

## **Bylaws of St. John's Episcopal Church, Honeoye Falls, NY**

The Bylaws of St. John's Episcopal Church in Honeoye Falls, NY (hereafter termed Bylaws) shall conform to:

- The Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church.
- The Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester.
- The Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York.

If the Bylaws conflict in any part or section with any of the above, that part or section will become null and void.

### **Amendments**

Bylaws may be amended in whole or part by a 2/3 vote of qualified voters present at an annual or parish meeting. All adult members must be notified of the meeting and receive a description of the amendment proposal(s) prior to the meeting.

### **Parish Meetings**

The annual parish meeting shall be held in January of each year with the date, time and place established by the Vestry at the November Vestry meeting. It will then be publicized throughout the Parish along with the criteria for voter eligibility.

Special parish meetings may be called at any time by the Bishop or the Rector. In the absence of the Rector, the Wardens and a majority of the Vestry persons may call a special meeting.

The nature and purpose of a special meeting and the scheduling of the Annual Meeting should be announced at least two Sundays preceding the meeting.

A majority vote is necessary by members present for any action at an Annual Meeting or special meeting.

Qualified voters must be persons 18 years of age or more who have been baptized and are regular attendants at worship and contributors to its support for at least one year prior to such a meeting.

The meetings shall be presided upon by the Rector or, in the Rector's absence, by a Warden or qualified replacement.

Debate and voting shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

### **The Vestry**

The Vestry is the elected lay leadership of the parish. In addition to the Vestry's canonical responsibilities for the parish's relations with its Rector and management of finances and property, the Vestry should facilitate Christian growth among parishioners and strive to be models of faithful Christian leadership in their own lives. They should lead as well as serve; manage as well as enable others to participate in parish life.

## **Qualifications**

Candidates to the Vestry should:

- Be 18 years of age, baptized, and a member and contribute of St. John's parish for one year prior to taking office.
- Attend church services regularly, be able to work with others and be open to new ideas and ministries.
- Express a commitment to support the mission and ministry of St. John's Church, the Diocese, and the National Church.
- Be committed to spiritual renewal personally and to the Church at large.
- Recognize that Vestry membership is a commitment to service.
- Be willing and able to invest the time required for fulfilling Vestry responsibilities.
- Know that if elected and circumstances change so that obligations cannot be fulfilled, they are free to resign.

## **Election Process**

A nominating committee appointed by the Vestry will represent the slate of candidates for unfilled Vestry and Warden positions at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. A short autobiography of all nominees will be distributed. At this time the criteria for voter eligibility will also be stated.

The slate of candidates will be formally announced prior to starting the Church service the day of the Annual Meeting. At that time nominations may be made from the floor provided the nominee has been asked and is willing to accept the nomination. A short autobiography should be offered verbally. This gives persons unable to attend the meeting an opportunity to cast their ballot.

All qualified persons are entitled to cast one vote for each Vestry position vacant. The candidates receiving the largest number of votes in accordance with the number of positions open shall be declared the winner.

The nominating committee will present candidates for delegates to the Convention accordance with the Canons of the Diocese. The delegates and alternate representing St. John's will be picked from persons receiving the highest votes.

Vestry or delegate vacancies, upon recommendation of the Rector, will be filled by the Vestry.

## **Organization**

The Vestry of St. John's Episcopal Church shall consist of six members. Vestry persons serve for three years and can serve no more than two consecutive terms at which time they may serve again after a one year absence.

## **Responsibilities**

The Vestry:

- Serves as trustees of the incorporated parish and are custodians of its real and personal property and its agents and legal representatives in all matters concerning its corporate affairs.
- As a consultative body, with the Rector, determines parish policies and procedures, promotes spiritual growth and development, facilitates mission and ministry among members and engages in parish planning for present and future development.
- Oversees the raising of funds to maintain the parish and for their proper allocation.
- Is responsible for the upkeep of buildings and grounds of the parish.
- Becomes an effective supervisor of the parish in the event the Rector resigns; is responsible for providing interim cleric; and assumes responsibility for securing a successor.
- Shall choose or elect, at the first meeting of the new Vestry, among the members of Vestry persons, to serve as Senior and Junior Wardens. These persons shall serve a term of one year and can be elected to serve more terms, if they so choose.
- Shall appoint a Clerk of the Vestry whose responsibilities will be to record the minutes of all Vestry meetings, record minutes at all annual and special meetings, preserves all records and papers belonging to the parish, performs such duties assigned by the Vestry, and delivers to the successor all books and documents belonging to the parish.
- Shall appoint a Treasurer whose duty it will be to receive, disburse and account for funds of the parish.

## **Finance**

There must be a majority vote of the Vestry and two signatures (Warden and Treasurer) to buy or sell any investment.

Revenues from the Building, Organ, Baker and Memorial funds (or any other investment/revenue funds which may ensue) can only be disbursed with a majority vote of the Vestry.

The Discretionary Fund is financed from the loose monies contributed the first Sunday of the month and from other monies as directed by the Vestry. The disbursement of Discretionary Funds must have the signature of the Rector or Senior Warden.

## **Meetings**

Monthly Vestry meetings will be held at dates and times determined by the first meeting of the Vestry following the Annual Meeting. Vestry meetings are open to all members of the parish. To address the Vestry, a member of the parish must contact the Rector or Senior Warden at least two weeks before the Vestry meeting.

In case of a tie vote by Vestry members on any resolution or action, the Rector shall break the tie.

## **Quorum**

To constitute a quorum of the Vestry, there must be present either:

- The Rector and at least a majority of the whole number of Vestry persons.
- In the absence of a Rector, a majority of the Vestry.

**Absences**

The Vestry, by majority vote of all persons serving, may remove from office any church Warden or Vestry member who fails to attend three successive regular meetings of the Vestry without excuse by the Rector, or if there is no Rector, by the Wardens.