

Title Allowing Deacons to Serve on Standing Committee

Proposer The Chancellor's Office

1. Whereas, the Constitution of the Diocese of West Missouri directs that Standing
2. Committee be composed of four priests and four laypersons; and
- 3.
4. Whereas, the Constitution & Canons of The Episcopal Church do not limit the clergy
5. members of a diocesan Standing Committee to priests only; and
- 6.
7. Whereas, in its canonical role as a Council of Advice to the Bishop and as the
8. Ecclesiastical Authority in the absence of a Bishop, Standing Committee would
9. benefit from the perspectives of laypersons, deacons, and priests; and
- 10.
11. Whereas, allowing deacons to serve on Standing Committee would bring the Diocese
12. of West Missouri in line with the practice of other dioceses.
- 13.
14. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Constitution of the Diocese of West Missouri
15. be amended to allow deacons to serve on Standing Committee, to wit:
- 16.
17. ARTICLE XIV - THE STANDING COMMITTEE
- 18.
19. SECTION 1. The Standing Committee shall consist of four (4) Clergy
20. members and four (4) Laypersons who are eligible to seats in the Convention,
21. and who shall be elected by concurrent vote of both orders to serve for terms of two
22. years. At each annual Convention, two (2) Clergy members and two (2) Laypersons
23. shall be elected to serve for terms of two (2) years. No member of the Standing
24. Committee may be elected to serve for more than three (3) consecutive terms. No
25. currently serving Dean/Deanery Council Chair of a Deanery or Member of the
26. Commission on Ministry shall be eligible to serve on the Standing Committee.
- 27.
28. SECTION 2. The members of the Standing Committee shall serve until their
29. successors are elected.
- 30.
31. SECTION 3. Vacancies in the membership of the Standing Committee shall be
32. filled by a majority vote of the remaining members.
- 33.
34. SECTION 4. The Standing Committee shall perform the duties required by the
35. Constitution and Canons of the Diocese and by resolution of the Convention.

Explanation

The Constitution & Canons of The Episcopal Church do not require clergy members of Standing Committee to be only priests. Likewise, nearby dioceses, including West Missouri's partners in the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry (Missouri, Kansas, Western Kansas, Oklahoma, and Iowa), allow deacons to serve on their Standing Committees. Most importantly, Standing Committee is responsible for serving as the Bishop's Council of Advice and as the Ecclesiastical Authority in the absence of a Bishop. The perspectives of deacons should be available to Standing Committee's work in these roles. This constitutional change would not mandate the presence of deacons on Standing Committee; it would only allow deacons to seek election to Standing Committee (or be eligible for appointment in the event of a clergy vacancy).
