

**BYLAWS OF
Christ Church Parish Kent island
Stevensville, Maryland
January, 2006**

General Provisions

1. *The official title of this Parish is: Christ Church Parish, Kent Island.*
2. *The Parish is located at 830 Romancoke Road, Stevensville, MD, 21666 and the principal office is at the same location.*
3. *This Parish, its Rector, Wardens, Vestry and other officers shall at all times accede to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, otherwise known as the Episcopal Church, and to its Constitution and Canons, and to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Easton.*

Article I

Membership

Section 1.

Eligibility

All persons who have been baptized in the name of the Trinity, whether in the Episcopal Church or in another Christian Church, and who regard Christ Church Parish, Kent island as their regular place of worship, are members thereof. Persons 16 years of age or older shall be considered adult members. [1997 CONSTITUTION AND CANONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Canon 17, sec. 1 (a)]

Section 2.

Communicants

All members of this Parish who have received Holy Communion in this church at least three times during the preceding year are considered communicants of this Parish.

Section 3.

Communicants in Good Standing

All adult members of this Parish, who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in sharing the work of the Parish by contribution, donation, and/or personal service for the spread of the Kingdom Of God, shall be considered Communicants in Good Standing.

[CONSTITUTION AND CANONS, Title 17, sec. 3]

Section 4.

Inactive Members

All adult persons now on the Parish Register who shall not report that they have made their Communion at Eastertide, or who shall make no contribution (either financial or working) to the Parish for a period of two years, or whose address is lost or unknown, shall be deemed inactive members, and shall not be reported as communicants: but their names shall not be erased from nor canceled on the Parish Register.

Article II

The Vestry

Section 1.

Eligibility

Every Communicant in Good Standing of the Parish [as defined in the CONSTITUTION AND CANNONS, Title 1, Canon 17, sec. 3] who is 16 years of age or older, and has been a member of the Christ Church Parish for a period of six months or longer, is eligible to serve as a member of the Vestry.

At the discretion of the Rector, and with the approval of the Vestry, up to two Youth Members under the age of 16 years may be appointed to the Vestry.

Section 2.

Membership

The Vestry shall consist of nine elected lay members. Three members shall be elected each year for a term of three years at the Parish Annual Meeting. The Vestry shall include the Rector, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Secretary or Registrar and Treasurer. No member of the Vestry shall be eligible for re-election to the Vestry for a period of one year after the member's term of office has expired. As defined in Article II. Section 1, the Youth Member(s) shall be appointed for a term of one year.

Section 3.

Nomination

The Nominating Committee for the selection of the candidates to the Vestry shall consist of the outgoing Vestry members. Other members of the Parish may be appointed by the Rector to serve on the nominating committee with the approval of the Vestry.

At least two months prior to the Annual Parish Meeting, the nominating committee shall submit for publication, notice in the Sunday bulletins and the Parish newsletter, the number of vacancies to be filled and the eligibility requirements for the position.

The nominating committee shall propose at least as many candidates to serve as Vestry members as there are vacancies to be filled at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The slate of persons so nominated shall be provided to the Vestry at least one month prior to the Parish Annual Meeting, and the Vestry shall immediately provide the congregation with the name and brief biography of each nominee.

No person shall be nominated for Vestry member unless that person has agreed to serve, if elected.

Section 4.

Election

Vestry members shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by the Voting Members of the Parish who are present. (Voting Members are the Communicants in Good Standing as defined under Article I, Section 3 of the Bylaws of Christ Church Parish.)

Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

By secret ballot, Voting Members shall cast a vote for a nominee for each Vestry position to be filled.

Nominees receiving a majority (over 50% of the Voting Members present) of votes for the positions to be filled shall be deemed elected.

Balloting shall continue until such a majority of votes has been reached for each vacant position.

Outgoing members of the Vestry shall act as tellers.

Elected members shall take office as Vestry members, immediately upon election.

Section 5.

Vacancies

If a Vestry member is unable to complete the term to which elected, the remaining Vestry members may, by majority vote at a duly constituted meeting, elect an eligible member of the Parish to fill the unexpired term until the next Annual Meeting. At that time the balance of the term for this vacancy shall be filled using the procedure for the election of the Vestry members. If the member elected to fill the unexpired term completes more than one year of service, that member is not eligible for re-election to the Vestry for a period of one year.

Section 6.

Duties and Powers

Except as provided by the Law of the State of Maryland or of the Constitutions and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Easton, the Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of Christ Church Parish, Kent Island Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relation of the Parish to its clergy. [CONSTITUTIONS AND CANONS, Title I, Canon14, Sec.2]

Section 7.

Personal Liability

No member of Christ Church shall be personally liable for any debt, contract or other obligation of the Parish unless he or she shall, in writing, assume responsibility therefore.

Section 8.

Voting

The voting members of the Vestry shall consist of the elected members. The Rector shall cast a vote only in the event of a tie vote. The Secretary or Registrar, the Treasurer, and any Youth Members shall be non-voting members.

Voting by Proxy shall not be allowed.

Section 9.

Meetings

Regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held on the first Monday following the second Sunday of each month or on another date as agreed to by the Rector and Wardens. Special meetings may be held at any time or location when requested by the Rector or by not less than one-third of the Vestry members.

Notice of time, place, and purpose of any Vestry meeting shall be given to each Vestry member not less than twenty four hours prior to the meeting. Such notice may be provided in person, by acceptable electronic or telephone communication, or written notice postmarked no less than two business days prior to such meeting. No other business shall be transacted at special meetings except as specified in the notice.

Vestry members and Wardens who miss more than two consecutive meetings, without prior notification and acknowledgement by the Rector of their reasons for absence, may be asked to resign.

Section 10.

Quorum and Presiding Officer

The presence of five elected Vestry members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Vestry. Wardens and officers who are not elected members of the Vestry shall not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

The Rector shall preside at all meetings of the Vestry at which he/she is present. In absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden, or in the Senior Warden's absence, the Junior Warden shall preside. If neither The Rector nor the Wardens are available, the Vestry may elect one of the members to preside.

The presiding officer may vote only in case of a tie.

ARTICLE III

Officers

Section 1.

Titles of Officers

The officers of the Parish shall be the Rector, a Senior Warden, a Junior Warden, a Registrar, a Treasurer and such other officers as the Vestry may designate.

Section 2.

Election

The Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Registrar, and Treasurer shall be elected annually by the majority vote at the first meeting of the Vestry, held after the Annual Parish meeting. Officers must be voting members of the Parish and may, but need not be, members of the Vestry.

A vacancy in any office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the Vestry within thirty days of the vacancy.

Section 3.

The Rector

The Rector of the Parish shall be the president and chief executive officer of the Parish and shall perform such duties and have such powers as may be prescribed by the CONSTITUTION AND CANONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH and of the Diocese of Easton. The Rector shall preside at all meetings of the Vestry at which he/she is in attendance. The Rector shall be elected by majority vote of the entire Vestry and, unless otherwise provided in the terms of the call, the Rector shall continue to serve until death, resignation, or until the pastoral relationship with the Parish is severed by mutual consent of the Rector and Vestry, and approved by the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of Easton or otherwise dissolved in accordance with the applicable CONSTITUTION AND CANNONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Section 4.

The Parish Wardens

The Senior Warden shall serve as lay consultant and advisor to the Rector and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Vestry. The Senior Warden shall be senior lay officer of the church.

The Junior Warden shall have general responsibility for the supervision and maintenance of all parish property, real and personal (other securities and cash), and shall perform other such duties as assigned by the Vestry.

Section 5.

The Registrar

The Registrar shall have custody of the corporate seal of the Parish. The Registrar shall record the minutes of all meetings of both Vestry and of the voting members of the Parish in a suitable book which shall be maintained in the Parish office.

The Registrar shall be responsible for maintaining and keeping at least two copies of the Parish Bylaws which shall be open to inspection by any parish member in the Parish office during normal business hours. In addition, the Registrar shall perform other duties as may be assigned by the Vestry.

Section 6.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep the financial records of the Parish and shall have general custody of all Parish funds, securities and other investments. All monies received by the Parish shall be delivered to the Treasurer, or the Treasurer's designate; and all expenses and other payments shall be made by the Treasurer, or under the Treasurer's direction.

The Treasurer shall report the general financial condition of the Parish at the Annual Parish Meeting of the voting members and make other such reports as the Vestry may request.

Assistant Treasurer

The Vestry may, at its discretion, elect one or more Assistant Treasurers to perform such duties of the Treasurer as the Treasurer and/or the Vestry may direct.

Article IV

Committees

Section 1.

Creation of Committees

The Vestry may, by resolution, designate regular and special committees for such purposes as may be indicated by the resolution. Committee appointments shall be made by the Rector with the advice and consent of the Vestry, by the Vestry, or be designated to another person or persons, by the resolution of the Vestry.

Section 2.

Finance Committee

The Vestry, by resolution, shall appoint and maintain a standing, financial advisory committee to assist the Treasurer, oversee financial expenditures, develop annual budgets for presentation to the Vestry, and provide oversight to all financial activities of the Parish.

Article V

Fiscal Matters

Section 1.

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Parish shall be the calendar year. CONSTITUTIONS AND CANONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH: Title I, Canon 7, sec. 1 (8)

Section 2.

Limitations of Expenditures

Any expenditure in excess of five hundred dollars, not provided for in the current annual operating budget of the Parish, must be decided upon by vote of the Vestry, after receiving the review and recommendation of the Finance Committee.

Section 3.

Audit

The financial books and records of the Parish shall be audited by a certified public accountant chosen by the Vestry or by three or more persons recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the Vestry, Such audits shall be performed, at year end, at the direction of the Vestry and/or Rector, but should occur no less than bi-annually. Results of this audit are to be presented at the Vestry meeting prior to the next Annual Parish Meeting and at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Section 4.

Fidelity Bond

The Treasurer and other officers, employees, and other persons handling Parish funds, as directed by the Vestry, shall be bonded in such amount and by the surety companies as the Vestry may determine.

Article VI

Meetings of the Congregation

Section 1.

Time and Purpose of Annual Meeting

There shall be an annual meeting of the congregation held on a Sunday between the second Sunday of January and the second Sunday of February, advance written notice of which shall be provided to the congregation no less than two weeks prior to the scheduled date.

The annual meeting shall be for the purpose of presenting the Annual Parish Report, election of Vestry members, election of lay delegates to the Convention of the Diocese of Easton, and amendment or adoption of Parish Bylaws if applicable.

The number of lay delegates to convention shall conform to the requirements set by Diocesan Canon.

The Rector of the Parish, or in his/her absence, the Senior Warden shall preside.

Section 2.

Voter Qualification

Voting members, as defined in Article II, sec. 4, are eligible to vote in congregational meetings and to stand for election as Vestry members, Wardens, and delegates to Diocesan convention.

Eligible voters working in the parish nursery, kitchen, etc., during the meeting shall be deemed present for purposes of elections.
Votes by proxy are not allowed.

Section 3.

Requirements for Election or Adoption

A simple majority of the eligible voters present shall be necessary for an election or the adoption of any matter to be voted upon.

Section 4.

Balloting

Parish elections shall be written by ballot, except in the event that only one person be nominated for an office, in which case, the secretary for the meeting, upon proper motion, duly carried, shall cast a unanimous vote for such nominee. Ballots shall be counted by at least three tellers who are eligible voters but are not standing for election to any the offices being voted upon.

The electoral process for Vestry members and delegates to Diocesan convention is described in Article II, sec. 4.

Section 5.

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Rector, Senior Warden, a majority of the members of the vestry, or by written petition of at least twenty five eligible voters of the Parish, provided that two weeks written notice is given to the congregation. Only business specified in the call of the meeting may be transacted during this special meeting of the congregation.

Article VII

Use of Parish Buildings and Services of the Church

Section 1.

Rector's Responsibility

The Rector of the Parish has control of and is responsible for the public worship of the Church, the music, and the furnishings and appointments of the Church.

Section 2.

Altar Guild (Decorations)

Decorations of the Church for festival occasions, weddings, funerals, and for all other occasions shall be under the supervision of the Altar Guild with the approval of the Rector.

Section 3.

Non-Parish Activities

Other than for Parish activities, no person or group may use the Parish facilities without the consent of the Rector, ratified by the Vestry, and scheduled through the Parish office. Such persons or groups must be provided and comply with the Application for Building Use provided by the Parish office.

Fees may be charged for the use of Parish property.

Article VIII

Ratification, Revision and Amendment of Bylaws

Section 1.

Superseding Previous bylaws

Upon ratification of these bylaws by the Vestry and by a majority of qualified voters at the Annual Parish Meeting, or at a special meeting called for the purpose of proposing ratification, these bylaws shall supersede all other ordinances, resolutions, and bylaws of the Rector, Wardens and Vestry of Christ Church Parish heretofore enacted.

Section 2.

Distribution

Copies of these bylaws shall be made available to the congregation at least seven days prior to the meeting at which they will be submitted for approval.

Section 3.

Vestry Resolutions

Procedures and resolutions established by the Vestry shall be in conformance with these bylaws.

Section 4.

Amendment and Revisions

These bylaws may be altered, amended, repealed, or added to by a majority vote of qualified voters present at an annual Parish meeting or special meeting called for the purpose of bylaw amendment. Written notice of any such changes shall be made available to the congregation at least seven days prior to such meeting.