the Synod, canonically resident within the Diocese, and from the laypersons who are qualified electors of a congregation in the Diocese, except those pursuing an application for postulancy or ordination. No person shall be elected to a second successive full term. No person serving on the Standing Committee shall serve concurrently on the Diocesan Council, Ecclesiastical Court or, or as Chancellor or Vice Chancellor.

Section 3. As soon as practicable after the adjournment of each annual Synod, the Standing Committee shall meet and shall elect a president and a vice president from among its clerical members and a secretary from among its members, either clerical or lay. The Secretary shall keep a record of all the proceedings of the Standing Committee. The records shall be open at all times to inspection by the bishop of the Diocese. The President or designated committee member shall give a full report of the actions of the Standing Committee to each annual Synod.

Section 4. A majority of the members of the Standing Committee shall constitute a quorum unless the Canons shall require a larger number.

Section 5. The Standing Committee shall have power to fill vacancies in its own membership, with such appointments to run until the next annual Synod.

ARTICLE XI

Diocesan Council

There shall be a Diocesan Council which, subject to the authority of the bishop, shall guide the affairs of the Diocese as specified by canon. It shall have the authority to act in the interim period between Synods, implementing the directives and policies of Synod; except that the Council shall not act in contravention of the expressed will of the Synod.

ARTICLE XII
THE ECCLESIASTICAL TRIAL COURT

There shall be an Ecclesiastical Court, which shall be appointed by the Diocesan Synod on such terms and conditions as determined by canon. The jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Court shall be to determine matters in dispute arising from the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese and such other matters as may be authorized by canon.

ARTICLE XIII
PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

The Diocese shall have representation at Provincial Assemblies and Councils as provided by Provincial and Diocesan Canon.

ARTICLE XIV

TITLE AND CONTROL OF PROPERTY

The Title or Ownership of all Property, real, corporate, or personal, now owned or hereafter acquired by The Diocese of Quincy or by an incorporated parish or incorporated mission shall be determined as provided by The Canons of The Diocese.

ARTICLE XV

PARISHES WISHING TO SEVER TIES WITH THE DIOCESE

Parishes wishing to sever ties with The Diocese shall follow the procedures as provided by The Provincial and Diocesan Canons.

ARTICLE XVI

AUTHENTICATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1. A copy of this Constitution as adopted, together with the certificate of adoption signed and attested by the Bishop and the Secretary of the Synod, and similarly attested copies of all subsequent additions, alterations and amendments shall be in the care and custody of the Registrar of the Diocese.

Section 2. All previous Constitutions, in whole and in the several articles thereof, adopted by any Synod or Convention of this Diocese are hereby annulled and repealed.

ARTICLE XVII

ALTERATIONS AND AMENDMENTS

- Section 1. The Synod shall provide by canon for a Committee on Constitution and Canons, to serve continuously, and shall prescribe its membership, organization, and functions.
- Section 2. Any proposed alteration, amendment or repeal of this Constitution shall first be submitted in writing to the Committee on Constitution and Canons, and shall be reported by them to the Synod, with their recommendations.
- Section 3. If approved by the Synod at its first reading, the proposed amendment shall be published in the Journal and held until the next Synod. Upon final consideration by the next Synod, it shall be adopted if approved by a majority of both orders, voting separately, and concurred in by the bishop. If not concurred in by the bishop, he may be overruled by a two-thirds majority vote in both orders.
- Section 4. Amendments to the Constitution shall take effect with the adjournment of the Synod by which they are finally adopted; provided, that by a two-thirds vote of the Synod, they may take effect immediately.