



THE CANONS OF THE ORTHODOX ANGLICAN COMMUNION

Denotation

Canon 1. The Orthodox Anglican Communion is a worldwide fellowship of Christians consisting of Churches that are faithful to the fundamental dogmatic principles and tenets of Orthodox Anglicanism, as defined in Canon 2, and recognized as such by the Presiding Bishop of The Orthodox Anglican Church in the United States of America, who serves as the Primate of the Communion.

Canon 2. The fundamental dogmatic principles and tenets of Orthodox Anglicanism are promulgated in the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Ordinal* of the Church of England, AD 1662, and the *Articles of Religion* set forth in AD 1562 by the same Church.

Purpose

Canon 3. The purpose of The Orthodox Anglican Communion is to promote the unity of Christendom by providing a canonical means to unite Anglican Christians throughout the world who are orthodox in Faith and Order.

Definitions

Canon 4. For purposes of these Canons, the following definitions apply:

Bishop: A Minister of the Gospel consecrated in the historic episcopate of the Church, in the succession of the Holy Apostles, who oversees the Cure of Souls in a nation or territory.

Church: Christian believers under the Cure of Souls of a Bishop in a nation or territory. A Church may be divided into Provinces and/or Dioceses, as is customary and according to provisions established by the Primate.

Continent: One of the main inhabited landmasses of the globe: Africa, Asia, Australia and Oceania, Europe, North America, and South America.

Cure of Souls: Preaching the Gospel, celebrating the sacraments, and providing pastoral

care to lay members of the Church, either directly by a Bishop, or by his designate priests, deacons, clerks and lay readers.

Episcopal Conference: An assembly of Bishops organized for the purpose of exercising together certain pastoral offices for the Orthodox Anglican faithful of a nation, territory, or continent.

Missionary Bishop: A Minister of the Gospel consecrated in the historic episcopate of the Church, in the succession of the Holy Apostles, who actively works to establish a new Orthodox Anglican Church in a nation or territory.

Nation: The political jurisdiction of a single nation-state.

Territory: Two or more contiguous nation-states.

Vicar-General: A Priest, duly ordained by a Bishop consecrated in the historic episcopate of the Church, in the succession of the Holy Apostles, who provides the Cure of Souls in a nation or territory without the benefit of a Orthodox Anglican Bishop or Missionary Bishop.

Eligibility for Membership

Canon 5. To be eligible to become a member of The Orthodox Anglican Communion, the leader of such Church or Diocese (and on behalf of those under his cure of souls) making application to the Primate, shall testify to the following:

- 1) That he is a Bishop consecrated in the historic episcopate of the Church, in the succession of the Holy Apostles, or is willing to be so consecrated;
- 2) That he believes Jesus Christ is the divine Son of God and Savior of the world;
- 3) That Holy Scripture is the inspired Word of God containing all things necessary to salvation;
- 4) That marriage is a sacred bond between a man and a woman;
- 5) That the Holy Order of the Church is reserved to godly men only;
- 6) That he believes in the ancient Apostles' and Nicene Creeds;
- 7) That he engages, or vows to engage, only in the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the historic Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*, and specifically the 1662 edition of the Church of England and such other derivatives thereof as specifically approved by the Primate;

- 8) That he pledges to uphold these Canons; and
- 9) That he recognizes the Presiding Bishop of the Orthodox Anglican Church in the United States of America to be the sole Primate and Temporal head of the Orthodox Anglican Communion.

Canon 6. (a) A duly ordained priest (and on behalf of those parishioners under his cure of souls) may also become a member of the Orthodox Anglican Communion so long as said priest was ordained by a Bishop consecrated in the historic episcopate of the Church, in the succession of the Holy Apostles, or is willing to be so ordained, and the priest himself (and on behalf of those under his cure) makes application testifying his assent to items 2-9 of Canon 5, above.

(b) A duly ordained priest making application under Canon 6 paragraph (a), ministering in a nation, territory, or continent that does not have a recognized Orthodox Anglican Bishop or Missionary Bishop, may be appointed a Vicar-General by the Primate. In such cases the priest, and those under the priest's cure of souls, shall be deemed part of The Orthodox Anglican Church in the United States of America, and subject to its Constitution and Canons, until such time the Primate determines it is appropriate for a Bishop to be elected, consecrated, and installed by the Primate or the Primate's designee for said nation, territory, or continent.

Recognition

Canon 7. Recognition of membership of any Church, Province, Diocese, Bishop, Missionary Bishop, or Priest shall be determined by the Primate. If an application for membership in the Communion is received where an Episcopal Conference of Orthodox Anglican Bishops in a nation, territory, or continent is established, the Primate will seek the advice of the relevant Episcopal Conference as to the merits of the applicant. The Primate shall execute and send each member Church a Certificate of Membership, and a Certificate of Recognition for each Bishop, Missionary Bishop, or Vicar-General.

Canon 8. To promote the unity of Anglican Christians, the Primate may, with advice from the Bishops and Churches affected, recognize more than one particular Church in a nation, seating all Bishops in the relevant Episcopal Conference, to participate in joint pastoral ministry in the nation.

Jurisdiction

Canon. 9. Each and every member Church of the Communion shall be autonomous in matters of government, finances, and ownership of property. Should it be deemed by the Primate that any member Church and/or Bishop has departed from the purpose for which this Communion was formed, recognition of membership shall be withheld and membership in the Communion shall cease. While each Bishop holds ordinary jurisdiction in his diocese or Church, the Primate shall and does exercise appellate jurisdiction for all dioceses and Churches in the Communion, and the Primate holds direct, ordinary jurisdiction over all Missionary Bishops and Vicars-General.

Episcopal Conferences

Canon 10. (a) The work of the Orthodox Anglican Communion is organized by Episcopal Conferences, as established and authorized by the Primate, in a nation, territory, or continent. The Primate may, after consultation with the Bishops affected, add or delete certain nations or territories to or from an existing Conference if the circumstances suggest such adjustments, in order to create new Episcopal Conferences as the Communion increases in size. It shall be the authority of the Primate alone, after consultation with the Bishops affected, to establish, dissolve, or alter any and all Episcopal Conferences.

(b) The following persons in a nation, territory, or continent shall belong to the Episcopal Conference and shall be entitled to one vote as members: all Archbishops or Presiding Bishops, all diocesan Bishops and those equivalent to them in law; all coadjutor Bishops, auxiliary Bishops, and suffragan Bishops, and any other persons whom the Conference may so designate.

(c) Episcopal Conferences shall be called and held at a minimum of once per calendar year as determined by the President of the Conference.

(d) Each Episcopal Conference is to draft its own statutes, to be reviewed by the Primate. Among other things, the statutes shall determine when, where, and how many plenary meetings of the Conference shall be held each year, establishment of the permanent committees, election procedures and election of officers such as the President, Vice President, Secretary General, and other officers, and the drafting and finalization of its mission statement and goals.

(e) Each Episcopal Conference shall elect a President and determine who, in the lawful absence of the President, will exercise the function of Vice President. It is also to designate a Secretary General.

(f) It shall be the role of the President of the Conference to preside over the general meetings of the Conference and also over the permanent committees.

(g) It shall be the role of the Secretary General of the Conference to prepare an account of the acts and decrees of the plenary meetings of the Conference, as well as the acts of the permanent committees of the Bishops and to communicate these to all members of the Conference and to the Primate for information and review.

(h) It shall be the role of the Secretary General of the Conference to communicate with neighboring Episcopal Conferences such acts and documents as the Conference or the permanent committees shall have decreed, after approval from the Primate.

(i) When a meeting of the Episcopal Conference has been concluded, its minutes are to be sent by the President to Primate for information and its decrees for review. No decrees shall become effective without the express approval and support of the Primate.

Canon. 11. In order to promote the greater good of the faithful and to promote and defend relations between Episcopal Conferences, invitations to attend one another's plenary meetings as observers is encouraged and the sharing of information is also encouraged.

Canon. 12. The Primate must always be consulted whenever actions or affairs undertaken by Episcopal Conferences have an international character. The agenda of an upcoming plenary meeting of an Episcopal Conference should be reviewed by the Primate prior to the meeting in order to provide the Primate an opportunity to comment on its contents.

Canon 13. Episcopal Conferences shall be self-funded.

The Primate's Council

Canon 14. The Primate's Council shall consist of the Presidents and Secretaries-General of the several Episcopal Conferences, the Primate, the Secretary-General of the Communion, and his assistants. The Primate's Council shall be called and held at a time and place as determined by the Primate.

Plenary Synods

Canon. 15. Synods of all Bishops in The Orthodox Anglican Communion shall be called and held at a time and place as determined by the Primate.

The Primate's Office

Canon 16. The Primate shall appoint a Secretary-General of the Communion to assist him in the administration of the Communion. Among other duties, the Secretary-General shall act to promote new memberships in the Communion, investigate new applications for membership, provide procedures and regulations for the development of new Churches and Missionary Dioceses, provide regulations as to the division of Churches into Provinces and/or Dioceses, provide advise and assistance for the formation of new Episcopal Conferences, and act as liaison between the Primate and member Bishops as well as the Episcopal Conferences. The Secretary-General may appoint assistants to him to accomplish these and any other duties assigned to him by the Primate.

Canon 17. The Primate may alter or amend these Canons, for the good of the Orthodox Anglican Communion, with the advice of the Episcopal Conferences.

Revision date: 3/09/09