

JOINT RESOLUTIONS REGARDING INTERIM DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP DURING A VACANCY IN THE EPISCOPATE

PREAMBLE

Whereas, the Bishop Diocesan of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina (the “Diocese”) previously advised that he would step aside from the exercise of his duties and authority as Bishop Diocesan as of August 1, 2026 and will resign as Bishop Diocesan November 1, 2026, and the Diocese is now in a period during which there is no Bishop Diocesan exercising jurisdiction; and

Whereas, Article IV of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church and Section 2.5 of the Constitution of the Diocese provide that, when there is no Bishop Diocesan, Bishop Coadjutor, or Bishop Suffragan canonically authorized to act, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, although with certain restrictions or limitations; and

Whereas, the Diocese requires continuity of administrative, pastoral, operational, financial, and programmatic leadership until a new Bishop Diocesan is duly elected and qualified; and

Whereas, the Canon to the Ordinary is the senior diocesan staff officer responsible for supporting the Bishop Diocesan and coordinating the work of the diocesan staff and ministries and is uniquely positioned to provide continuity during the vacancy; and

Whereas, the Standing Committee and Executive Council desire to establish clear lines of authority, accountability, and responsibility during this transitional period;

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Standing Committee and Executive Council of the Diocese, acting at a duly called joint meeting, as follows:

RESOLUTION I

Authority and Status of the Canon to the Ordinary

Be it Resolved, that until a successor Bishop Diocesan assumes office, the Canon to the Ordinary shall continue to serve as the senior administrative officer of the Diocese and shall perform (a) those duties she was performing for and on behalf of the Diocese immediately prior to the Bishop Diocesan’s relinquishment of the role of Ecclesiastical Authority, and (b) such additional or continuing duties as may be assigned by these resolutions or by subsequent action of the Standing Committee or Executive Council, consistent with their respective constitutional and canonical responsibilities, whether or not such duties are among those described in clause (a).

Be it Resolved Further, that nothing in these resolutions shall be construed to confer upon the Canon to the Ordinary any authority that may be exercised only by a Bishop of The Episcopal Church.

RESOLUTION II

Responsibilities Delegated to the Canon to the Ordinary

Be it Resolved, that, subject to any express directions and limitations established by the Standing Committee or Executive Council, the Canon to the Ordinary is authorized and directed to provide continuity in the ordinary administrative and operational affairs of the Diocese, including the following:

1. Diocesan Staff

The Canon to the Ordinary shall:

- (a) provide day-to-day coordination and supervision of diocesan staff to ensure continuity of diocesan operations, subject to the personnel policies and budget approved by the Diocesan Convention or Executive Council and subject to any specific direction of the Executive Council;
- (b) recommend to the Executive Council, when necessary and for action by Executive Council, changes in staffing, compensation, organizational structure, or personnel policies, and implement personnel decisions authorized by the Executive Council;
- (c) take appropriate disciplinary actions as to personnel, including termination of staff when appropriate; and
- (d) advise Executive Council and the President of the Standing Committee of significant personnel matters, including the resignation, termination, hiring, or material disciplinary action involving senior diocesan staff.

2. Congregational and Pastoral Support

The Canon to the Ordinary shall:

- (a) serve as the principal administrative point of contact between the Diocese and its congregations and institutions;
- (b) provide administrative and pastoral support to clergy and to wardens, and vestries of congregations and governing bodies and leaders of institutions of the Diocese;
- (c) coordinate assistance to congregations and institutions concerning routine diocesan matters;
- (d) facilitate communication between congregations and institutions and the Standing Committee or Executive Council, as appropriate; and
- (e) identify matters requiring action by a Bishop of the Episcopal Church and promptly bring such matters to the attention of the Standing Committee so that appropriate assistance may be obtained..

3. Clergy Matters

The Canon to the Ordinary is authorized to:

- (a) maintain ordinary administrative communication with clergy;
- (b) coordinate clergy deployment, transitions, leave, and other routine clergy matters;
- (c) assist congregations in matters involving clergy vacancies and calls;
- (d) maintain appropriate clergy records and files; and
- (e) prepare and transmit documents and routine communications on the status of clergy to appropriate persons or bodies.

The Canon to the Ordinary shall advise the Standing Committee of any clergy matter that requires action by the Standing Committee in its capacity as Ecclesiastical Authority under Title III of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, and provide such information and assistance as the Standing Committee may require in addressing the matter. Moreover, the Canon to the Ordinary shall inform the Standing Committee as to the emergence or existence of any clergy matter that requires the authority of or action by a Bishop of The Episcopal Church.

4. Diocesan Programs and Ministries

The Canon to the Ordinary is authorized to implement and oversee policies, budgets, programs, decisions, and ministries previously or hereafter established by Diocesan Convention, the Executive Council, or the Standing Committee.

5. Bishop's Discretionary Fund

The Canon to the Ordinary is authorized to make disbursements from the Bishop's Discretionary Fund for purposes consistent with the purpose of the Fund, subject to applicable diocesan policies and procedures.

6. Emergency Matters

In an emergency requiring immediate action to protect persons, property, records, finances, or the orderly operation of the Diocese, and where authority to act has not otherwise been granted by these resolutions, the Canon to the Ordinary may take such action as is reasonably necessary, provided that the action is not in violation of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese. The Canon to the Ordinary shall promptly report any such action to the Standing Committee and Executive Council, as appropriate.

RESOLUTION III

Matters Reserved to the Standing Committee

Be it Resolved, that the following matters are reserved to the Standing Committee acting as the Ecclesiastical Authority and shall not be exercised independently by the Canon to the Ordinary:

1. the invitation, licensing, authorization, or appointment of bishops to perform episcopal acts within the Diocese;
2. matters requiring the action, consent, or approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority under the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese;
3. matters involving the ordination, canonical residence, Letters Dimissory, licenses, or other canonical status of clergy that require action by the Ecclesiastical Authority or a Bishop of The Episcopal Church; provided, however, the Canon to the Ordinary is hereby authorized to perform those administrative and ministerial functions relating to clergy as set forth in Resolution II above;
4. granting or withholding consent where consent of the Standing Committee is expressly required by either the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese;
5. matters concerning the election, nomination, consent to, or transition of a Bishop Diocesan, except where the Standing Committee has expressly delegated a particular administrative function to the Canon to the Ordinary;
6. disposition, acquisition, encumbrance, or material alteration of real property when such action requires approval of the Standing Committee or the Ecclesiastical Authority; and
7. any matter which the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or of the Diocese expressly reserve to the Standing Committee and cannot be delegated.

Be it Resolved further, that the Standing Committee shall not exercise any authority as to matters for which the Diocesan Convention or the Executive Council has responsibility under the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese.

RESOLUTION IV

Matters Reserved to the Executive Council

Resolved, that the following matters are reserved to the Executive Council and shall not be exercised independently by the Canon to the Ordinary:

1. development of the diocesan budget;
2. authorization of any material expenditures and financial commitments not otherwise authorized within an approved budget or amendment thereto;
3. oversight of diocesan investments, reserves, endowments, and other financial assets;
4. approval of material contracts or material financial obligations as required by diocesan policy;

5. oversight of diocesan property and facilities, unless expressly delegated by Diocesan Convention or Executive Council or action is required as part of any approved budget or amendment thereto;
6. approval or adoption of personnel policies, compensation structures, and material changes to the diocesan staff structure;
7. preparation of budgets and recommendations regarding the same to Diocesan Convention;
8. oversight of financial reporting, audits, insurance, and risk management; and
9. any matter which the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or of the Diocese expressly reserve to the Executive Council and cannot be delegated.

Be it Resolved further, that the Executive Council shall not exercise any authority as to matters for which the Standing Committee has responsibility under the Constitution or Canons of The Episcopal Church or the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese.

RESOLUTION V

Coordination Between the Standing Committee and Executive Council

Be it Resolved, that the President of the Standing Committee and the Canon to the Ordinary shall maintain regular communication concerning the operation and governance of the Diocese during the vacancy and are encouraged to meet at least once each week.

Be it Resolved Further, that the President of the Standing Committee, the Vice-President of the Executive Council, and the Canon to the Ordinary shall maintain regular communication concerning the operation and governance of the Diocese during the vacancy and are encouraged to meet jointly at least once each month.

Be it Resolved further, that the Canon to the Ordinary shall attend meetings of the Standing Committee and Executive Council when requested, but shall not have a vote.

RESOLUTION VI

Legal Authority and the Chancellor

Resolved, that the Chancellor of the Diocese shall continue to advise the Diocese and its governing bodies concerning legal matters as well as matters involving the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church or the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.

Be it Resolved further, that the Canon to the Ordinary shall consult the Chancellor concerning any matter that may materially affect the legal rights or obligations of the Diocese.

RESOLUTION VII
Title IV Matters

Resolved, that nothing in these resolutions shall alter the allocation of responsibilities established by Title IV of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church.

Be it Resolved further, that when the Diocese has no Bishop authorized to exercise a function assigned to a Bishop under Title IV, the Standing Committee shall determine the appropriate canonical procedure, including obtaining the services of another Bishop when required.

Be it Resolved further, that the Canon to the Ordinary shall provide administrative support to the Standing Committee and any authorized Bishop with regard to Title IV matters.

Be it Resolved further, that the Canon to the Ordinary may continue to function in the role as Intake Officer as to Title IV matters, with all powers and responsibilities associated with that role

RESOLUTION VIII
Bishop Search and Election

Be it Resolved, that the Standing Committee shall retain primary responsibility for matters assigned to it by the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese concerning the search for, nomination of, election of, and transition to a new Bishop Diocesan.

Be it Resolved further, that the Canon to the Ordinary shall provide administrative support to the Bishop Search Committee and the Standing Committee as requested.

RESOLUTION IX
Changes to these Resolutions

Be it Resolved, that these resolutions may be amended, supplemented, or rescinded by appropriate action of the Executive Council and Standing Committee. Any such action must be immediately communicated to the Canon to the Ordinary.

RESOLUTION X
Termination of Interim Authority

Be it Resolved, that the authority delegated to the Canon to the Ordinary under these resolutions shall terminate upon the earlier of: (a) the assumption of office by a new Bishop Diocesan or (b) the adoption of superseding resolutions by the Standing Committee and Executive Council that terminate the Canon to the Ordinary's authority.

[Signature pages follow]

**SIGNATURE PAGE TO
JOINT RESOLUTIONS REGARDING INTERIM DIOCESAN LEADERSHIP
DURING A VACANCY IN THE EPISCOPATE**

I, Jean S. Harrisoni, Recording Secretary of the Executive Council of the Diocese hereby certify that the foregoing resolutions were adopted by a vote at a duly called joint meeting of the Executive Council and Standing Committee of the Diocese on _____, 2026 at which a quorum of the members of Executive Council was present and after one of the members Executive Council made a motion for approval of the resolutions and another member offered a second to the motion.

Jean S. Harrison, Recording Secretary of the
Executive Council of The Episcopal Diocese of
Western North Carolina

I, Susan Buchanan, President of the Standing Committee of the Diocese hereby certify that the foregoing resolutions were adopted by a vote at a duly called joint meeting of the Standing Committee of the Diocese on _____, 2026 at which a quorum of the members of Standing Committee was present and after one of the members of Standing Committee made a motion for approval of the resolutions and another member offered a second to the motion.

Susan Buchanan, President of the Standing Committee of
The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina