

## **SAMPLE OF CHURCH BYLAWS #3**

### ARTICLE I - NAME

The name shall be the \_\_\_\_\_ and referred to herein as the “church”.

### ARTICLE II - MEETINGS

#### Section 1 - Parish Meetings

There may be one or more meetings annually of the congregation upon the call of the rector, the call of a majority of the members of the vestry, or by written petition of one third (1/3) of the adult confirmed communicants. Notice of the time, place and purpose of the meeting must be given not less than ten (10) days before the meeting.

#### Section 2 - Annual Parish Meeting

There shall be an annual parish meeting not later than thirty (30) days after the close of each annual meeting of the Diocesan Convention for the purpose of reporting on the convention and on the work of the church since the preceding annual parish meeting, to elect members of the vestry and delegates and alternates to the Diocesan Convention/Convocational Council and to conduct such other business as may be brought before it.

#### Section 3 - Presiding Officer

At each congregational meeting, the rector or in his absence, or at his discretion, the senior or junior warden in order shall preside.

#### Section 4 - Secretary

The clerk of the vestry shall be the secretary of the meeting.

#### Section 5 - Qualifications of voters

Qualified voters are all baptized persons eighteen (18) years of age or over who regularly attend the public services of the church and are recognized members of the congregation and who contribute by subscription or otherwise for the funds or expenses of the church and have done so for six months previous to the meeting, and who, if required, declare themselves conscientiously attached to the doctrines and discipline and worship of the church. The qualifications of any voter may be determined by the presiding officer.

#### Section 6 - Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots will be available to qualified voters in the parish office. Voters will place the ballots in envelopes which they must seal and then sign their ballots on the outside of the envelope. The voter shall then deliver the sealed envelope to the rector, who may then determine whether the individual is qualified to vote, pursuant to the provisions contained in Article II, Section 5. All absentee ballots must be completed at least one week prior to the annual meeting and no ballots will be accepted after this time.

## ARTICLE III - VESTRY

### Section 1 - Composition

There shall be a vestry composed of five (5) to twelve (12) elected members and the rector.

### Section 2 - Qualifications

Members shall be persons who are qualified voters eighteen (18) years of age or over who have been adult confirmed communicants in good standing of the parish for at least six (6) months immediately prior to the election. Additional qualifications may be established by the vestry.

### Section 3 - Election and Term

Elections shall be by ballot at the annual parish meeting. Persons shall be elected by a plurality vote, with those nominees receiving the highest number of votes filling all vacancies. The term of elected members shall be three (3) consecutive years. One third (1/3) shall be elected each year at the annual parish meeting as well as any vacancy in an unexpired term shall be filled. Each person shall hold their respective offices until their successors are elected and one (1) year shall elapse before an outgoing vestry member is eligible for reelection.

### Section 4 - Partial Term

A person who has served more than half of a specific term in an office as that specific term is set forth in the bylaws, shall be considered to have served the full term for the purpose of determining eligibility to serve additional terms in that office.

### Section 5 - Vacancies

The vestry may fill all vacancies that may occur in their number to serve until the next annual parish meeting, at which time the parish shall fill any unexpired terms.

### Section 6 - Duties

It shall be the duty of the vestry to take charge of the temporal concerns of the parish and to work with the clergy and laity of the congregation for the furtherance of the church's purpose. It shall execute all duties imposed by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church or any convention of the Diocese of Florida.

### Section 7 - Officers

The rector shall be chairman of the vestry, but will not be accorded a vote on any motion presented for the vestry's consideration. He shall appoint a member of the vestry senior warden and the vestry shall elect one of their number junior warden. The vestry shall annually elect a clerk, chancellor, treasurer and such other officers as they may deem necessary. The clerk, chancellor and treasurer need not be elected members of the vestry. If they are not elected members they must meet the qualifications of a vestry person, and they shall be accorded a seat and voice, but not a vote.

### Section 8 - Senior Warden

The senior warden, or in his absence, the junior warden, shall with the vestry provide for the decent celebration of the public worship. In the absence of the rector, he shall call meetings of the vestry and preside over the same.

### Section 9 - Meetings

Regular meetings of the vestry shall be held once each month, or at alternate times as agreed upon by the vestry. All members of the vestry shall be given due notice of all meetings of the vestry. The rector or senior warden may call a meeting at any time. The rector, senior warden or junior warden shall call a meeting upon the request of one third (1/3) of the members of the vestry.

### Section 10 - Quorum

A majority of the elected members shall constitute a quorum. A majority of the quorum so convened shall be competent to act, unless contrary to canon law, or to the laws of the state of Florida.

### Section 11 - Committees

The vestry may establish standing committees, special committees, and/or task groups as it deems necessary.

## ARTICLE IV - NOMINATING COMMITTEE

### Section 1 - Composition

The committee shall consist of the outgoing vestry members and at least four (4) parishioners appointed by the rector who are representative of the parish at large.

### Section 2 - Responsibilities

The committee shall prepare a slate to present to the annual parish meeting. The slate shall present nominees for the positions of vestry members and delegates to the Diocesan Convention/Convocational Council. Persons may be proposed for nomination by themselves or by any member of the church who is an adult communicant in good standing. No person who meets the qualifications of a member of the vestry will be eliminated by the nominating committee. Deadline for submitting shall be three (3) to four (4) weeks prior to the election. There shall be no nominations from the floor at the annual parish meeting. The committee shall publicize the slate at least ten (10) days prior to the annual parish meeting. Such publication shall be in writing in a conspicuous place on the parish grounds, as well as orally communicated on the Sunday(s) immediately preceding such meeting.

## ARTICLE V - DIOCESAN CONVENTION/CONVOCATIONAL COUNCIL DELEGATES

Each congregation shall elect lay representatives to the Diocesan Convention in accordance with the provisions of Canon 1, Section 3b, and Canon 2, Section 4, of the Diocese of Florida, revised in 2002, or as revised at a later date.

## ARTICLE VI- VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF RECTOR

The parish shall act in accordance with Canon 22, section 5, of the Diocese of Florida.

## ARTICLE VII- ELECTION OF THE CLERGY

The parish shall elect (subject to the approval of the Bishop) a rector. Upon the nomination by the rector, it may elect (subject to approval of the Bishop) assistant clergy.

## ARTICLE VIII- AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLES

These articles may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present provided that written notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting has been given not less than ten (10) days before the meeting. They must conform with the canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Florida.

Bylaws amended (date).