



Constitution & Canons 2025 Amendment Proposals

The CCC voted to recommend the following for Synod vote.

Please send questions to Dan Gibson: rdgibson0419@gmail.com

Current (pre-Synod) [DCOH Canons](#)

Current [ACNA Canons](#) (includes changes not yet ratified by the Provincial Assembly, see pp. 20-21)

2025.1 Licensing Lay Catechists and Lay Church Planters - page 2

- a. The canons currently require the bishop to license or commission lay catechists and lay church planters. This proposal allows Rectors and clergy overseeing Congregations and Missions to license lay catechists and lay church planters.

2025.2 Remove Cap on Assistant Bishops- page 3

- a. The canons currently cap the number of suffragan or assistant bishops at 3. This proposal removes that cap.

2025.3 Officers and the Diocesan Council - page 4

- a. This proposal corrects a typo in Canon 3.1, which relates to ex officio members of the Diocesan Council.
- b. This proposal also clarifies language around the nomination of the vice-chair of the Diocesan Council

2025.4 Lay Delegates of Synod - page 5

- c. This proposal clarifies that lay members of the Diocesan Council are *ex officio* delegates to Synod that do not need to be separately elected as delegates.

2025.1 Lay Orders

RE: Title III. Canon 6. Section 1.4

Proposed by Bp. Alan Hawkins

Proposed Language

Canon 6

Of Licensed Lay Orders

The Diocese recognizes that the ministry of the laity is indispensable to the work of the Diocese and that this ministry originates within each Congregation and Mission. All clergy, Congregations, and Missions of the Diocese are strongly encouraged to equip the laity for ministries in their communities. To this end, Rectors and clergy overseeing Congregations and Missions may license members such as Lay Evangelists, Lay Pastors, Lay Preachers, Lay Readers, ~~and~~ Lay Eucharistic Ministers, **Lay Catechists, and Lay Church Planters** for ministry with the local Congregation or Mission as seems helpful in bearing fruit for the Kingdom of God. Those exercising these ministries need to be spiritually mature, of sound character, have received adequate training, and have regular oversight. At the request of the Rector, ~~the Bishop may license or commission Lay Ministers in a liturgical service of worship designed for that purpose~~ **the bishop may participate in a liturgical service of worship for the purpose of licensing or commissioning Lay Ministers**, or within any service of worship that occurs during a Bishop's regular visit to the parish.

~~This Diocese also recognizes the ministry of laity in expanding the mission of the Church, and to that end recognizes the office of Lay Catechist and Lay Church Planter. Those who are recognized and called by the local church for these specialized ministries of mission expansion and potential church planting are required to be examined in collaboration with the local church by those the Bishop designates for this purpose, in accordance with the spirit of Title III, Canons 2, 3, 4 and 5. After successful examination, the Bishop will license Lay Catechists and Church Planters for the work of the Gospel.~~

Rationale:

Though the vetting and training of Lay Catechists and Lay Church Planters is of vital importance, it is unnecessary for the bishop to be required for their licensing. This amendment places the licensing of the offices of Lay Catechist and Lay Church Planter alongside the rest of the lay offices mentioned and under the authority of the Rector or overseeing clergy, while retaining the possibility of the bishop participating in the licensing service at the request of the Rector.

2025.2 Assistant Bishop

RE: Title I. Canon 4. Section 1.4

Proposed by Bp. Alan Hawkins

Proposed Language:

4. Assistant Bishop

With approval of the Synod, or the Diocesan Council, the Bishop Ordinary may request permission from the College of Bishops of the Province to appoint an Assistant Bishop, or receive a duly consecrated, qualified Bishop from within the Province or from a sister Province, as Assistant Bishop. An Assistant Bishop assists in the oversight and care of the Diocese in ways determined by the Bishop Ordinary in consultation with the Assistant Bishop and the Diocesan Council.

~~No more than three Suffragan or Assistant Bishops may serve at any given time in the Diocese.~~

Rationale:

As our diocese continues to grow, Bp. Alan would like to have the option to partner with retired bishops from within our diocese, as well as those who may enter our diocese in the future but still wish to assist in episcopal ministry such as episcopal visits. In addition, it is envisioned that Bp. Andudu or other missionary bishops could also be assisting bishops for a season. As it currently stands, every time Bp. Andudu is asked to engage in episcopal ministry for our diocese, it is required that the Bishop issue a license for that specific event.

In addition, eliminating the specific maximum number of bishops avoids unnecessary and subjective arguments about what that number should be.

It is important to keep in mind that this Canon requires assisting bishops be approved by the Synod or the Diocesan Council. If desired, in order to strengthen the check on the system, Bp. Alan would be fine with amending the language to require approval by BOTH the Diocesan Council and the Synod.

2025.3 Officers and the Diocesan Council

RE: Title I, Article 1, Canon 3

Proposed by Dr. Jerald H. Walz

Approved for submission by the Diocesan Council, 8-19-2025

Proposed Language:

Canon 3

Of the Diocesan Council

Section 1. Diocesan Council Established

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1. Composition

The Diocesan Council shall be composed of a minimum of ten members and maximum of fifteen members, consisting of the Bishop Ordinary, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, and representative members of the laity and clergy from the Diocese. Each of these members shall have voice and vote on the Diocesan Council. The Suffragan and Assistant Bishops, if there be any, and the officers of the Diocese an Staff will be members ex officio of the Diocesan Council. A two-to-one ratio of laity and clergy members of the Diocese, respectively, will be chosen by the Synod, ensuring a full and fair representation from an even geographic distribution of the entire Diocese, and will be presented for election to the Synod. The specific number of nominees presented to the Synod will accord with the number necessary to maintain a full number of Diocesan Council members serving staggered three-year terms.

2. Officers of the Diocesan Council

The Bishop shall serve as the Chair of the Diocesan Council. He shall establish the agenda of business for the meetings of the Diocesan Council.

In addition, a layperson, **nominated from within the Diocesan Council**, shall be elected annually **by the Synod for a one year term to serve as the Vice-Chair of the Diocesan Council** ~~from within the Diocesan Council.~~

Rationale:

The guiding principle here, as found in the Constitution Article VI and elsewhere in the Canons, is that the Diocese has other officers in addition to Bishops. Furthermore, since these are officers for the entire Diocese, the Synod should elect them on behalf of the whole Diocese, just as they do Bishops. Currently, the Vice-Chair is elected by the Diocesan Council. The Constitution, however, lists the Vice Chair as one of the officers of the Diocese. Therefore, it seems right that the Synod should elected the Vice-Chair once nominated by the Diocesan Council.

2025.4 Lay delegates of the Synod

RE: Title I, Canon 2

Proposed by Dr. Jerald H. Walz

Approved for submission by the Diocesan Council, 8-19-2025

Proposed Language:

Canon 2

Of the Synod Section

1. Membership

The Synod shall be composed of the Lay Order and the Clerical Order.

The Clerical Order shall be composed of the Clergy Delegates, comprising the Bishop or Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons under the authority of the Bishop in the Diocese. No member of the Clerical Order while under ecclesiastical discipline will be entitled to a seat in the Synod.

1. All clergy canonically domiciled in the Diocese, as defined in Provincial Canon III.1.3, shall have seat, voice, and vote in the Synod.
2. All other clergy canonically domiciled elsewhere but licensed in the Diocese shall have seat and voice but no vote in the Synod.

The Lay Order shall be composed of the Lay Delegates elected by the member Congregations and Missions, and, as authorized by canon, appointed and ex officio members. **Lay members of the Diocesan Council shall be *ex officio* delegates to Synod and need not be elected as delegates by their congregation or mission.**

Each elected Lay Delegate, each Clergy Delegate and, except as provided by canon, each appointed and ex officio member shall have voice and vote.

Rationale:

As currently written, the lay members of the Diocesan Council are not members of the Synod (unless they concurrently serve as their church's delegate) even though they are elected by Synod to serve in that role. Since they have been elected by Synod to the Diocesan Council, it is appropriate that they also be members of Synod by that election, regardless of whether they are their church's delegates.