

Constitution and Canons  
Of the  
Diocese of the Southeast  
Of the  
Reformed Episcopal Church

*As adopted by the First Council of the Diocese, November 24<sup>th</sup>, A.D. 1973,  
and as Amended by subsequent Councils,  
through the Twenty-sixth Council, September 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, A.D. 1998.  
(Update Published August, 1999)*



**CONSTITUTION**

*ARTICLE I-Name*

The name of this Diocese is, and shall be, THE DIOCESE OF THE SOUTHEAST OF THE REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

*ARTICLE II-Objects*

The objects of this Diocese are to establish and maintain Churches of the Reformed Episcopal Church, to supervise and govern said Churches within the limits and jurisdiction of The Diocese of the Southeast, to engage in Church Extension, and to supervise and aid the ministry of clergymen belonging to the said Diocese.

*ARTICLE III-The Diocese*

Section 1. The diocese of the Southeast, as a constituent part of The Reformed Episcopal Church, accedes to and accepts the principles and restrictions of the Declaration of Principles of The Reformed Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of The Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. Said Diocese shall consist of all organized parishes and mission parishes, and of all the resident presbyters, of The Reformed Episcopal Church within the limits of this Diocese, which has complied with or shall comply with the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese and of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The parishes and mission parishes shall be represented at all Diocesan Councils as the Canons of this Diocese direct.

Section 3. The territorial limits of The Diocese of the Southeast are those defined by the General Council of The Reformed Episcopal Church, subject to such amendment as may be later voted by a Council of this Diocese, with the consent of the General Council, as follows:

The Diocese of the Southeast comprises the States of South Carolina, Georgia & Florida.

#### *ARTICLE IV-Government of the Diocese*

Section 1. The legislation of the Diocese, and the direction of all matters which belong to and effect the Diocese, shall be vested in a Council of the Diocese, subject to the restrictions of Article III, Section 1.

Section 2. The Bishop and Standing Committee of this Diocese, or the Standing Committee, if there be no Bishop, shall be the ecclesiastical authority of this Diocese.

Section 3. All Conventions, Boards and Committees of this Diocese shall be under the supervision of the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese, which Committee shall, within the limits have veto power over their operations and actions.

#### *ARTICLE V-Membership of the Council of the Diocese*

Section 1. The Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, Assistant Bishop(s), and all Presbyters of the Diocese.

Section 2. The Secretary, the Standing Committee, the Trustees of the Diocese, all lay Presidents, Chairmen, and Treasurers of Boards and Committees of the Diocese and of Authorized Agencies of the Diocese (see Title I, Canon X, of the Canons of the Diocese) or their alternates, the Senior Warden of each Parish, with the Junior Warden of the Parish as his alternate, and the Sunday School Superintendent in each Parish, or his alternate.

Section 3. All lay delegates elected in accordance with the provisions of Title II, Canon III, of the Canons of the diocese.

Section 4. Any Deacon who is Minister-in-Charge of a Parish within the Diocese may be elected by any Council to membership therein.

Section 5. No one shall be a member of the Council of the Diocese who is not a communicant member of the Reformed Episcopal Church in good and regular standing.

Section 6. By a two-thirds vote, visitors and friends of our Church may be made Corresponding Members for the duration of that meeting of the Council. Corresponding membership shall confer the right to speak upon the floor of the house, but not to vote in its deliberations.

## ARTICLE VI-*Meetings of the Council*

Section 1. The Council of the Diocese shall convene in its regular meeting on the Thursday before the third Sunday in September in each year, at such place as shall have been selected at the next preceding meeting, unless such time or place of meeting, or both, shall have been changed in the manner set forth in Section 2 of this Article.

*(Note: In accordance with Section 5 of this Article, by unanimous vote of the Twenty-fourth Council of the Diocese, September 1996, the regular meeting of the Council of the Diocese was moved to begin on the Thursday before the third Sunday in September.)*

Section 2. In case there shall be any good cause rendering it advisable to change either the time or the place fixed for any meeting of the Council of the Diocese, or both, the Bishop of the Diocese may do so, by and with the written consent of two-thirds of the members of the Standing Committee. Thirty days notice thereof shall be given by the Bishop to every Parish and Mission Parish entitled to representation in the Council of the Diocese.

Section 3. Special meeting of the Council of the Diocese may also be called by the Bishop of the Diocese, by and with the written consent of two-thirds of the members of the Standing Committee, and any such meeting shall be held at the time and place designated in the call for the meeting. Thirty days notice thereof shall be given by the Bishop to every Parish and Mission Parish specifying the object or objects of such meeting, in the manner prescribed in Section 2 of this Article. The business stated to be the object or objects of such meeting, and no other, shall be the subject of deliberation at special meetings of the Council of the Diocese.

Section 4. The Delegates elected to the next preceding Council of the Diocese shall be delegates to any special meeting, unless, in the interim, any Parish shall have elected other delegates.

Section 5. The Council of the Diocese may, by two-thirds vote, adopt a different date for the regular meetings of the Council.

## ARTICLE VII-*Officers of the Council*

Section 1. The officers of the Council of the Diocese shall be a President, Vice-President, and Secretary, and such other officers as the Council of the Diocese may decide upon from time to time. Except for the Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, and Assistant Bishop(s), if there be any, who hold their offices *ex officio*; the officers shall be elected by ballot at each regular meeting, upon the organization of the Council of the Diocese, and shall hold their respective offices until their successors have been elected and have qualified.

Section 2. The Bishop of the Diocese shall be *ex officio* President of the Council.

Section 3. The Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall be *ex officio* Vice-President. If there be no Bishop Coadjutor, the senior (counting from date of consecration) Assistant Bishop shall be *ex officio* Vice-President. If there be no Bishop Coadjutor or Assistant Bishop(s), the office of the Vice-President shall be filled by the election of a Presbyter.

Section 4. The Secretary may be a Presbyter of the Diocese, or a layman. With the consent of the Council, the elected Secretary may appoint an Assistant Secretary to help him with his duties during a meeting of the Council.

Section 5. The several officers described in Section 1 shall perform the duties which usually pertain to the offices and such other duties as may be assigned to them by the Council of the Diocese. In the event of the resignation, removal, or death of the Bishop of the Diocese, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall immediately succeed to the office.

Section 6. In case of the death or disability or resignation of the Vice-President, Secretary, or any Treasurer, the President, with the concurrence of a majority of the Standing Committee, shall forthwith appoint a suitable person to fill the office and execute the duties until the next regular meeting of the Council of the Diocese.

Section 7. The Treasurer of the Council of the Diocese shall be the Trustees of the Diocese.

#### ARTICLE VIII-*Proceedings of the Council of the Diocese*

Section 1. The proceedings at meetings of the Council of the Diocese shall be regulated by such parliamentary rules as the Council may from time to time adopt; provided, however, that whenever ten or more members of the Council call for a vote by orders it shall be allowed. In such case the Bishops shall vote as Presbyters, and the concurrence of both orders shall be necessary to the passage of the measure so voted on.

Section 2. In all business of the Council, freedom of debate shall be allowed, subject to the right of the Council to fix and limit the time of debate.

Section 3. Ten Presbyters and twenty lay delegates from not less than ten Parishes shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but any number may adjourn from day to day to await the arrival of a quorum.

Section 4. A call for prayer is always in order in the deliberations of the Council of the Diocese.

## ARTICLE IX-Boards and Committees

Section 1. The following Committee and Boards shall be elected by the Council of the Diocese at its regular meetings:

(1). A Standing Committee, consisting of three Presbyters and three laymen, plus the Bishops of the Diocese *ex officio*. One Presbyter and one layman shall be elected at each annual meeting of the Council of the Diocese and the terms of office of all elected members of the Committee shall be three years.

(2). A Board of Trustees of the Diocese, consisting of six Presbyters and six laymen, plus the Bishops of the Diocese *ex officio*, and one Presbyter and one layman from the Standing Committee, these latter to be appointed annually by the Bishop of the Diocese. Two Presbyters and two laymen shall be elected at each meeting of the Council of the Diocese and the terms of office of all elected members of the Board shall be three years.

(3). A Board of Managers of the Bishop Jerdan Conference Center, consisting of twelve members plus the Bishops of the Diocese *ex officio*. Four members shall be elected to the Board at each annual meeting of the Council of the Diocese and the terms of office of all elected members of the Board shall be three years.

(4). A board of Trustees of Cummins Memorial Theological Seminary, consisting of twelve members plus the Bishops of the Diocese *ex officio*. Four members shall be elected to the Board at each annual meeting of the Council of the Diocese and the terms of office of all elected members of the Board shall be three years.

(5.) A Board of Directors of Cummins Christian School, consisting of twelve members plus the Bishops of the Diocese *ex officio*. Four members shall be elected to the Board at each annual meeting of the Council of the Diocese and the terms of office of all elected members shall be three years.

Section 2. The following Committees, and any others which have been or shall be ordered by the Council of the Diocese, shall be appointed annually by the President.

(1). A Committee on Constitutions and Canons, consisting of three clergymen and two laymen, to which shall be referred all proposed alterations of, or additions to, the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese before the same shall be considered by the Council of the Diocese, and questions of a constitutional nature arising on the floor of the House on which the Council of the Diocese may desire a report.

(2). A Committee on Credentials, consisting of five members, which shall examine the certificates of lay delegates to the Council of the Diocese; which shall report any irregularities; which shall enforce Title II, Canon III, of the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese.

(3). A Committee on the State of the Diocese, consisting of three members, which shall prepare, distribute and gather proper forms to record such information concerning Parish membership, finances, improvements, and activities as shall be required by the Bishop and Standing Committee

and/or the General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church; collate and tabulate such material into readable and available form, give an oral report in the annual meeting of the Council of the Diocese of the highlights of Parish and Diocesan statistics; and deliver their complete report in written form to the Secretary for the inclusion in his minutes within two months after the annual meeting of the Council of the Diocese.

(4). A Committee on Evangelism, consisting of five members, which shall seek to encourage the ministers and Parishes to engage in all forms of evangelism, and assist, when requested, any ministers of Parishes in evangelistic efforts, that our people may be built up in the Christian faith and life that the lost may be saved and the believers strengthened.

(5). A Committee on Christian Education, consisting of five members, which shall undergird and support the work of our educational institutions; provide means of assisting in the education of our clergy and laity; study and recommend methods, materials, and plans for the effective training of our people in the knowledge of Christ and the Scriptures, of the Christian life, and of the principles, doctrines and worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(6). A Committee on Church Extension, consisting of five members. The Bishop and the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of the Diocese shall be members *ex officio*. The duties of the Committee shall be to seek and investigate opportunities for starting new churches, and to bring such opportunities to the attention of the Standing Committee and Board of Trustees of the Diocese; to assist and encourage new mission parishes and parishes where and when they are established, and to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees concerning financial aid to parishes and mission parishes.

(7). A Committee on Nominations, consisting of seven members, which shall meet before the next ensuing regular Council of the Diocese, and prepare a list of nominees for the elective officers of the Council and for all elective Boards and Committees. They shall ascertain the willingness and ability of all of their nominees to serve in office, and submit one name only for each vacancy. Copies of the Nominating Committee's report shall be distributed early on the first day of the Council.

(8). A Committee on Memorials and Resolutions, consisting of seven members. This Committee shall note and record the passing of members if the Council of the Diocese and the Conventions of the Diocese, prepare a memorial Roll of the departed members, and on the first night of the each annual Council of the Diocese conduct a Memorial Devotional Service. This Committee shall also be for all courtesy motions and the House any other resolutions for consideration and report.

(9). A Committee on Finance, consisting of five members, which shall be appointed upon the organization of any Council of the Diocese and shall serve for the duration of the sessions of the Council in which it is appointed. The duties of this Committee shall be to lift offerings and other financial receipts in the Council which are not in the hands of specific treasurers, to pay all bills and assessments incurred in the Council to the proper persons entitled to receive them, and render a public report of all funds handled.

(10). A Committee of Public Relations, consisting of five members, which shall endeavor to publicize by various news media all events and matters of interest occurring in the Diocese and its Parishes.

(11). A Committee on Women's Work, consisting of seven members, including the President of the Missionary Convention, President of the Minister's Wives' Alliance, the Chairman of the Reformed Episcopal Conference Center Auxiliary, and the Chairman of the Christian Education Auxiliary *ex officio*. The duties of this Committee shall be to correlate the work of the various women's organizations of the Diocese, to develop organize efforts among our women in the women's activities of the whole denomination and to bring a closer relationship between the women in the various parts of our Church.

(12). A committee on Men's Work, consisting of seven members, including the President of the Men of the Church *ex officio*, which shall endeavor to correlate the work of the various men's organizations of the Diocese, to develop organized efforts among the men of the churches, and to sponsor a larger interest among our men in the men's activities of the whole denomination and to bring a closer relationship between the men in the various parts of our Church.

(13). A Committee on Young People's Work, consisting of seven members, which shall serve as a link between the Christian activities of the young people and this Council. It shall seek to foster the faith of the young people and their intelligent interest in the work and witness of their parish and of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 3. The first-named member of any appointed Committee shall be the Chairman. The Committees appointed at any Council, with the exception of the Committee on Finance, shall report to the next succeeding Council.

Section 4. The Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor shall be members *ex officio* of all Boards and Committees, elective and appointive.

#### ARTICLE X- *Bishops*

Section 1. At any regular meeting of the Council of the Diocese or at a special meeting called for that purpose, the Council may elect a Bishop of the Diocese or a Bishop Coadjutor or Assistant Bishop(s) by and with the consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee, or Standing Committee alone if there be no Bishop, and at their suggestion. The consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee, alone if there be no Bishop, shall be required for all nominations for the office of Bishop. By a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting, any Council of this Diocese shall have power to set aside the prior provisions of this section. (See Canon 13 C & C REC)

Section 2. At least thirty days before the regular or special Council at which a Bishop is to be elected notice in writing of such election shall be sent by the Secretary of the Standing Committee to every clergyman and vestry in the Diocese. A majority of the Parishes must be represented at a Council in which a Bishop is to be elected. Such election shall be by concurrent vote of both orders, clerical and lay, and a

majority of those present of both orders shall be necessary to a choice. Such election shall in every respect follow the procedure for the election of Bishops as set forth in the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 3. The Reformed Episcopal Church recognizes the Episcopate as an Office, not an Order, therefore any Bishop of this Diocese may, with the consent of the General Council, resign his Jurisdiction or may be relieved from duties of his Episcopal office for causes not affecting his moral character.

Section 4. (a). The Bishop of the Diocese shall hold office during life until he reaches the age of 70 years, or until he resigns, or is relieved from his office in accordance with Section 4(b) of this Article and Title I, Canon 19, Section 5(a) of the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

(b). A resolution requesting a vote of any Council of this Diocese to relieve a Bishop of his Episcopal office must be signed by at least ten Presbyters and twenty of more Lay Delegates, properly elected to represent their parishes at a Council of the Diocese. It shall be presented to the Standing Committee and this Committee, when assured of the authenticity of the signatures, shall schedule such a resolution on the agenda of the next ensuing regular or special Council of the Diocese. At least thirty days before the regular or special Council at which a vote to relieve a Bishop of his Episcopal office in the Diocese is to be taken, notice of such resolution shall be sent by the Secretary of the Standing Committee to every clergymen and vestry in the Diocese. A majority of the Parishes must be represented in a Council which votes on such a resolution. The vote shall be by orders and a two-thirds majority of those present of both orders shall be necessary to adopt the resolution.

Section 5. The Bishop shall preside at all meetings of the Council of the Diocese and may delivered his sentiments on any subject after it has been discusses and before a vote thereon. In case of a tie he may cast the deciding vote. The Bishop May shall also preside at all meetings of the Standing Committee and shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees. He shall have, in addition to all other powers specifically conferred, those which ordinarily pertain to the President of a South Carolina corporation organized under law for eleemosynary purposes.

#### *ARTICLE XI-Amendments*

This Constitution may be amended only by a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a stated meeting of the Council, ratified by a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting at the next meeting of the Council.

# CANONS

## **TITLE I-THE DIOCESE**

### **CANON I-The Clergy**

Section 1. Annually before the meeting of the Council of the Diocese, the Bishop, or if there be no Bishop, the Standing Committee, shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, a Roll of the Clergy of the Diocese, with names of their respective charges, together with their places of residence; and also, with particulars of time and place, the names of all ministers who have been ordained or received from other churches or who have resigned, or died, or been dropped from the Clergy Roll, or may have been subjected to discipline. Such Clergy Roll shall be laid before the Council immediately after it shall have been called therefrom. This Clergy Roll shall be published in the Journal and the Secretary of the Diocese shall send a copy of the same to the Secretary of the General Council.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of every minister under the jurisdiction of the Diocese, except he be retired because of age or disability, who is in charge of a Parish or other wise engaged in the service of the Diocese, to report, in writing, within thirty days immediately preceding the convening of the annual Council of the Diocese, to the Bishop of the Diocese, or if there be no Bishop, to the Standing Committee, stating his address and his occupation. The notation of the receipt of such reports shall be appended to the Clergy Roll.

Any minister failing so to report for two or more successive meetings of the Council of the Diocese shall be dropped from the Active Clergy Roll, in which event he shall forfeit his seat in the Council of the Diocese. Any minister so dropped from the Active Clergy Roll may be restored by reporting for two successive years to the Bishop (Standing Committee if there be no Bishop) with a satisfactory explanation for his previous failure; or by being called to an active pastorate of this Church.

Section 3. A Presbyter in charge of a Parish shall be designated the Rector, or Pastor, thereof.

A Deacon in charge of a Parish shall be designated the Minister-in-Charge thereof.

A Presbyter or Deacon in charge of a Mission Parish by appointment of the Bishop and Standing Committee shall be designated the Vicar thereof.

Section 4. The mandatory age for retirement of Presbyters from active service of the employed staff of the Diocese, or in a Parish or Mission Parish, shall be seventy-two years of age. (Title I Canon 19 Sec 5(a) Constitution and Canons, REC).

### **CANON II-*The Vice-President***

In the event of the disability of the President to act during a session of the Council, or between sessions, the Vice-President shall discharge his duties while such inability continues, except ecclesiastical duties pertaining to the office of Bishop of the Diocese.

### CANON III-*The Secretary*

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to take the minutes and record all the proceedings of the Council of the Diocese, and, together with the President, to attest its official acts. He shall direct the printing and distribution of the Journal of the Council of the Diocese and shall preserve in the archives of the Diocese at least ten copies thereof.

Before printing, the copy of the Journal shall be examined by and have the approval of the President of the Council or, in his absence, by someone designated by the Standing Committee.

### CANON IV-*The Treasurers*

It shall be the duty of all Treasurers elected by the Council of the Diocese, or acting under its supervision, to receive the monies belonging to their respective funds and to distribute the same under the direction of the Council of the Diocese and/or the Conventions, Boards or Committees under which they serve. Their accounts shall be rendered to the Council of the Diocese and audited by a committee appointed by the President of the Council. A certificate of audit by a professional accountant may be accepted in lieu of examination by such committee.

### CANON V-*The Standing Committee*

Section 1. The Standing Committee shall be an advisory board to the Bishop of the Diocese and have such powers and perform such duties as may be assigned to it by the Council of the Diocese.

Section 2. The Bishop of the Diocese and the Bishop Coadjutor shall be respectively Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee, *ex-officio*. The Committee shall elect from among its own members a Secretary who shall keep the minutes of its meetings and perform other clerical duties as the Committee may direct.

Section 3. Four members shall constitute a quorum. The Committee may fill its vacancies in its number, the new members so chosen to hold office until the next regular meeting of the Council and thereafter until their successors are elected by the Council and qualify.

Section 4. The Committee shall make a report of its proceedings to each annual Council of the Diocese and to each General Council of the Church.

### CANON VI-*The Board of Trustees of the Diocese*

Section 1. The Bishop of the Diocese shall be the President of the Board of Trustees, *ex-officio*. The Board shall elect from its own members a Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. The Board shall meet upon call of the President, Vice-President, or any three members, upon one week's notice in writing. A majority of the Trustees shall constitute a quorum. The Board may

fill vacancies in its number, the new Trustees so chosen to hold office until their successors are elected by the Council and qualify.

Section 3. The Board of Trustees of the Diocese shall have such duties as are defined by the Charter of the Diocese of the Southeast of the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of said Diocese.

Section 4. The Board shall hold in trust, invest, change investment, control, and care for all funds and other property of the Diocese, and may, by vote of at least ten members, authorize the leasing, mortgaging, encumbering, selling, and conveying of any and all property of the Diocese, in its discretion. It shall also take all necessary legal steps to establish title to the property of the Diocese and of all extinct parishes. It shall exercise special care that Parish property which shall have been acquired in whole or in part by grants from the Board be secured to the Reformed Episcopal Church, and it shall make the amount of its grants to any Parish for the acquisition of property payable to the Diocese whenever such property shall be alienated from the uses of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 5. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees of the Diocese to receive and hold for the Diocese the equity in any and all property and funds, whether real or personal, that may be left by virtue of the closing or disbanding of any Parish, or of any society or group connected with such Parish, which has been meeting under the name of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or of any other organization or society not connected with a particular Parish, but meeting to further the interests of the Reformed Episcopal Church, where no prior provision has been made for the disposition of said property that rightly belongs the General Council of the Church.

Section 6. It shall be a specific duty of the Board to prepare annually an estimate of the financial requirements of the Diocese for the ensuing year and a plan for meeting them, and to submit this to the Council of the Diocese for adoption. It shall be also the duty of the Board to take such steps as may be necessary to provide monies required, except such portions as may be otherwise specifically provided for.

Section 7. The Council of the Diocese shall have the power to prescribe and regulate the acts and proceedings of the Board of Trustees in all matters not regulated by statutes.

Section 8. The Secretary and Treasurer shall report annually to the Council of the Diocese the entire proceedings of the Board of Trustees including a full report of the conditions of their trusts.

#### *CANON VII-The Board of Managers of the Bishop Jerdan Conference Center*

Section 1. The Board of Managers of the Bishop Jerdan Conference Center shall elect from its own members a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. The Board shall meet at such times and places as it shall decide. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The Board may fill vacancies in its number, the new Manager so chosen to hold office until the next regular meeting of the Council and thereafter until their successors are elected and qualify.

Section 3. The Board shall manage the Bishop Jerdan Conference Center and promote its use and improvement.

Section 4. The Chairman of the Board shall report annually on the acts of the Board and the use and improvement of the Conference Center to the Council of the Diocese. The Treasurer shall likewise report annually to the Council of the Diocese of the funds received and disbursed by the Board.

*CANON VIII-The Board of Trustees of the  
Cummins Memorial Theological Seminary*

Section 1. The Board of Trustees of the Cummins Memorial Theological Seminary shall elect from among its own members a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer(s).

Section 2. The Board shall meet at such time and places as it shall decide. A majority of the members shall constitute a Quorum. The Board may fill vacancies in its number, the new Trustees so chosen to hold office until the next regular meeting of the Council and thereafter until their successors are elected by the Council and qualify.

Section 3. The Board shall administer the property and program of Cummins Memorial Theological Seminary, plan for the development and use of said Seminary, govern its operation, seek to raise funds for its maintenance, operation and improvement, plan , in consultation with the faculty members, its educational program, appoint the Dean and, in consultation with him, appoint the other necessary faculty members.

Section 4. The Board shall have custody of the Charter and Seal of Cummins Memorial Theological Seminary, and for all purposes, serve as the successors to the incorporators of said Seminary.

Section 5. The Chairman of the Board shall report annually on the acts of the Board and the use and improvement of the Seminary, both as to property and program, to the Council of the Diocese. The Treasurer(s) shall likewise report annually to the Council of the Diocese on the funds received and disbursed by the Board.

*CANON IX-The Board of Directors of Cummins Christian School*

Section 1. The Board of Directors of Cummins Christian School shall elect from its own members a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. The Board shall meet at such times and places as it shall decide. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The Board may fill vacancies in its numbers, the new Directors so chosen to hold office until the next regular meeting of the Council and thereafter until their successors are elected by the Council and qualify.

Section 3. The Board shall direct the educational program of Cummins Christian School, plan for the development of said School, govern its operation, seek to raise funds for its maintenance, operations and improvements, appoint Headmaster or Principal and, in consultation with him, appoint other faculty members, and, in consultation with the faculty members, plan the education curriculum of said School.

Section 4. The Chairman of the Board shall report annually on the acts of the Board and the use and improvement of the School to the Council of the Diocese. The Treasurer shall likewise report to the Council or the Diocese on the funds received and disbursed by the Board.

#### *CANON X-Convocations of the Diocese*

Section 1. For the purpose of administration, the Diocese shall be divided geographically into Convocations comprising the Parishes and Mission Parishes in various areas. The naming, bounding, and assignment or re-assignment of Parishes and Mission Parishes of Convocations shall be the function of the Bishop and Standing Committee, subject to the approval of the Council of the Diocese.

Section 2. Quarterly, in December, March and June, of each year, on a date and at a time and place appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese, a Quarterly Convocation shall be held (*in each of the geographical Conventions.*) At such Quarterly Convocations the Ministers, Lay Readers, Lay Delegates elected in accordance with Title II, Canon III of these Canons, Wardens, Church Secretaries, Sunday School Superintendents, Missionary Chairmen, and local Church representatives of Conventions and Auxiliaries, together with the Diocesan and Convocation Chairmen of the Conventions and Auxiliaries, shall meet the Bishop or a chairman appointed by him to make reports of activities and consider matters of interest to the churches.

Section 3. Such Quarterly Convocations shall have power to legislate on matters referred to them by the Council of the Diocese. (*Such legislation shall be effective only within the geographical bounds of the Convocation at whose Quarterly Convention it was adopted.*) Nothing in this Canon, however, shall be construed as denying the right of any Quarterly Convocation to address resolutions and petitions to the Council of the Diocese or the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese.

Section 4. Budget Assessments and other assessments for the Diocesan purposes shall be due and payable quarterly at the Convocations. For this purpose, the annual Council of the Diocese will fulfill the function of the final Quarterly Convocation of each year.

#### *CANON XI-Authorized Agencies of the Diocese and Their Representative in the Council of the Diocese*

Section 1. The following organizations are recognized as authorized agencies of the Diocese and are entitled to representation in the Council of the Diocese under Article V, Section 2, of the Constitution:

- (1) The Sunday School Convention
- (2) The Women's Missionary Convention
- (3) The Ministers' Wives Alliance

- (4) The Men of the Church
- (5) The Women of the Church
- (6) The B.J.C.C Auxiliary

Section 2. Each organization authorized under this Canon must operate under a constitution approved by the Bishop and Standing Committee and must report their actions and finances to the annual Council of the Diocese. Failure to meet these conditions shall be grounds for action of the Bishop and Standing Committee to rescind any previous recognition, to seize their funds for the purposes of the Diocese, and to forbid their activity among the Parishes and Mission Parishes of this Diocese.

## TITLE II-OF PARISHES

### *CANON I-The Admission of Parishes*

Section 1. In accordance with TITLE IV, Canon 48, Section 4, of the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, the consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee is a prerequisite to the formation of a new Parish of this Diocese.

Section 2. In the organization of a new Parish, the following article of the association and conformity shall be signed by at least twelve (12) persons of legal voting age, who have been duly examined by the Bishop, or some other Presbyter of his appointment, as to their personal faith, and as indicated by prior membership in an evangelical Church, or by Confirmation by the Bishop, who intend to be supporters of the Parish, to wit:

*“We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves for the purpose of maintaining the worship of God and the preaching of the Gospel according to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Reformed Episcopal Church, under the name of-----  
-----Church, in the city (or town) of-----,  
state of-----and we promise conformity to the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and of the Diocese of the Southeast.*

*We do hereby authorize the Chairman and Secretary of this meeting to certify this action, in writing, to the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese.”*

Section 3. A Parish already in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church may be admitted to this Diocese by the Standing Committee on its presenting, with its petition for admission, a copy of its charter, its articles of incorporation or other certificate thereof, its acceptance of the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, duly certified by the Secretary thereof as the act of its Parish meeting; provided that in every such case the consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee or, if there be no Bishop, of the Standing Committee of the Diocese or Jurisdiction to which the Parish formerly belonged, be obtained.

Section 4. A congregation, or Parish, of another Church that may desire to be received into union with this Church and Diocese may be received by the Standing Committee upon presentation to them of its

acceptance of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and of this Diocese, and of the doctrine, discipline, and worship of this Church, duly certified as the act of a congregational or Parish meeting by the Secretary thereof.

Section 5. Where the adult membership of legal voting age of a PARISH is between twelve (12) and thirty-nine (39) members, such PARISH shall be designated a Mission Parish. A Mission Parish shall be under the sole government of the Bishop, or a Presbyter appointed by him, who shall appoint and remove Wardens, Vestrymen and other officers and admit and dismiss members.

Section 6. Every group meeting for worship and service by authority of the Standing Committee but not admitted as a Parish or Mission Parish shall be known as an Extension work.

Section 7(a). In the event that the communicant membership of a Parish falls below the number of forty for two consecutive years, that Parish shall revert to the status of a Mission Parish with all of the limitations to which Mission Parishes are subject under the Canons of the Diocese of the Southeast. It shall thereafter be necessary for the Vestry of such a congregation to re-apply for connection with the Diocese as a Parish.

(b). In the event that a communicant membership of a Mission Parish falls below the number of twelve for two consecutive years, that Mission Parish may be disbanded by the Bishop with the approval of the Standing Committee and the members assigned to the pastoral care of a neighboring Parish or Mission Parish.

Section 8. The consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee shall be a prerequisite to the formation of Parishes consisting of two or more congregations. In matters of representation, the rights, and limitations enumerated in these Canons, the status of such Parishes with several congregations shall be determined by their total combined communicant membership.

#### *CANON II-Of Parish By-Laws*

By-Laws of any Parish must not conflict with the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or of the Diocese of the Southeast and must be submitted to the Committee on Constitutions and Canons for correction, if need be, and for certification. Likewise, proposed revisions of By-Laws of Parishes shall be so submitted. (The model Constitution and By-Law for a Local Parish shall serve as a guide to any Parish formulating its By-Laws.)

#### *CANON III- Election of Lay Delegates*

Section 1. In each Parish, at the annual election, or at a special meeting called for the purpose, there shall be chosen two delegates, with two alternates, to the Council of the Diocese when a Parish has less than ninety (90) communicants; and one delegate, with one alternate, for each fifty (50) communicants reported by it to the Council over the base membership of forty (40) communicants.

Section 2. In each Mission Parish, at the annual election, or at a special meeting called for the purpose, there shall be chosen one delegate, with one alternate, to the Council of the Diocese.

Section 3. Delegates and alternates must be communicant members of this Church, in good and regular standing, of legal voting age or over, and who have been communicants members of a Parish or Mission Parish of this Diocese for at least one year prior to the Council in which they are elected to serve.

Section 4. Parishes and Mission Parishes which fail to pay in full the budget assessments equitably determined by the Board of Trustees of the Diocese and adopted in open debate on the floor of the Council of the Diocese shall forfeit the right of having said Parish or Mission Parish represented by delegates in the Council of the Diocese which meets next following the fiscal year in which said failure to pay occurred.

#### *CANON IV-Of Vacant Parishes*

Section 1. Whenever a Parish becomes vacant (without a regularly employed minister) it shall be the duty of the Wardens or the Secretary of the Vestry forthwith to notify the Bishop of the Diocese.

Section 2. The Bishop of the Diocese is *ex-officio* Rector of every vacant parish until a Rector is elected and installed. The Bishop or his representative shall be *ex-officio* chairman of the Vestry and any Parish meeting. In his absence the Senior Warden shall preside.

Section 3. During the vacancy it shall be the duty of the Vestry, under the direction of the Bishop, to make provision for maintaining Divine Worship in the church, and for the pastoral care of the Parish.

#### *CANON V-Of Parish Registers*

Section 1. In every Parish and Mission Parish the Vestry shall provide a suitable book to become a Parish Register. It shall be in the custody of the Minister, whose duty it shall be to keep accurate and full records therein of all baptisms, confirmations, receptions by letter from other Churches, marriages, and burials, together with a complete list of communicants and a list, so far as practicable, of the families within his charge, which Register shall be property of the Parish, and be preserved for the use of his successor. No names once entered shall ever be erased; changes of status being entered as notes or remarks.

Section 2. Communicants of a Parish are all persons who have been confirmed therein, or who have been received by letters dimissory from evangelical churches, or who have presented evidence of previous communicant membership and present purpose to serve the Lord, provided that in every case they have received the Holy Communion.

Section 3. The communicant list shall be corrected annually by the Parish Council by removing from active membership, through notation, the names of all persons who have died, or been ordained to the presbyterate, or dismissed to another church, or excommunicated, together with those who for a period of one year have not partaken of the Lord's Supper, or disappeared, or ceased to attend Divine Services, or to contribute to the support of the Parish; provided that all reasonable efforts to reclaim such members have been made. Exceptions may be made of non-residents who continue to contribute and wish to retain their active standing, and of aged persons, invalids, and persons who are financially unable to contribute, and in

military service or educational institutions which requires a change of residence. All who are placed upon inactive list shall be so notified if their addresses are known. In preparing statistical reports of Communicant Members, only those on the active list shall be enumerated.

Section 4. A communicant removing from a Parish to any other shall request and be granted a letter dimissory, which shall give his status as shown by the Parish Register. A communicant who has resumed regular attendance at Divine Services, renewed his support, and partaken of the Lord's Supper shall be restored at any time to the active roll from the inactive roll.

Section 5. Upon death or removal of the Minister, the Parish Register shall pass to the Senior Warden, who shall keep the records, entering every change without delay, while the Parish is vacant.

Section 6. All parish record shall be open to the inspection of the Bishop, and it shall be his duty to examine them regularly, or to appoint a person or persons to act in his stead.

Section 7. Upon dissolution of a Parish or Mission Parish, the Parish Register shall become the property of the Diocese, to be preserved in its archives.

#### *CANON VI-Of The Annual Parish Meeting*

Section 1. In each parish, annually during Easter Week, or on some other convenient occasion, an election shall be held for Wardens, Vestrymen, Parish Council, Deputies to the General Council, and Delegates to the Diocesan Council. Wardens, Parish Council, Deputies, and Delegates shall be chosen from among the communicants of legal age, and, when practicable, Vestrymen also. It is recommended that the Vestrymen be so chosen that one-third of the entire number shall be elected each year.

Section 2. A parish or congregation consists of all persons enrolled as communicants or stated worshippers in that congregation, and who, in greater or less degree, contribute to its support, and have been thus connected with the parish for the twelve months preceding. Only communicants of legal voting age shall be entitled to vote at the Parish Meeting. In any case of dispute as to the qualifications of electors, the decision shall rest with the Wardens.

Section 3. At the annual parish meeting reports in writing shall be made by the Rector, of the spiritual condition of the parish, with a synopsis of the his official labors, and the showings of the parish register, and from all other auxiliaries, boards, clubs and departments of work in connection with the parish. The Treasurer of the Parish and the treasurers of all parish organizations shall, together with his (their) itemized report, present his receipts and vouchers. Such Treasure's report shall be audited by a committee of two or more, whom one shall not have been a member of the Vestry for the year preceding.

Section 4. Every Parish Meeting, whether stated or special, must be announced at each church service on the two Sundays preceding its date. The purpose for each special meeting shall be announced in its call and this business, and no other, shall be considered in such special meeting.

## TITLE III-OF PASTORAL CONNECTIONS

### CANON I-*The Call of a Minister*

Section 1. Unless otherwise provided by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish, or ordered by the Parish at a stated meeting, the Vestry shall take initial and final action in the Calling of a Rector or of a Minister-in-Charge (Deacon).

Section 2. The advice and consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee, or the Standing Committee alone if there be no Bishop, shall be required before a Call is issued by any Parish. No Deacon may be considered as a Candidate for a Call without the prior consent of the Bishop.

Section 3. The Call of a minister shall be in the following form, and no other:

THE \_\_\_\_\_ REFORMED EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
of \_\_\_\_\_ being fully satisfied  
with your ministerial qualifications, and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit  
as one whose ministry will be profitable to the spiritual life of our Church and fruitful to the  
Kingdom of our Lord, solemnly calls you,

\_\_\_\_\_

to undertake the work as \_\_\_\_\_ of this Parish, promising you in the  
discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord. That you  
may devote yourself to the Ministry of the Word among us, we obligate ourselves to pay you the  
sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a year in regular (monthly/weekly) payments, and will pay the  
church's portion into the Minister's Retirement Fund on the basis determined by the Council of  
the Diocese, during the time of your being and continuing in the pastoral relationship set forth in  
this call to this parish.

(NOTE: Insert below other terms, including such matters as rectory, annual leave for  
recreation and rest, expense allowances, moving costs, car allowance, etc. It is suggested that cash  
allowances for rectory expense be designated "\$ \_\_\_\_\_ of above cash remuneration to be  
designated for rectory expense," or "\$ \_\_\_\_\_ in addition to the annual cash remuneration be  
designated for rectory expense," or "rectory expense to be paid directly by the church.")

We also engage to provide:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We agree that the Vestry of this Parish will annually review the above remuneration with a view to necessary adjustments.

At least \_\_\_\_\_ days notice shall be required for the termination of this pastoral connection by either party.

In testimony whereof we have respectively subscribed our names this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. \_\_\_\_\_ Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior Warden  
\_\_\_\_\_ Junior Warden  
\_\_\_\_\_ Secretary

Approved by action of the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Southeast of the Reformed Episcopal Church: Date \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Bishop  
\_\_\_\_\_ Secretary  
Of the Standing Committee

Accepted this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. \_\_\_\_\_, by \_\_\_\_\_

After approval and acceptance:

- WHITE copy to the Minister
- PINK copy to the Standing Committee
- YELLOW copy to Secretary's Records

Section 4. The Bishop and Standing Committee shall appoint the Vicar of a Mission Parish or of an Extension Work. A Presbyterian shall have the right to accept or reject such appointment and serve diligently at the pleasure of the Bishop.

Section 5. Unless otherwise provided in the By-Laws of a Parish, a Call shall be for an indefinite period of time but in no case for less than a period of two years.

Section 6. No Presbyterian shall be settled as Rector or Pastor of a Parish of this Diocese unless he be duly installed according to the Order provided in the Book of Common Prayer by the Bishop, or a Presbyterian appointed by the Bishop to act in his stead. This section shall not apply in the case of a Deacon called as Minister-in-Charge or of a Vicar appointed to a Mission Parish or Extension Work.

*CANON II-Termination of a Pastoral Connection*

A pastoral connection in this Church may, at any time, be terminated by consent of both parties; or, after not less than thirty nor more than ninety days, by decision of the Bishop and Standing Committee, on appeal by one party, after giving due notice to the other party. The Bishop and Standing Committee shall

have the authority to dissolve any pastoral connection on its own initiative after not less than thirty days nor more than ninety days, after giving notice to both parties, if viewed necessary and in the interest of the Church, but only after an open examination into the reasons for such dissolution. And, in the event that either party refuse to abide by the decision rendered in either of these cases, such party shall forfeit the right, if a Presbyter, of a seat and a vote in the General Council and in the Council of the Diocese; or if Wardens and Vestrymen, of having their parish represented in the same. No Minister shall be approved for a pastoral relationship in a Reformed Episcopal Church, nor shall any Parish have its pastoral Call approved, while refusing to abide by a decision of the Standing Committee made under this Section. In any case, the party or parties shall in other respects be amenable to the ecclesiastical authority, as if these forfeitures of seats, representation and approvals had not been incurred; provided that either party shall have the right of appeal to the final decision of the next ensuing General Council.

## TITLE IV - OF WORK AND WORSHIP

### CANON I-*Of Ministers and Their Duties*

Section 1. It shall be the duty of every Minister in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish of this Diocese to preach the Gospel and declare the whole council of God according to the Holy Scriptures, to appoint and conduct services for Divine Worship; to visit the members of his congregation, particularly such as are sick, infirm or aged; to prepare candidates for Baptism and Confirmation; and to conduct the funeral services of deceased communicant members; and in every way seek to strengthen the spiritual life of the members of the Parish or Mission Parish, the cause of this Diocese, and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom through the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of every Minister in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish to give due notice to his congregation of an Episcopal visitation, and to present such persons as are ready and desirous to be confirmed, with a list of their names, after having ascertained the fact of their baptism, to the Bishop making such visitation.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of every Minister in charge of a Parish or Mission Parish, with such assistance as he may see fit to obtain from persons skilled in music, to give order concerning the tunes to be sung at any time in his church; and especially it shall be his duty to suppress all light and unseemly music, and all indecency and irreverence in the performance, by which vain and ungodly persons profane the service of the Sanctuary.

### CANON II-*Of the Wardens and Vestry*

Section 1. The governing body of a local parish or mission parish is called a Vestry.

Section 2. A Vestry shall consist of a Rector's Warden (or Senior Warden) and an Accounting (or People's) Warden (or Junior Warden) and some number of Vestrymen. The number of Vestrymen and

their term of office shall be determined by the Charter or By-Laws of the Parish, or by the Parish at a stated meeting, subject to the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese and of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 3. The Rector or Pastor is *ex-officio* Chairman of the Vestry and shall preside at all its meetings when present. In his absence the Senior Warden shall preside, if present. If he also be absent, the Junior Warden shall preside. The Chairman shall have a vote only in case of a tie. A Deacon who is Minister-in-Charge of a Parish may act as Chairman upon the vote of the Vestry but shall have no vote. The Vicar of a Mission Parish may preside by the appointment of the Bishop, but shall have no vote.

Section 4. The chief lay leader in a Reformed Episcopal Church is called the Rector's Warden, or Senior Warden. He shall be elected at an Annual Parish Meeting. If the By-Laws of the Parish so provide, he may be nominated only by the Rector. He should be a person of outstanding Christian character. He shall provide a supply for the pulpit in the case of the sickness, absence or resignation of the Minister. He is the custodian of the Parish Register if there be no Rector or Minister-in-Charge.

Section 5. The Accounting (or People's) Warden, or Junior Warden shall be elected at an Annual Parish Meeting. He shall be responsible for the funds of the Parish unless a Treasurer be provided for this purpose. He should be a person of especial Christian character and be qualified in business ability.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the Wardens and Vestry to take charge of all properties of the Parish, to regulate all its temporal concerns, to act in calling a Rector or Minister-in-Charge unless otherwise provided by the Charter and By-Laws of the Parish, to employ all other persons serving the Parish under salary and fix the amount of each salary. The Vestry cannot mortgage or sell the real estate of the Parish without the approval of a Parish Meeting.

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the Wardens, especially, to provide the elements for the Lord's Supper, and take charge of the communion ware. In the absence of the minister they shall see that orderly and worshipful Divine services are conducted.

### CANON III-Of Lay Readers

Section 1. No one shall habitually officiate as Lay Reader in any parish or mission of this Diocese without a license from the Bishop. Such licensure shall be in accordance with the provisions of Title I, Canon XXI of the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the Lay Readers to assist the Minister in the church services or to hold church services and prayer meetings at the direction of the Minister.

### CANON IV-Of Funerals

Section 1. The Minister shall have sole responsibility for the arranging and conducting of all funeral services for members of the Parish or Mission Parish and no arrangements for the use of the Church or Chapel or burying ground of the church shall be made by any Warden, Vestrymen, or member of the Parish without the prior consent of the minister.

Section 2. The Minister may, at his discretion, but is under no compulsion to do so, arrange and conduct the funeral services of persons who are not communicant members of the Parish.

Section 3. Since Sunday funerals interfere with regular Church Services, they shall be discouraged by all Ministers and Communicants of this Diocese.

#### *CANON V-Of order of Worship*

Section 1. In conduct of the worship of the Church, where there is no Rubric or Canon, or where the Rubric or Canon is susceptible of various interpretations, recourse shall be had to the Bishop in case of doubt or dispute, and his decision shall be authoritative, subject, however, to revision by the Council of the Diocese or the General Council.

### TITLE V- AMENDMENTS

#### *CANON I-Of Standing Resolutions*

Standing Resolutions, being of doubtful authority and enforcement, shall not be adopted in lieu of Amendments to the Constitution and Canons. When adopted, they shall stand only for the duration of the Council of the Diocese in which they were adopted and until the convening of the next regular or special meeting of the Council of the Diocese.

#### *CANON II-Of Amendments*

These Canons may be amended by a unanimous vote of any stated meeting of the Council of the Diocese, or any special meeting thereof called for the purpose; otherwise by a majority vote at one stated meeting of the Council of the Diocese, ratified by a majority vote at the next succeeding stated meeting thereof.