

**HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
5333 Clyde Park Avenue, SW  
Wyoming, MI 49509

**PARISH BYLAWS,**  
**REVISED**  
May 4, 2014

**ARTICLE I**  
**Parish Meetings**

Section 1. Annual Parish Meeting: A parish meeting shall be held annually on or before the fourth Wednesday in January. The Rector shall preside at the Annual Meeting or in the Rector's absence the Senior Warden will preside. The purpose of such Annual Meeting shall be:

- a. The election of qualified communicants to the Vestry.
- b. The election of delegates and alternates to the annual Diocesan Convention (said delegates must be communicants).
- c. For the reception of reports of the Rector, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers of the parish and its organizations.
- d. For the purpose of considering and making recommendations upon such business as may properly come before such meetings.
- e. Consideration and action upon proposed amendments, if any, to the Articles of Association or By-laws of the parish.

Section 2. Notice of Annual Meeting: Notice of the date, hour, and place of each annual parish meeting shall be given at a regular service on each of the two Sundays next preceding such meeting, by the Rector or in the Rector's absence, by a Warden; or notice may be given with like effect by publishing, posting, or mailing as the Rector or Vestry may direct.

Section 3. Special Parish Meetings: Special meetings of the parish may be called by the Rector or written consent of two-thirds of the Wardens and Vestry members or by written consent of a majority of the Vestry if the Rector approves or by consent of a majority if there be no Rector. Notice of a special meeting shall state the purpose or purposes thereof and may be given in the same manner as notice of an Annual Parish Meeting. If it is planned that a vote will be held at the special meeting, absentee ballots shall be made available at least 14 days prior to the meeting. The absentee ballots shall be signed by the voter such that the judges of election can verify that the vote meets all the criteria of the Qualification of Voters section of these by-laws. The Vestry shall reserve the right to decide if absentee ballots are appropriate for each situation.

Section 4. Qualifications of Voters: At all parish meetings, whether annual or special, the right to vote shall be limited to baptized persons, not less than 16 years of age, whose baptisms have been duly recorded in such parish and who for a period of not less than six months preceding, shall have been regular worshipers in such parish and bona fide regular contributors to its support, according to the method used in such parish, and that physical disability or absence from the parish during said period shall not disqualify an otherwise qualified voter. Before any vote has been taken, the presiding officer shall state to the persons present the foregoing qualifications of voters. Proxy ballots shall not be accepted.

The Rector and Wardens shall be judges of the qualifications of voters. If a Warden be absent, the presiding officer may appoint a member of the Vestry to act in place of such absentee. The judges of election shall not permit an unqualified person to vote. The presiding officer, to accelerate the election, may appoint tellers and other assistants. The Secretary shall preserve a list of the names of all persons who vote for Vestry members. Such list shall be signed by the judges of election.

Section 5. Quorum: At any duly called parish meeting, whether annual or special, a quorum shall be 51% of average attendance as stated in previous year Parochial Report.

Section 6. Order of Business at Annual Meeting: The order of business at the Annual Meeting shall be as follows:

- a. Call to order
- b. Prayers
- c. Minutes of last Annual Meeting and/or any special meetings
- d. Reports of church organizations and committees
- e. Church Secretary's report of previous year  
Action thereon
- f. Church Treasurer's report of previous year  
Action thereon
- g. Report of the Wardens
- h. Report of the Rector
- i. Old business
- j. Report of the nominating committee
- k. Election of church officers
- l. Election of delegates and alternates to the Diocesan Convention
- m. New business
- n. Adjournment

Provided, that in the absence of any objections, the presiding officer may control and vary the order of business at the officer's discretion.

## ARTICLE II

Section 1. Qualifications and Election of Vestry Members: Members of the Vestry shall be adult communicants in good standing, as defined by Section 2 and 3 of Canon 17, Title 1 of the General Convention, and shall be qualified voters of the congregation. Vestry members may not be a Spouse, Sibling or Child of or reside in same household as Rector or any other Vestry member.

- a. The Vestry of this parish shall consist of nine lay members. Three Vestry members shall be elected each Annual Meeting for a three year term.
- b. Immediately following the Annual Meeting, the newly constituted Vestry shall meet and elect for a term of one year:
  1. A Senior Warden
  2. A Junior Warden
  3. A Secretary
  4. A Treasurer
  5. The authorized number of lay delegates to represent the Parish at the Convention, as determined according to Title I, Canon 3, Section 3.04, together with the same number of alternates.

The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be ex-officio, the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the parish.

Section 2. Qualifications of Officers: The Wardens shall be Vestry members. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be qualified voters of the parish who may or may not be members of the Vestry.

Section 3. Vestry Meetings: The Vestry shall meet as often once in each month in ten months of the calendar year. The Rector, when present, shall preside at all Vestry meetings, but shall have no vote except in case of a tie; and in the Rector's absence from the meeting, one of the Wardens, if present, shall preside. A special meeting of the Vestry may be called by the Rector at any time, upon notice given in any practical manner, to each Vestry member. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated as a part of the notice. In a vacancy of the Rectorate, a special meeting may be called by either Warden at any time upon notice given in any practical manner, to each other Vestry member. No notice of any meeting at which the Rector and all members of the Vestry are present shall be necessary. Any or all members may waive notice in writing either before or after the meeting has been held. All waivers of notice shall be kept on file by the Secretary.

A majority of the members of the Vestry, not counting the Rector, when duly assembled shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Duties of Vestry Members:

- a. The duties of Vestry members shall be those prescribed by Section 23.04 of the Canons of the Diocese of Western Michigan, Canon 23.
- b. All candidates for the Vestry must notify the nominating committee in writing, of their willingness to serve and assume the duties and obligations of a Vestry member if elected to that office.

Section 5. Vacancies:

- a. Should a vacancy occur on the Vestry between elections, the Rector and Vestry shall have power to fill such vacancy until the next annual election.
- b. Any Vestry member who is absent from three regular meetings in a given year, shall be visited by a committee of the Vestry and asked to assume the duties and obligations of a Vestry member. Failing to do so, the office of that Vestry member shall be declared vacant.
- c. Should a vacancy occur with regard to Diocesan Convention Delegates, the Vestry will appoint an elected alternate to complete the remainder of the term.

Section 6. Re-election:

- a. Vestry members and convention delegates who have served one full term (three consecutive years from the date of election) shall not be eligible for re-election until out of office for at least one year. However, the person serving as the Honorary Member of the Vestry, appointed by the Rector, shall be exempted from this provision.
- b. Three consecutive years from the date of election shall constitute full term for a regular member of the Vestry.

Section 7. Committees: The Rector or member of congregation may appoint, subject to agreement of the Vestry, the following.

- a. Business Administration
- b. Worship
- c. Evangelism
- d. Outreach
- e. Parish Life
- f. Public Relations and Communications
- g. Building & Grounds
- h. Education
- i. A Nominating Committee - to be appointed at least one month prior to the Annual Meeting, consisting of three members, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Vestry and others who must be qualified voters, whose duties shall be to nominate at least one candidate for each vacancy occurring on the Vestry and, at the annual parish meeting, nominate convention delegate candidates to be elected in accordance with the canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan.
- j. Any other Standing or Special Committees as deemed necessary for the furtherance of the task of the church.

Section 8. Order of Business for Vestry Members: The order of business at each Vestry meeting may be as follows:

- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll call
- c. Prayers
- d. Minutes of previous meeting by the Secretary
- e. Report of the Treasurer
- f. Reports of the Wardens
- g. Report of the Rector
- h. Report of the Standing Committees
- i. Report of Special Committees
- j. Old Business
- k. New Business
- l. Adjournment

In the absence of any objection, the presiding officer may control and vary the order of business.

### **ARTICLE III** **Duties of Officers**

Section 1. Wardens: In case the parish be without a Rector, or in the absence of the Rector, the Wardens shall preside at meetings of the parish and of the Vestry, and shall provide public worship as circumstances shall permit.

Section 2. Secretary: The Secretary shall keep correct minutes properly bound of all meetings of the Vestry and of the parish and shall sign the same and deliver the same to the subsequent Secretary. The records of the parish and Vestry at all times shall be safely and permanently kept and open to inspection by the Bishop, the Rector, and all qualified voters of the parish. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the bonds of the Treasurer and shall see to it that proper timely notice is given of all meetings of the Vestry and of the parish.

Section 3. Treasurer: The treasurer shall follow the Episcopal Church Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs. The Treasurer shall receive and keep safely all moneys of the parish corporation and shall make disbursements therefrom only upon order of the Vestry. The Treasurer shall obtain and keep on file proper receipts and vouchers covering all disbursements and shall maintain proper accounts covering all funds received, disbursed, and on hand. The Treasurer shall report to the Vestry at each stated meeting thereof, and whenever requested, all receipts and disbursements and the

condition of the parish corporation finances. The Treasurer shall make a like report to the annual Parish

Section 4. Bonds: All Treasurers and other custodians of funds which may exceed \$500.00 at any one time during the fiscal year shall be bonded in amount and form approved by the Vestry as required by Title I, Canon 7 (3) of the General Convention.

#### **ARTICLE IV** **Church Debt**

No indebtedness shall be incurred by the parish except in accordance with Diocesan Canon 27.

#### **ARTICLE V** **Fiscal Year, Audits and Insurance**

Section 1. Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the parish shall be the calendar year beginning January 1 and ending December 31, both inclusive.

Section 2. Audits: As soon as may be after the close of each fiscal year, the accounts of all officers handling funds shall be audited in accordance to Canon 28: Section 28.01 and submit to Diocesan Treasurer before September 1 .

Section 3. Insurance: All buildings and tangible personal property owned by the parish shall be kept adequately insured against loss or damage by fire and windstorm and such other hazards, if any, in accordance with Diocesan Canon 28, Section 28.02. The Finance Committee shall have authority to supervise the amount and sufficiency of such insurance.

#### **ARTICLE VI** **Amendments**

These By-laws may be amended by a majority vote of a quorum of qualified voters at any duly called parish meeting, provided that the substance of the proposed amendment shall have been stated in the notice of such meeting.

#### **ARTICLE VII** **By-laws Subject to Constitution and Canons**

These By-laws and all amendments and additions thereto shall at all times be subject to the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and of the Diocese of Western Michigan.