

Title **Rules for Election of a Bishop Diocesan in the Diocese
of West Missouri**

Proposer **The Standing Committee of the Diocese of West Missouri**

1. Whereas, pursuant to Canon III.11.1.a of the Constitution & Canons of the General Convention
2. of The Episcopal Church, the Standing Committee possesses the canonical obligation for the
3. “oversight of, and responsibility for, any search, nomination, transition, and election
4. processes” for a Bishop Diocesan; and
5.

6. Whereas, the Standing Committee believes that it is time to begin such a process for the
7. search, nomination, transition, and election of the ninth Bishop Diocesan of The Diocese of
8. West Missouri; and
9.

10. Whereas, Canon III.11.1.a requires the Diocese to “establish a nominating process either by
11. canon or by the adoption of rules and procedures for the election of the Bishop at a regular
12. or special meeting of the Convention of the Diocese with sufficient time preceding the
13. election of the Bishop;” and
14.

15. Whereas, the Standing Committee asks this Convention to approve such rules and
16. procedures for the election of the ninth Bishop Diocesan at the 2024 Convention of the
17. Diocese; therefore
18.

19. BE IT RESOLVED THAT the following rules and procedures for the election of the ninth
20. Bishop Diocesan at the 2024 Convention of the Diocese be established and adopted:
21.

22. Rule One: Standing Committee Oversight & Responsibilities.
23.

24. A. The Standing Committee shall have oversight of, and responsibility for, the search,
25. nomination, transition, and election of the ninth Bishop Diocesan as described in
26. these Rules and pursuant to Canon III.11.1.a of the Constitution & Canons of the
27. General Convention of The Episcopal Church.
28.

29. B. In overseeing the election process, the Standing Committee shall be responsible for:
30.

31. 1. Giving notice in all appropriate publications that the Diocese is entering into the
32. process for an election to the episcopate;
33.

34. 2. Establishing the date for the election;
35.

36. 3. Forming a Bishop Search Committee and appointing its chair and members;
37.

38. 4. Forming a Transition Committee and appointing its chair and members;
39.

40. 5. Forming a Consecration Committee and appointing its chair and members;
- 41.
42. 6. Forming, appointing, and/or retaining any other committees, consultants,
43. assistants, and chaplains for the process as it deems appropriate;
- 44.
45. 7. Determining the means and procedures for nominations and amendments thereto
46. as may be proposed by the Bishop Search Committee;
- 47.
48. 8. Receiving the slate of proposed and vetted final nominees from the Bishop Search
49. Committee, in consultation with the Office of Pastoral Development under
50. the purview of the Presiding Bishop;
- 51.
52. 9. Collaborating with the Bishop Search Committee, the Transition Committee, the
53. Consecration Committee, and diocesan staff leadership to provide appropriate
54. financial means, staff support, and facilities support for the nomination
55. process, electing convention, episcopal transition, and
56. ordination/consecration, the budget for which shall be subject to approval by
57. the Diocesan Council;
- 58.
59. 10. Providing for procedural and logistical details for the Electing Convention not
60. inconsistent with these Rules, particularly Rule Ten, and overseeing the
61. election;
- 62.
63. 11. Seeking the necessary and required Church-wide consents following the election;
- 64.
65. 12. Providing for the ordination and consecration of the elected Bishop Diocesan, in
66. collaboration with the Office of the Presiding Bishop; and
- 67.
68. 13. Providing for the seating of the elected Bishop Diocesan.
- 69.
70. Rule Two: Bishop Search Committee.
- 71.
72. A. The Standing Committee shall appoint no fewer than twelve (12) and no more than
73. fifteen (15) members as the Bishop Search Committee. The membership shall include
74. both laypersons and clergy and shall reflect the diversity of the Diocese.
- 75.
76. B. The Standing Committee may appoint, from its membership, a fully participating
77. member of the Search Committee and/or the Transition Committee.
- 78.
79. C. The meetings of the Bishop Search Committee shall be held in closed session, not
80. open to the public, to preserve privacy and confidentiality.
- 81.
82. D. Members of the Bishop Search Committee who resign shall not be replaced.
- 83.
84. E. The Bishop Search Committee shall be responsible for:

85. 1. Determining its own processes and procedures, subject to the supervision of the
86. Standing Committee;
- 87.
88. 2. Completing a survey and publishing a diocesan profile;
- 89.
90. 3. Organizing and conducting a search for appropriate candidates;
- 91.
92. 4. Coordinating the receipt of nominations within a published timeframe for the
93. receipt of nominations;
- 94.
95. 5. Developing a slate of proposed nominees and, with the search consultant,
96. obtaining background checks on all persons proposed to be final nominees;
- 97.
98. 6. Providing periodic progress reports to the Diocese without violating rules of
99. confidentiality;
- 100.
101. 7. Consulting with the Office of the Presiding Bishop regarding processes required by
102. the Presiding Bishop; and
- 103.
104. 8. Presenting the final report of the Bishop Search Committee to the Standing
105. Committee at least sixty (60) days in advance of the electing convention. This
106. report shall contain the biographical information on each nominee and any
107. other information as appropriate.
- 108.

109. Rule Three: Transition Committee.

- 110.
111. A. The Standing Committee shall appoint up to twelve (12) persons as members of a
112. Transition Committee. The membership shall include both laypersons and clergy and
113. shall reflect the diversity of the Diocese.
- 114.
115. B. The Transition Committee shall introduce the bishop candidates to the Diocese and
116. the Diocese to the candidates, coordinate the episcopal election, plan the smooth
117. transition of a newly elected bishop into the life of the Diocese, and provide for the
118. transition, including a celebration of the ministry of the Bishop Provisional.
- 119.
120. C. The Transition Committee shall be responsible for:
- 121.
122. 1. Determining its own processes and procedures, subject to the supervision of
123. the Standing Committee;
- 124.
125. 2. Providing an appropriate flow of information to the Diocese and to the media with
126. regard to the transition by utilizing all communication means available within
127. the diocesan structure;
- 128.
129. 3. Providing support to the incumbent Bishop and diocesan staff;

130.
131. 4. Providing opportunity for all nominees to meet with as many members of
132. the Diocese as possible in creative ways, including, but not limited to,
133. walkabouts, candidate videos, sample sermons, social-media interactions, etc.;
134.
135. 5. Providing for the transition of the Bishop Provisional from office, including a
136. formal recognition and celebration of the Bishop Provisional's ministry; and
137.
138. 6. Providing a written report to the Standing Committee upon completion of
139. the process.
140.

141. Rule Four: Consecration Committee.

142.
143. A. The Standing Committee shall appoint up to twelve (12) persons as members of a
144. Consecration Committee. The membership shall include both laypersons and clergy
145. and shall reflect the diversity of the Diocese.
146.
147. B. The Consecration Committee shall be responsible for:
148.
149. 1. Planning and directing the ordination, consecration, and seating of the new Bishop,
150. in consultation with the Presiding Bishop;
151.
152. 2. Planning and executing all celebratory events related to the consecration and the
153. Presiding Bishop's visit;
154.
155. 3. Coordinating invitations, reserving blocks of hotel rooms, and arranging
156. transportation for visiting bishops and guests of the Bishop-elect; coordinating
157. a media availability for the Presiding Bishop; and coordinating a gathering with
158. the Presiding Bishop for diocesan clergy; and
159.
160. 4. Assisting the Bishop-elect in adapting to and being introduced to the diocesan
161. community.
162.

163. Rule Five: Disqualifications for Committee Membership.

164.
165. A. No member of the diocesan staff shall serve on the Bishop Search, Transition, or
166. Consecration Committees. The committees may invite staff members to take part in
167. committee meetings to provide support to the committees' work but without vote or
168. decision-making authority.
169.
170. B. Lay persons serving as members of the Bishop Search, Transition, or Consecration
171. Committees must be members in good standing of West Missouri congregations.
172.
173. C. Ordained persons serving as members of the Bishop Search Committee must be
174. canonically resident and in good standing in the Diocese of West Missouri. Ordained

175. persons serving on the Transition or Consecration Committees must be canonically
176. resident or licensed and in good standing in the Diocese of West Missouri.
177.
178. D. Persons not currently on the Standing Committee but who will be candidates for
179. election to the Standing Committee shall not serve on the Bishop Search Committee.
180.
181. Rule Six: Nominees.
182.
183. A. If a member of the Standing Committee wishes to become a candidate for Bishop,
184. that member shall resign from the Standing Committee before that member's name
185. is placed before the Bishop Search Committee for consideration.
186.
187. B. Not fewer than sixty (60) days prior to the designated date for the electing
188. convention, the Standing Committee shall receive the report of recommended
189. nominations from the Bishop Search Committee, verify the eligibility and
190. background-check completions on each nominee, and proceed to announce publicly
191. the names of those nominated in all appropriate publications.
192.
193. Rule Seven. Supplemental Nominations.
194.
195. A. Supplemental nominations may be made by petition submitted to the Standing
196. Committee for a period of seven (7) days following the public announcement of the
197. list of nominees. To be considered, each supplemental petition must be signed by at
198. least three (3) clergy from at least three (3) different congregations and (3) lay
199. persons from at least three (3) different congregations within the Diocese and must
200. be accompanied by all information required of other candidates by the Standing
201. Committee.
202.
203. B. Upon receipt of one or more properly prepared petitions, the Standing Committee
204. shall secure the required background checks for each person nominated by
205. supplemental petition. The Standing Committee may use members of the Bishop
206. Search Committee, as well as the search consultant, to help provide reference and
207. background checking of petition candidates.
208.
209. C. Once the deadline has passed and the background checks have been approved, the
210. Standing Committee shall announce the names of the approved nominees in all
211. appropriate publications and send separate written information concerning the
212. supplemental nominees to all clergy and lay delegates as soon as practicable, at
213. which time the nominations shall be deemed closed.
214.
215. D. The final slate of nominees introduced to the Diocese shall consist of nominees
216. recommended by the Bishop Search Committee and those properly made by
217. supplemental petition.
218.
219. E. The Standing Committee reserves the right to remove any nominee from the slate, at

220. any time before the election, if information emerges causing the Standing
221. Committee to determine that nominee to be unfit to serve as Bishop.
222.
223. Rule Eight: Nominations During Convention.
224.
225. A. The Standing Committee will place in nomination the names of all persons whose
226. names were submitted to it by the Search Committee, and also those who have
227. fulfilled the petition requirements.
228.
229. B. Nominations from the floor of Convention shall not be permitted.
230.
231. Rule Nine: Budget.
232.
233. The Standing Committee shall collaborate with the Diocesan Council to establish a budget
234. sufficient to fund the work of the Bishop Search, Transition, and Consecration Committees
235. as set forth in these Rules.
236.
237. Rule Ten: Convention Rules of Order.
238.
239. A. Procedure.
240.
241. 1. Any business coming before the Annual Convention other than the election process
242. shall be conducted pursuant to the Rules of Order Governing the Conduct of
243. Business at Meetings of the Convention of The Diocese of West Missouri
244. (“General Rules of Order”). Establishment of a quorum and certification of
245. delegates shall be done in accordance with the General Rules of Order.
246.
247. 2. These Rules may be amended or suspended after their adoption by the Convention
248. by a two-thirds majority of the certified delegates voting in each order. If the
249. balloting has commenced for the election of a Bishop, then no Rule contained
250. within may be amended or suspended without the four-fifths vote of the
251. certified delegates in attendance.
252.
253. 3. When any voting is done by orders, other than by secret ballot, the laity shall vote
254. first, and then the clergy.
255.
256. 4. All forms, ballots, and other written instruments as required under these Rules shall
257. have been previously approved by the Chancellor as to form.
258.
259. B. Procedures for Delegates and Alternates.
260.
261. 1. Upon certification, the Credentials Committee is authorized to issue each delegate
262. or alternate the proper card.
263.
264. 2. Clerical delegates, lay delegates, and alternates will be issued different colored

265. cards.
266.
267. 3. No alternate may be in the voting area, unless permitted by the Chair, while
268. balloting is under way.
269.
270. 4. No alternate may vote as a delegate until the Credentials Committee has
271. approved the transfer of voting cards. The transfer back to the original
272. delegate must likewise be approved. The procedure for handling the process
273. of transfer shall be established by the Credentials Committee and announced
274. at the Convention.
275.
276. C. Ballots and Counting.
277.
278. 1. Balloting and counting shall be conducted via an electronic voting system that
279. permits anonymous voting and reporting of votes by orders. A vote conducted
280. through reliable electronic means shall be deemed a written ballot, fulfilling
281. any requirement in the Constitution and Canons that a vote be conducted by
282. written ballot. Electronic votes shall be deemed anonymous, provided,
283. however, that each electronic ballot shall designate whether the voting
284. delegate is a member of the lay or clergy order.
285.
286. 2. In the event that the electronic voting system fails or is otherwise inoperable,
287. voting shall be conducted by paper ballot. There shall be separate ballot boxes
288. provided for each order, and the ballots for each order shall be printed on
289. different colored paper. After sufficient time has been provided to delegates
290. for marking their ballots, the delegate shall go to the proper ballot box for that
291. delegate's order, display their credential card to the member of the Credentials
292. Committee, and hand over the ballot, which the Credentials Committee
293. member shall place in the box
294. .
295. 3. Candidates shall be listed for election in alphabetical order.
296.
297. 4. After balloting has commenced, no motions, points of order, or the like shall be
298. made from the floor. All such inquiries shall be made privately to the
299. parliamentarian.
300.
301. 5. At the counting of the first through the third ballots, inclusive, the name of any
302. nominee who fails to receive at least two (2) percent of votes in each order
303. shall be dropped off all succeeding ballots. At the counting of the fourth ballot
304. and all subsequent ballots, the name of any nominee who fails to receive at
305. least five (5) percent of votes in each order shall be dropped off all succeeding
306. ballots.
307.
308. 6. If the total number of ballots cast in either order shall exceed the number of
309. certified delegates in that order, the ballot shall not be announced, and the

310. order in which the excessive ballot or ballots were cast shall ballot again.
311.
312. 7. Any nominee is permitted to withdraw prior to the next ballot by notifying the
313. Chair on the form provided for that purpose. If the nominee is not present, a
314. representative shall be designated in writing to have full authority to withdraw
315. the name of the nominee.
316.
317. 8. A nominee who receives a simple-majority vote of the certified delegates voting in
318. each order on the same ballot shall be declared by the Chair as elected.
319.
320. D. Decorum.
321.
322. 1. The floor shall be restricted to those holding delegate credentials from the
323. Credentials Committee. Prior to the commencement of the voting on each
324. ballot, the Chair shall ensure that only delegates are on the floor except for
325. those whom the Chair shall have otherwise permitted. The vote shall
326. thereafter be opened.
327.
328. 2. No nominee, if a delegate, may be a member of the Credentials Committee or
329. Dispatch of Business Committee, involved with the collection or counting of
330. ballots, speak to the Convention as to the nominee’s candidacy or withdrawal
331. from the same, or announce to the Convention assembled after withdrawal
332. the support of any other nominee.
333.
334. 3. It shall be deemed inappropriate for presentations on the floor by any delegate
335. beyond the nomination process.
336.
337. Rule Eleven: Contingencies.
338.
339. A. If the election cannot occur at the 2024 Annual Convention due to delays in the
340. proposed timeline, the election will be held at a special meeting of the Convention
341. (“Special Convention”) pursuant to Article IX.2 of the Constitution & Canons of The
342. Diocese of West Missouri. Delegates and alternates to the immediately preceding
343. Annual Convention shall be the delegates and alternates to the Special Convention
344. unless the body entitled to a delegate or alternate determines otherwise. The
345. certification process shall be the same as for a regular meeting of the Convention.
346.
347. B. If the election can be held at the 2024 Annual Convention, but a pandemic or other
348. emergency prevents an in-person Convention, the election shall be held via virtual
349. means in accordance with the Special Rules of Order for Virtual Conventions of The
350. Diocese of West Missouri (adopted October 2, 2020). The election of the Bishop
351. Diocesan will be the first order of business after organizational matters are
352. conducted. See Special Rules, Section L. Likewise, if the election is held at a Special
353. Convention as contemplated by paragraph A above, and the Special Convention
354. cannot be held in-person for reasons of pandemic or other emergency, the election

355. will be held via virtual means at the Special Convention consistent with this
356. paragraph.
357.
358. C. If the election of a Bishop Diocesan becomes impossible because the Standing
359. Committee does not accept the slate of candidates from the Bishop Search
360. Committee, the Standing Committee shall restart the search process and may
361. develop a new set of Rules or retain these.
362.
363. D. If a Bishop Diocesan is not elected after ten (10) ballots, the Chair may entertain a
364. motion that the election be declared closed. If this motion is approved by a two-
365. thirds majority of certified delegates voting in each order, the Standing Committee
366. shall restart the search process and may develop a new set of Rules or retain these.

Effective: November 11, 2023

By Resolution of the 2023 Annual Convention

Explanation

Canon III.11.1.a of The Episcopal Church and Article IV.1 of the Constitution of the Diocese of West Missouri give the diocesan Standing Committee oversight and responsibility for the election of a Bishop Diocesan. In April 2023, the Standing Committee met with the Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley, bishop for pastoral development in the Office of the Presiding Bishop, to discern the diocese's readiness to begin searching for the ninth bishop of West Missouri, and the committee voted to launch that process. In May 2023, the Standing Committee voted that the diocese would contract with the Rev. Canon Brian Nordwick as our search consultant, one of three potential consultants offered by Bishop Ousley and interviewed by the Standing Committee. In July, assisted by Canon Nordwick, the Standing Committee began organizing the search process, drafting job descriptions for members of three search-related committees (Bishop Search, Transition, and Consecration) and a search chaplain, as well as a timeline for the search-to-consecration process and a prayer for the process. In August, the Standing Committee approved these documents and created a search website, assisted by Zach Phillips, diocesan communications director. The search website came online Aug. 23 with applications for the Bishop Search Committee, Transition Committee, and Consecration Committee. An email was sent to the diocesan community on Aug. 24 inviting applications, and another email was sent Sept. 28 reminding the diocesan community of the application deadline, Oct. 1. With this resolution, the Diocesan Convention will authorize the process for searching for, electing, and consecrating the ninth bishop of West Missouri.
