

### #3 Revise Canons to Amend Canons 6.1, 15.3, 18, 27, 29E, and 38 (THRIVE Canons)

SPONSOR: Canons Committee, Diocese of Vermont

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RESOLVED, That the 193<sup>rd</sup> (2025) Convention of the Diocese of Vermont amend Canons 6.1, 15.3, 18, 27, 29E, and 38, to read as presented below the Explanation, the new text underlined and the deleted text overstruck; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the repeal of Canon 38 will not repeal or amend any THRIVE-related canon amendments adopted at the Conventions of 2023 or 2025; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in accordance with Canon 37, Section 2, these amendments will take effect upon adjournment of the October 30, 2025, Diocesan Convention.

*[Note: The following explanation of the Resolution is not included in the Resolution to be voted on. It is presented as an overview of the Resolution's proposed canonical changes, which follow.]*

#### EXPLANATION

The Resolution proposes the following changes:

- Create new seats on Executive Council for the chairperson or a representative of the Racial Healing and Justice Committee and for representation of the leadership involved with Creation Care. See the proposed changes to Canon 6.1.
- Amend Canon 27 to revert the Commission on Missional Vitality to the Commission on Ministry, returning to this body all the attendant responsibilities of a Commission on Ministry, to align with the model in The Episcopal Church Canons. Accordingly, the amendments delete references to the Commission on Missional Vitality. See the proposed changes to Canons 27, 15.3 and 18.
- Amend Canon 27 to dissolve the Committee on Congregational Development and Formation (CCDF). See the proposed changes to Canons 6.1 and Canon 27.
- Delete Canon 29E, Advisory Commission on Diocesan Organizations, which did not meet during the three-year period of assessing the THRIVE changes.
- Delete Canon 38, which was added in 2022 to “sunset” the THRIVE Canons unless specific action was taken prior to, or at, the 2025 Convention to make some or all of the THRIVE changes permanent. By deleting Canon 38, the changes made to the Canons in 2022, 2023, and at this 2025 Convention will become permanent parts of the Canons of the Diocese of Vermont.

The resolution provides for the amendments to take effect at the conclusion of this Convention in accordance with CANON 37: AMENDMENTS TO CANONS. The relevant section reads:

*2. The Committee on Canons may submit proposed amendments to these Canons at any annual Convention for immediate adoption, instead of deferring action for one year, provided the submission of such proposed amendment is approved by a concurrent vote, by Orders, of two-thirds of those present and voting in each Order.*

**From**  
**CONSTITUTION AND CANONS**  
**OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT**

**As Most Recently Amended on November 14, 2024**

*[Click on the title above to link to the full Constitutions and Canons on the Diocese of Vermont website.]*

CANON 6: THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1. There shall be an Executive Council comprised of:

- the Bishop, *ex officio*;
- the President of the Standing Committee, *ex officio*, and one other member of the Standing Committee designated by the Standing Committee; one of these members shall be clergy and the other lay;
- the Chair of the Commission on Finance, *ex officio*, and one other member of the Commission designated by the Commission; one of these members shall be clergy and the other lay;
- The President of The Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont, Inc., *ex officio*;
- **Two members of the Commission on ~~Missional Vitality's~~ Committee on Ministry, one clergy and one lay, designated by the Commission Committee; and two members of the Commission's ~~Committee on Congregational Development and Formation, one clergy and one lay, designated by the Committee;~~**
- ~~the Chair of the Advisory Commission on Diocesan Organizations, *ex officio*;~~
- **the Chair of the Racial Healing and Justice Committee established by the Bishop, or the Chair's designated representative;**
- **the Chair of a group or committee recognized by Executive Council and involved with Creation Care, or that Chair's designated representative;**
- up to three members appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Executive Council, not all from the same order; and
- the Treasurer of the Diocese, *ex officio*.

The Bishop shall be the President of the Executive Council; the Executive Council shall elect a Secretary and may elect other officers as it sees fit.

2. The Executive Council shall keep minutes of its meetings and a regular record of its actions and documents, which shall be open to inspection by the Convention and kept in the permanent records of the archives of the Diocese in a reasonably accessible manner.

3. The Executive Council shall meet regularly between sessions of the Convention, at a minimum quarterly, and shall also meet when called upon by the Bishop or any three other members of the Council.

4. The Bishop or, if there be none, the Standing Committee and the Executive Council, shall exercise the executive powers of the Diocese between sessions of the annual Convention and shall be responsible for the promotion of the Mission of God in the Church and the programs of the Diocese. To that end, the Executive Council may take such actions, organize, supervise, and coordinate such departments, commissions, task forces, and committees as it may deem necessary. The Executive Council may also request every Parish and Mission to conduct periodic self-studies and draft statements of goals in light of the Diocesan Mission Statement. The

Executive Council shall report its activities and recommendations to the annual Convention for action.

5. The Executive Council, with the assistance of the Commission on Finance and in consultation with the Treasurer of the Diocese, shall prepare a comprehensive budget each year for submission to the annual Convention for action. This budget shall include appropriations, as recommended by the Council, necessary to promote the Mission of God in the Church and to maintain and operate the Diocese for the ensuing fiscal year. The budget revenues shall be determined and assessed as provided in Canon 10.2

6. The Executive Council, acting through the Treasurer of the Diocese, shall be responsible for the collection and disbursement of the budget as adopted by the annual Convention. The Executive Council may authorize the Treasurer of the Diocese to borrow money from time to time in anticipation of the budget income, so that the budgeted appropriations and obligations of the Diocese may be paid when due.

7. The Executive Council shall review the minimum stipend and travel allowance of the Clergy of the Diocese and shall recommend the same to the Convention with regard to the proper support of the ministry. Such a minimum stipend shall be binding on all Parishes and Missions upon ratification by the Convention. The Council shall also annually review the stipend or stipends of the Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor or the Bishop Suffragan, if there be either or both, together with their expenses for housing, house maintenance, travel, secretarial or office expenses, which shall be paid from the Episcopal Fund and Diocesan Assessments.

CANON 6A: THE FORMER DIOCESAN COUNCIL

The duties, authority and responsibilities held by the Diocesan Council prior to the October 13, 2022 Convention shall be held and exercised by the Executive Council, except as specifically otherwise provided in these Canons. Effective with the adjournment of that Convention, the Diocesan Council shall cease to exist and the terms of office of all members shall end. The members whose terms of officer are thus foreshortened may be redeployed, as appropriate, to other Diocesan duties.

CANON 6B: THE FORMER MISSION DISTRICTS

Effective upon the adjournment of the Convention held October 13, 2022, the Mission Districts shall cease to exist.

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CANON 15: MISSION CONGREGATIONS

3. The spiritual and temporal control of all Missions and missionary work shall be vested in the Bishop and the Executive Council, ~~with the assistance of the Commission on Missional Vitality~~. The Bishop shall appoint the Priest-in-Charge of a Mission after consultation with the Executive Committee of the Mission.

*[Note: This change is needed if the Resolution, "Revise Canons to Amend Canons 13, 14, 15 and add Canon 15A" is not adopted. If it is adopted, Canon 15.3 is replaced with new language and this struck.]*

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## CANON 18: FORMATION OF CONSTELLATIONS

A constellation is a formal agreement between at least two worshiping communities, i.e., of Parishes and/or Missions, who share clergy leadership and other services. This agreement is approved by the Bishop and is formed with the facilitation of ~~own one~~ or more Canons to the Ordinary as determined by the Bishop, ~~and may be assisted by the Commission on Missional Vitality~~. A constellation is a dynamic structure in which mission can be better furthered by the close mutual support of its members.

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CANON 27: COMMISSION ON ~~MISSIONAL VITALITY~~ MINISTRY

**1. ~~The Commission on Missional Vitality~~ Ministry is established to advise and assist the Bishop in determining the present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all the baptized; and designing and overseeing the process of discernment, formation, and assessment of readiness, in accordance with Title III, Canon 3 of The Episcopal Church ~~further the mission and ministry of the Church in the Diocese. The Commission is comprised of and generally shall act through a Committee on Ministry and a Committee on Congregational Development and Formation, but may also meet and act as a Commission of the whole.~~**

2. Membership:

(a) The Bishop shall *ex officio* be a member of the Commission and shall designate a Chair ~~of each Committee~~. The Bishop Coadjutor and the Bishop Suffragan, if there be such, shall *ex officio* be members of the Commission.

(b) Membership of the ~~Committee~~ Commission on Ministry will include no fewer than eight and no more than 12 members at least four of whom are clergy, and four 4 lay. Members shall be appointed by the Bishop with the advice of the Standing Committee and such other persons as the Bishop may choose to consult.

~~(c) — Membership of the Committee on Congregational Development and Formation shall include no fewer than eight and no more than 12 members at least four of whom are clergy and four of whom are lay. These members shall be nominated and elected by the Diocesan Convention.~~

~~(d) — The Bishop may, in the exercise of discretion, include on the Commission on Missional Vitality not more than four persons who are not communicants of The Episcopal Church.~~

3. The duties of the Commission ~~Committee on Ministry~~ shall be those prescribed in Canon III.2 of the Canons of The Episcopal Church and such other duties relating to the ministry of this Diocese as shall be assigned by the Bishop.

**4. ~~The Committee on Congregational Development and Formation shall provide support for congregations in the areas of mission, growth and stewardship. The Committee will also oversee task forces, committees and programs as directed by the Bishop, the Standing Committee or the Convention, which may encompass programs, initiatives, and ministries addressing anti-racism, racial healing and justice, creation care, ecumenism and other programs and opportunities for mission, growth and stewardship.~~**

~~5. The Commission on Missional Vitality may adopt bylaws for its governance, not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.~~

~~6. The Commission on Missional Vitality shall report annually in full to the Convention of the Diocese.~~

7.4. The Bishop, with the advice of the Commission ~~Committee on Ministry~~, may require all persons seeking Holy Orders to participate in such counseling and evaluation programs as the Bishop may deem necessary and advisable.

~~8~~ 5. To provide moral and spiritual support for newly ordained Clergy, and to strengthen those actively engaged in ministry, the Commission may establish such support procedures as it may deem advisable; and may require the participation of the Clergy of the Diocese, as far as practicable.

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~~CANON 29E: ADVISORY COMMISSION ON DIOCESAN ORGANIZATIONS~~

~~There shall be an Advisory Commission on Diocesan Organizations comprised of the Board Chairs of:~~

- ~~(a) The Rock Point Commons Board,~~
- ~~(b) The Rock Point School, Inc.,~~
- ~~(c) Brookhaven Home for Boys, Inc., and~~
- ~~(d) Mission Farm~~

~~The Advisory Commission members will select one of them to act as Chair, and to report to the Standing Committee periodically as requested by the Bishop or the Standing Committee.~~

~~The purpose of the Advisory Commission is to strive to have the Commission's member entities complement their respective missions and goals and provide continuity with the missions of the diocese; as well as to allow the member organizations to explore potential synergies with respect to mission, administration and financial management.~~

~~Each member institution will submit financial reports to the Commission on Finance at least semi-annually and an annual report and such other reports as may be necessary or desired, to the Bishop, the Board of Trustees of the Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont, Inc., the Commission on Finance, and the Convention.~~

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~~CANON 38: SUNSET OF 2022 CANONICAL CHANGES~~  
~~Repealed~~

~~The changes to these Canons adopted by the Diocesan Convention on October 13, 2022, shall sunset and cease to be effective at the adjournment of the 2025 annual Diocesan Convention unless that Convention, or an earlier Convention, extends their effectiveness. The 2025 Convention shall strive to anticipate this eventuality and enact any needed transition plan.~~