

Diocese of Pennsylvania
234th Convention
November 4, 2017

R4-2017

Designated contact person for this resolution:

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RESOLVED: Article IV, Sections 2 and 3 of the Constitution are hereby amended as follows:

2. No church shall be admitted as a member of the Convention, which does not, by its Charter or Articles of Association, expressly accede to the Constitution, Canons, Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and to the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this Diocese. Each regularly established Parish of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this Diocese, now a member, or which shall hereafter be admitted a member of the Convention, may send to the Convention Lay Deputies, Communicants of this Church, who have been elected by the congregation, including Chapel congregations, from their own number, but not exceeding three in number except as hereinafter provided for. The Convention may, from time to time, provide by Canon for the election in the same way of additional Deputies, not exceeding two in number from any Parish, in such relation and proportion to the size or strength of the Parish, including its Chapel congregations, as said Canon may determine. But any Canon providing for such additional Deputies, or changing such provision shall not take effect until after the adjournment of the session at which it is adopted. ~~In a vote by ballot or Orders the Deputation from each Church shall be entitled to one vote, and no more.~~ **Each Deputy shall have voice and vote in all matters before the Convention.** No Deputation from any Church shall be entitled to a vote at the same Convention at which the Church shall be admitted as a member.

3. Each organized mission and Aided Parish of this Diocese, reporting not less than 50 communicants, which has made a Parochial Report and paid its assessment for the Episcopal Fund for the preceding calendar year, may send to the Convention three Lay Deputies, chosen as may be provided for by Canon, who shall have all the rights of parochial Deputies, ~~and in an election or when the vote is by Orders the vote cast for such Mission, or Aided Parish, so represented shall count as one vote in such election or vote by Orders.~~

EXPLANATION

The purpose of this Resolution is to insure that in all votes or elections that come before the Convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, each lay deputy will cast one vote in the same way as the clergy according the well-established principle of one person, one vote. Currently, this principle holds for votes on resolutions, but in elections (which are “by ballot”) each parish’s lay deputation casts a single vote irrespective of whether it is comprised of one, two or three deputies.

Our Baptism is the foundation of all ministry and in baptism we are all equal in our value and dignity before the Lord. According to the Book of Common Prayer the lay order is the primary order of ministers in the Church followed by Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Clearly the Book of Common Prayer understands lay ministry and ordained ministry as equal orders and both are essential to the leadership, maintenance and mission of the church. Therefore we should adapt our voting practices to reflect our most dearly held beliefs.