

Summary of Proposed 2023 Amendments to the Bylaws of the Parish of St. Monica and St. James

These proposed amendments to the Bylaws of the Parish of St. Monica and St. James were prepared to fulfill a commitment made at the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Parish. They have been drafted to accomplish these main purposes:

- 1) To bring the Bylaws into conformance with the Diocesan Canons;
- 2) To ensure that procedures, roles, and responsibilities of the Vestry, Clergy, and staff are clear;
- 3) To remove certain restrictions on membership and leadership participation that are not required restrictions of the Diocesan Canons;
- 4) To authorize electronic meetings and voting;
- 5) To eliminate, where possible, gender-specific pronouns; and
- 6) To update the format to make the Bylaws easier to read.

Proposed Changes – Section By Section

- Header – the header was changed to use “and” instead of an ampersand “&”
- List of dates of Amendment – If changes are approved at the Annual Meeting, this will be updated to include the specific date of the Amendments.
- Numbered section titles are **bolded**.

Section 2) Members and Voting Eligibility

- Section 2) a) – Revised to eliminate gender pronouns
- Section 2) b) – format changed to mirror the Diocesan Canon format
- Section 2) c) – text and format changed to conform with Diocesan Canon 4705(b). The current bylaws (at 2) c) iv)) require Vestry members and Wardens to be confirmed. This is an optional requirement in Diocesan Canons 4703 and 4705. During our rector vacancy, it may be difficult to create a pipeline of confirmands. The Vestry has deleted the confirmation requirement for Vestry members, and retained it, with modification, for Wardens.
- Section 2) c) 5) has been updated to specify that persons in the immediate household of an employee are not eligible to serve on the Vestry or as a Warden.
- Section 2) d) – terminology is updated to conform with Diocesan Canon 4706(c)(4)

Section 3) Parish Meetings

- Section 3) b) – terminology is updated to conform with Diocesan Canon 4704(b)(2)
- Section 3) c) i) – Oxford comma added to list of methods to communicate notice of meetings
- Section 3) d) – New sections ii) and iii) are added to include wording from Diocesan Canon 4704(e)(5) concerning the Presiding Officer for parish meetings when the office of Rector is vacant.
- Section 3) e) ii) – Advance permission requirement for emailing an absentee voting request is eliminated, as it seems to be from a time when email was not a common form of communication. Final sentence is simplified but does not change the content or meaning.
- Section 3) g) – A new Section 3) g) establishes authority and procedures to conduct electronic meetings of the parish. The old Section 3) g) is deleted, as Robert’s Rules of Order can be difficult to use in electronic meetings. The Vestry and committees may choose to adopt Robert’s Rules for meetings, as needed and appropriate.

Section 4) Clergy

- Section 4) a) – a sentence is added to state that ‘Interim Rector’ and ‘Priest-in-Charge’ are included in the references to ‘Rector’ in this section.

- Section 4) d) – First sentence is reorganized for clarity. Second sentence is changed to conform with Diocesan Canon 4708. The specific contract terms for a Rector are deleted; the parish will rely on the Canon 4708, that requires compliance with Diocesan terms and conditions and the policies of the Bishop.

Section 5) **Vestry**

- Section 5) b) – removes “nine” as the number of Vestry members, to reflect a change approved in 2018. Seven is the correct number.
- Section 5) d) 1) – Section is amended to clarify how the Nominating Committee will be established when the office of Rector is vacant, and rewritten to eliminate gender pronouns.
- Section 5) d) iii) – Revised to eliminate gender pronouns
- Section 5) e) i) – Changed to remove some confusing language; no change to the substance
- Section 5) f) – Changed to reflect Diocesan Canon 4705(j); vestries may, but are not required to, establish committees
- Section 5) g) i) – Oxford comma added after “Secretary/Clerk”
- Section 5) g) iii) – Changed to conform with Diocesan Canon 4705(i)
- Section 5) g) vi) – Removed. Diocesan Canons do not require this provision.
- Sections 5) g) vii), 5) g) viii), and 5) g) ix) are renumbered to reflect the removal of 5) g) vi).
- Section 5) g) vii) (new numbering) – Changed to incorporate Diocesan Canon 4705 (h)(6) procedures for electronic meetings and voting.
- Section 5) h) i) – Changed to conform with terminology in Diocesan Canon 4705(f)
- Section 5) h) ii) – Revised to eliminate gender pronouns
- Section 5) j) – This section is rewritten to conform with Diocesan Canon 4705(j). The Canon allows Vestries and Rectors to establish committees, but whether to do that is entirely discretionary. The Canon includes requirements for committees established by the Vestry, and different rules for committees established by a Rector.
- Section 5) k) is revised to provide for the removal of a Vestry member for good cause.

Section 6) **Officers**

- Section 6) a) i) – Oxford comma added
- Section 6) a) iii) – deleted, as it duplicates the language in 6) a) ii).
- Sections 6) a) iv), 6) a) vi), 6) a) vii), and 6) a) viii) are renumbered to reflect removal of Section 6) a) iii).
- Section 6) a) vii) (new numbering) – Revised to eliminate gender pronouns.
- Section 6) b) ii) – Changed to conform with Diocesan Canon 4706.(b)(1)(B), which allows persons who are not members of a Parish to serve as Treasurer. Sentence edited to include Oxford commas.
- Section 6) b) iv) – Revised to eliminate gender pronouns
- Section 6) c) ii) – Revised to conform with Diocesan Canon 4706.(c)(1)(B), which allows persons who are not members of a Parish to serve as Secretary/Clerk, and edited to include Oxford commas.
- Section 6) c) iv) - Revised to eliminate gender pronouns

Section 7) **Diocesan Convention Delegates**

- Section 7 – This section is rewritten to conform with Diocesan Constitution Article 3 Sec. 304(b), and Diocesan Canon Sec. 4706(d). Section 7) d) is added to allow the Vestry to select a Delegate if both the elected Delegate and Alternate are unable to serve.

Section 8) **Staff**

- Section 8 – This section is revised to incorporate requirements of Diocesan Canon 4705(l).