

**Title:** Amended Diocesan Constitution Article V  
**Proposer:** Nominations and Elections Committee, The Rev Mary Kate Rejouis, Chair  
**Drafting Contact:** The Rev Robert Anton Franken, 970-281-2311  
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*Whereas:* The election of Clergy and Lay Deputies to General Convention “concurrently by order” utilizing rank-choice and electronic voting, is impractical at best and likely impossible; and ensuring that clergy under discipline should not represent this diocese, clarify that elected clergy and lay deputies will represent the diocese at Provincial Synods the year of General Convention, and clarify that the Ecclesiastical Authority may appoint additional Alternate deputies to General Convention in the event there are insufficient elected or alternate deputies

*Be it Resolved:* That, upon the recommendation of the Diocesan Election Committee, the 137th Convention of Episcopal Diocese of Colorado adopt and replace in The Constitution of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Colorado the following revised Article V (Deputies to the General Convention and to the Provincial Synod) in its entirety:

#### **ARTICLE V: Deputies to the General Convention and to the Provincial Synod**

Section 1. At the Diocesan Convention held ~~two years~~ **no later than 12 months** preceding the ~~year in which the~~ **opening date of the** next regular session of the General Convention ~~is to be held~~, there shall be elected by a ~~concurrent~~ **vote by the members of the Diocesan Convention four clergy Deputies and four lay Deputies** ~~by clergy and lay orders; clergy Deputies and lay Deputies~~ who shall represent this Diocese in the meetings of the General Convention and who shall continue in office until their successors are elected. The Clergy Deputies shall be clergy canonically and actually resident in this Diocese at the time of their election and throughout their period of service **and not under discipline** and the lay Deputies shall be communicants in good standing of a Parish or Mission of this Diocese at the time of their election and throughout their period of service.

Section 2. A majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to elect each Clergy and each Lay Deputy and the Deputies shall be ranked in the order of election. Following the election of the full number of Clergy and Lay Deputies, a ballot shall be taken for a like number of Clergy and Lay Alternate Deputies. A majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to elect Alternate Clergy Deputy and each Alternate Lay Deputy and the Alternate Deputies shall be ranked in the order of election.

Section 3. The Ecclesiastical Authority may at any time appoint additional Alternate Deputies to represent the Diocese in the General Convention in the event neither the elected deputies nor the elected alternate deputies are able to attend.

Section 4. Each year, except for any year in which the General Convention is to be held, the ~~Bishop~~ **Ecclesiastical Authority** shall appoint clergy Deputies and lay Deputies to represent this Diocese in the Synod of ~~the Sixth~~ **Province VI**. **If there is a Provincial Synod in the year that General Convention is to be held, the elected Clergy and Lay Deputies to that General Convention shall be the deputies to represent this Diocese in that Synod.**

*And be it further resolved:* That upon adoption on second reading at the 138th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado in October 2025, this constitutional change will take effect immediately upon passage.

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### Explanation

The focus of the proposed amendment is to change the vote for General Convention deputies to a vote of the whole convention from a current vote by orders. The first rationale for the change is to simplify the voting process. Over 25 years ago, the elections committee implemented rank choice voting to reduce the multiple rounds of voting required to elect 4 deputies and 4 alternates in each order by a concurrent majority of both orders, lay and clergy. However, this method requires a certain degree of complex mathematical calculation at the time of counting ballots that can be challenging to clearly explain and to fairly implement. The result has been unnecessary confusion, time delay and distrust in the election results. Moving to a simple majority of the whole body simplifies the voting process and vote tabulation thus fostering more confidence and less ambiguity in the election results.

The Diocese of Colorado along with much of the Episcopal Church has moved to electronic voting. While electronic voting streamlines the voting process and greatly speeds tabulation of the results, electronic voting does not on its own simplify the problem that arises in the interplay between votes by order, rank choice voting and ranking of deputies in priority from 1 to 4 based upon the number of votes received. A solution such as this amendment is necessary to rectify our current voting challenges. The Election Committee polled several dioceses on their election practices, and we received information from eight dioceses. These eight dioceses elect both clergy and lay deputies with a majority of all votes cast. Approving this amendment would not be a significant deviation from current practice in the broader church.

Secondly, moving to a vote by the whole convention aligns our voting practice with a sense of an equal responsibility for the life and governance of the church by laity and clergy. There is a sense in our church community that clergy carry a greater than their proportional share of responsibility and authority within the governance of the church, and that it is appropriate for laity and clergy to share that responsibility and authority in a new way. Bishop Lucas says this well when she defines the Diocese as "lay-led and clergy-supported."

The four additional changes are relatively simple and straightforward:

1. The first, in Section 1, allows for the possibility that Diocesan Convention or General Convention could be held in any month of the year. This change is consistent with Title I Canon I.4.a of The Canons of The Episcopal Church 2022.
2. The second in Section 1 adds the words "and not under discipline," to ensure that an elected deputy who subsequently was placed under discipline could not represent the diocese at a General Convention.
3. The third, in the new Section 4, makes it clear that the Ecclesiastical Authority has the power to appoint alternate deputies should there be an insufficient number of elected or alternate deputies to fill our deputation to General Convention. This is consistent with Title I Canon I.3.c in The Canons of The Episcopal Church 2022.
4. The fourth change, also in Section 4, would clarify that duly elected deputies would also be deputies to represent the Diocese at Provincial Synod in the year of General Convention.

Fiscal Impact: None.

## Signatures

### Amendment to Article V Diocese of Colorado Constitution and Canons 2024

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Rev. Melissa Adzima  
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Sharon Caulfield, ESQ  
7/29/2024

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Rev. Cynthia Espeseth  
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Date Signed

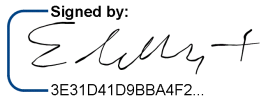
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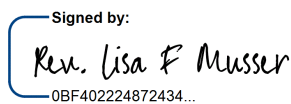
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