



Diocese of West Missouri

The Rt. Rev. Martin S. Field, Bishop

To: Clergy members of, Bishop's and Senior Wardens of, Clerks of the Vestry of, Secretaries of the Committees, and delegates to, the Convention of The Diocese of West Missouri

From: The Rt. Rev. Martin S. Field

Date: Tuesday, September 1

Subject: **A Call for a Special Convention of the Diocese**

Per Article IX. Section 2 of the Constitution of The Diocese of West Missouri, I call the Convention of The Diocese of West Missouri into special session on Saturday, October 3, 2020, at 10:00 a.m. CDT, at Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral, Kansas City, MO, for the sole purpose of considering revised Rules of Order for conventions of the diocese, which specifically would enable future conventions to be conducted virtually, i.e. by making use of internet conferencing services, should the need arise.

EXPLANATION:

Rules of Order govern the Order of Business and all procedural matters for conducting a diocesan convention, whether Special or Annual.

Primarily, this Special Convention is needed to approve new **Rules of Order** enabling the Annual Convention of the Diocese to be conducted virtually this November 7, 2020. Obviously, this need is being driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and the desire of diocesan leadership to practice an abundance of caution.

Secondarily, the **Rules of Order** approved at the Special Convention will become a second, permanent set of rules in place should we ever need to hold another virtual convention.

Legally, to accomplish what needs to be done — meaning in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese as well as the current Rules of Order — we need to meet face-to-face. Our current Rules of Order do not enable us to meet any other way.

Because we need to meet face-to-face, all participants at the Special Convention will be required to properly wear face masks, to observe physical distancing, etc. Also, the number of delegates that can attend will be limited by the physical space of the Cathedral and the 6-foot rule for physical distancing. If more clergy and delegates arrive than the Cathedral's nave can accommodate, another section of the building will be used for overflow.

We anticipate not needing to make use of the overflow space since, for the **Special Convention**, we will need only to gather the necessary quorum to conduct the limited business before us. A quorum for our conventions is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the clergy eligible to seat, voice,

and vote and representation from $\frac{1}{4}$ of the parishes and congregations of the diocese eligible for seat, voice, and vote. Representation from 12 parishes and approximately 40 clergy constitute the required minimum. The Cathedral's nave can accommodate this number. So, we hope that the quorum will be established by attendees (lay and clergy) from the KC Metro area and nearby congregations. It is hoped that by doing so, those farther from KC might be relieved of the drive to KC for what is anticipated to be a brief meeting.

But let me be clear. All delegates duly elected to represent their congregation or parish, and all canonically resident clergy, have the right to attend regardless of where they live, serve, or worship. All who attend will be accommodated and expected to abide by rules about masks and physical distancing.

The ***Special Convention*** will have no other business before it than the single agenda item described earlier.

For advance consideration, the full text of the draft resolution on the ***Rules of Order for a Virtual Convention*** will be emailed to all clergy, wardens, clerks of the vestry, secretaries of the committees, and delegates separately from this letter and will be published to the special convention website. Another and final form of the resolution will be emailed after the Constitution & Canons Committee has finished its review and developed its recommendation for action.

Yours in Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin S. Field". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt. Rev. Martin S. Field
VIIth Bishop of West Missouri