

The Anglican Church of  
Via Apostolica

# CONSTITUTION

Approved \_\_\_\_\_, 202\_

**The Constitution of  
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF VIA APOSTOLICA, a Missionary District  
of the Province of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA)**

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**ARTICLE 1**

***ARTICLE 1.1 OUR FAITH***

As the Anglican Church of Via Apostolica (subsequently referred to in this document as Via), being a part of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of Christ, we believe and confess Jesus Christ to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no one comes to the Father but by Him. Therefore, we identify the following seven elements as characteristic of the Anglican Way, and essential for membership:

- a) We confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, containing all things necessary for salvation, and to be the final authority and unchangeable standard for Christian faith and life.
- b) We confess Baptism and the Supper of the Lord to be Sacraments ordained by Christ Himself in the Gospel, and thus to be ministered with unfailing use of His words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.
- c) We confess the godly historic Episcopate as an inherent part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as integral to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ.
- d) We confess as proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture the historic faith of the undivided church as declared in the three Catholic Creeds: the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian.
- e) Concerning the seven Councils of the undivided Church, we affirm the teaching of the first four Councils and the Christological clarifications of the fifth, sixth and seventh Councils, in so far as they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures.
- f) We receive The Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662, together with the Ordinal attached to the same, as a standard for Anglican doctrine and discipline, and, with the Books which preceded it, as the standard for the Anglican tradition of worship.
- g) We receive the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion of 1571, taken in their literal and grammatical sense, as expressing the Anglican response to certain doctrinal issues controverted at that time, and as expressing fundamental principles of authentic Anglican belief.
- h) In all these things, Via is determined by the help of God to hold and maintain, as the Anglican Way has received them, the doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ and to transmit the same, unimpaired, to our posterity. We seek to be and remain in full communion with all Anglican Churches, Dioceses and Provinces that hold and maintain the Historic Faith, Doctrine, Sacraments and Discipline of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

***ARTICLE 1.2 OUR PURPOSES***

- a) To protect and improve the capacity of congregations in Via by providing expertise on planning, structuring, and improving charitable programs to better address the needs of congregants and their communities.
- b) To advance religion to adherents of the faith or the public by establishing new congregations that will preach and teach the religious tenets, doctrines, observances, sacraments, and culture associated with the Christian Faith.

- c) To advance religion to adherents of the faith or the public by establishing prayer centres that will teach methods of prayer and worship associated with the Christian Faith.
- d) To receive gifts, bequests, trusts, funds, and property, either beneficially or as a trustee or agent, to hold, invest, develop, manage, administer, and distribute such funds and property for the objects, principle purposes and benefit of Via and its Parish Members, or to transfer same to such other organizations as are “qualified donees” under the provision of the Income Tax Act (or Act appropriate to where the parish/church is located), for the purposes and activities consistent with the objects and purposes of Via and authorized under the provisions of the Income Tax Act (or Act appropriate to where the parish/church is located);
- e) To advance the Christian faith in society through religious activities and humanitarian efforts within Canada and abroad, by providing relief from poverty by providing care for basic physical, emotional and spiritual needs, including providing funds and other resources to “qualified donees” under the provision of the Income Tax Act (or Act appropriate to where the parish/church is located), for the purposes and activities consistent with the objects and purposes of Via Apostolica and authorized under the provisions of the Income Tax Act (or Act appropriate to where the parish/church is located);
- f) to conduct any and all activities and exercise any and all such powers as are necessary for the achievement and furtherance of the objects (Letters Patent) of Via.

## **ARTICLE 2**

The operations of Via may be carried on throughout Canada as well as internationally.

## **ARTICLE 3**

The place where the head office of Via is to be situated is in the Province of Alberta, Canada.

## **ARTICLE 4**

Upon the winding-up or dissolution of Via, the funds and property remaining after the payment of all costs, charges, and expenses properly incurred in the winding-up or dissolution, including the remuneration of a liquidator, payment of any arrears of salaries or wages to employees of Via and payment of any debts, shall be distributed to such registered charities or “qualified donees”, as defined in the Income Tax Act of Canada, as shall be designated by the Board of Directors of Via (hereinafter called the “District Council”). Any of such funds or property which had originally been received for specific purposes shall, wherever possible, be distributed to “qualified donees” or charities registered under the provisions of the Income Tax Act (or Act appropriate to where the parish/church is located) that are carrying on work of a similar nature to those specific purposes.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### ***ARTICLE 5.1 Group Members***

Via shall have three groups of members (“Members”) as follows:

a) Group A Member is limited to the Bishop of Via (hereinafter referred to as Bishop) as defined under the bylaws of Via (hereinafter referred to as the Canons)

b) Group B Members shall consist of:

District Council

c) Group C Members shall consist of:

District Assembly

**ARTICLE 5.2 Voting**

Unless otherwise specified in the Canons of Via, for all matters to be voted on by Members, the Group A Member, Group B Members and Group C Members shall vote together as a class and a matter is only approved if passed by the majority of each class present. Each member under Group A Member, Group B Members, and Group C Members shall be entitled to one vote per Member.

**ARTICLE 5.3 Voting Other**

The Canons may specify the majority that is required for different groups of members for approval of certain matters.

**ARTICLE 5.4 When a Members Ceases to be a Member of Via**

A Member will cease to be a member of Via upon the occurrence of one of the following:

- a) the Member terminates its membership by written notice to the District Council;
- b) the death of the Member;
- c) removal or termination of a Member of Via by the Bishop and the District Council, which shall be confirmed by a resolution passed at a District Assembly as specified in the Canons;
- d) a Group A Member who has ceased to be in the office of the Bishop pursuant to the relevant provisions in the canons;
- e) a Group B Member who has ceased to meet the definition of a Group B Member as set out in Article 5.1(b);
- f) a Group C Member who has ceased to meet the definition of a Group C Member as set out in Article 5.1(c).

**ARTICLE 6**

Article 1.1 shall not be amended unless such an amendment is approved unanimously by all Members at a Via Assembly. Amendments to any other provision of this constitution shall be made in accordance with Title I, Canon 2 of the Canons.

The minimum number of directors on the District Council shall be six (6) and the maximum number of directors shall be twelve (12).

Two (2) directors shall be elected by the Group A Member alone. All remaining candidates shall be presented by Group Member A and elected by Group B and Group C Members voting together, and the candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to fill the other vacancies available to be filled. See Canon 3.

Except for two directors who are appointed by the Group A Member, and the Bishop Co-Adjutor (if there is one), the term of each director shall be for two (2) years and a director may be re-elected for two (2) additional terms of two (2) years each, after which the director shall retire for at least one (1) year.

The first Via Council elected after the constitution is adopted will determine amongst themselves 50% of the members to be up for re-election after one (1) year to establish a staggering of terms.

The Bishop may choose to invite others to the Via Council meetings for advice and support as non voting members.

#### **ARTICLE 7**

The Canons shall be those filed with the application for continuance until repealed, amended, altered or added to.

#### **ARTICLE 8**

Via is to carry on its operations without pecuniary gain of its members and any profits or other accretions to Via are to be used in promoting its objectives.

**THE CANONS OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF VIA APOSTOLICA,  
A MISSIONARY DISTRICT OF  
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA**

***Preamble***

Pursuant to the Constitution of the Anglican Church in North America (hereinafter referred to as “the Province”) and the Canons thereof (“Provincial Canons”); and the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Via Apostolica a Missionary District (hereinafter referred to as Via), Via, acting in Assembly, hereby adopts these Canons for the purpose of establishing and maintaining its own governance.

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***DEFINITIONS***

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**Bishop**

- Refers to the man who has received Episcopal orders and who provides oversight for the Anglican Church of Via Apostolica, a Missionary District, by protecting the doctrine, discipline and unity of the Church. He is also responsible for giving leadership to the District Council and District Assembly.

**Bishop Co-Adjutor**

- The elected successor of the Bishop.

**Bishop’s Council**

- A group of advisors selected by the Bishop.

**Canon to the Ordinary**

- Refers to a person that has been appointed to such duties and responsibilities as delegated to them by the Bishop.

**Cathedral**

- Refers to a congregation with a local responsibility as a Parish, and Via-wide responsibilities as set by the Bishop. The Cathedral is also the principal church of Via, with which the Bishop is domiciled.

**Clergy**

- Anyone who holds the office of deacon, priest or bishop and is licensed as so in Via.

**Congregation**

- A group of any size that has assembled for public worship, is recognized by Via and is overseen by a member of the clergy.

**Dean of the Cathedral**

- Refers to a priest who is Rector of the Cathedral Church.

**Deacon**

- Refers to a man who has been made a Deacon or received as a Deacon and licensed as such by the Bishop pursuant to these Canons.

**Deaconess**

- Refers to a woman who has been made a deaconess and has been appointed by the Bishop to assist in the ministry of a Parish, Congregation or Mission.

#### **Holy Order(s)**

- Refers to the threefold ministerial offices of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon as described in Holy Scripture. The men ordained to this office are to live an ordered way of life under the episcopal authority of the Bishop of Via.

#### **House of Prayer**

- Refers to a type of Mission that has a primary focus of training people into a rule of life regarding prayer. To be a House of Prayer in Via, you must be accepted by the Bishop and District Council as such. Though not necessarily a congregation, houses of prayer may start congregations from them, following the charge of the Bishop and approval of the District Council.

#### **Laity**

- Refers to men and/or women who have been baptized into the Christian faith, are members of local congregations, and have not entered into Holy Orders.

#### **Mission**

- Refers to a ministry or project of Via that is recognized and approved by the Bishop.

#### **Parish**

- Refers to one or more congregations that meets for public worship in word and sacrament, is recognized as a Parish by Via, is overseen by a priest, is financially self-sustaining, is a registered incorporation and charity, and is governed by a local board of directors.

#### **Parish Council**

- Refers to the governing body, or local board of directors for a parish or cathedral.

#### **Priest (Presbyter)**

- Refers to a man who has been made a Priest or received as a Priest, and licensed as such by the Bishop pursuant to these Canons.

#### **Province**

- Refers to the Anglican Church in North America.

#### **Rector**

- Refers to a Priest designated by the Bishop and received by the local board of directors in a manner that is in line with their constitution, as the Senior leader of a Parish.

#### **Religious Order(s)**

- Refers to an ordered way of life and ministry under the episcopal authority of the Bishop of Via.

#### **Retired Bishop**

- Refers to a Bishop who has retired from the active episcopal ministry of oversight, but still carries episcopal orders of the Church and as such may function in those episcopal orders under the guidance of the Bishop of Via.

#### **Registrar**

- Maintains the records of Via and issues certifications upon the direction of the Bishop and/or District Council.

#### **Secretary**

- Maintains the records of the meetings of the District Council and District Assembly.

#### **Suffragan Bishop**

- Refers to a man who has been ordained to the office of bishop and has been appointed to help the Bishop of Via in episcopal matters.

#### **Treasurer**

- Maintains Via's financial records.

#### **Vicar**

- Refers to a priest designated by the Bishop to establish or provide senior leadership of a congregation that has yet to meet all requirements to be considered a Parish.

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## TITLE 1

### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

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#### *Canon 1*

##### *Structure and Authority*

Via comprises Anglican congregations across Canada and internationally.

1. The congregation is the fundamental unit of mission.
2. Congregations relate directly to the Bishop through their local Board, and the Rector or Vicar.
3. The Ecclesiastical Authority of Via shall be vested in the Bishop, and, in the absence of the Bishop, in the District Council as modelled by Article IV, Paragraph 2 of the Provincial Constitution, Title I, Canon 5, Section 1 and 3 of the Provincial Canons, Article III of the District Constitution and by these canons.
4. Via's Constitution and these Canons recognizes the right of each member congregation to establish and maintain its own governance not inconsistent with the provisions of the Provincial and Via's Constitutions and Canons.
5. The District Council has legislative, executive, and judicial authority of Via.
6. The District Assembly has authority to further the mission of Via through the approval of new initiatives for mission, welcome new congregations, reviewing Via's budget, and when required to amend the constitution, to adopt or amend canons, and to approve other matters specified by the Canons.

#### *Canon 2*

##### *Of the District Assembly*

###### **Section 1. Powers and Duties**

The District Assembly has the power to adopt and amend the Via Constitution and Canons and to receive the District Council's admissions of Congregations to Via. It shall also review the vision and values of Via and review Via's budget.

###### **Section 2. Membership**

All clergy, and two (2) Lay representatives from each congregation who agree with the lay representative guidelines, chosen in a manner deemed appropriate by each congregation in Via shall meet annually for furtherance of common mission. Based on the Average Sunday Attendance, a congregation may send an additional lay representative for every 50 members after the first 50.

### **Section 3. Meeting of the District Assembly**

- a) The District Assembly shall meet regularly once a year at a date set by the Bishop after consulting with the District Council.
- b) Special meetings may be called by the Bishop, after consulting with the District Council.

## ***Canon 3***

### ***Of the District Council***

#### **Section 1. Membership**

The Bishop is an ongoing member of the District Council. Additionally, the two district council members chosen by the Bishop, shall not be subject to term limits but may be removed by the Bishop at any time. If there is a Bishop Co-Adjutor in place, this individual will also be an ongoing member.

In addition, a minimum of three additional lay members, who are members of a Via Congregation, will be submitted by the Bishop to and voted in by the District Assembly. Additional members may consist of clergy or laity with no more than fifty (50) percent of the total District Council membership being clergy, inclusive of the Bishop, the Bishop Co-Adjutor (if there is one), and the two members chosen by the Bishop. Seventy-five (75%) of the voting members of the District Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

#### **Section 2. Powers and Duties**

Except as otherwise provided in the Canons and Constitutions of Via, the District Council shall have the following powers and duties:

- a) Serve as council of advice to the Bishop;
- b) Function as the Legal Board of Directors of Via;
- c) Serve as the Ecclesiastical Authority of Via in the absence of the Bishop;
- d) Consider with the Bishop for the approval of new Congregations herein by Title 1, Canon 6;
- e) Unless and until an Ecclesiastical Trial Court of Via is formed, the District Council shall serve as the Ecclesiastical Trial Court but may also appoint a Trial Court, task force or committee (composed of members of the District Council or other communicants in good standing in Via) to which it may delegate this responsibility.

## ***Canon 4***

### ***Officers of Via***

#### **Section 1. The Bishop**

The Bishop shall serve as the Ecclesiastical Authority of Via and the Presiding Officer of the District Council and the District Assembly with the authority and responsibility set forth in this Canon and these additional expressed authorities set forth in the Constitution and Canons of the Province and Via.

The Bishop shall be responsible for the hiring and firing of all District Staff, should there be additional staff necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of Via as outlined in ARTICLE 1.2 of the Constitution.

### **Section 2. The Bishop Co-Adjutor**

The Bishop and District Council may create the position of Bishop Co-Adjutor, who is intended to succeed the Bishop upon the Bishop's retirement, death or removal. The Bishop Co-Adjutor shall be chosen in accordance with the provisions of Canon 5 of the Via Canons. The Bishop shall prescribe the duties and responsibilities of the Bishop Co-Adjutor.

### **Section 3. The Secretary and Registrar**

The Secretary and Registrar of the District, appointed by the Bishop with the advice of the District Council, shall be a communicant in good standing. He or she shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the District Council and of the District Assembly and shall submit such reports as the Bishop may request. The Bishop may appoint assistant secretaries as necessary. He or she shall be a custodian of the official records of Via and shall issue such certifications as may be directed by the Bishop or the District Council.

### **Section 4. The Treasurer**

The Treasurer of Via, appointed by the District Council, shall be a communicant in good standing. He or she shall be the custodian for all funds of Via. The treasurer shall prepare the annual budget and shall file an annual report to the District Assembly on the financial status of Via, including reports of all accounts for all funds under his or her custody of control, profit, and loss statements, and balance sheets. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for the preparation of such periodic financial reports as may be required by the District Council.

### **Section 5. Terms of Office and Diocesan Assembly Representation**

The Secretary/Registrar, and the Treasurer shall serve at the pleasure of the District Council. All Officers shall serve as members *ex officio* of the District Assembly if not chosen as a Lay representative in their congregation.

## ***Canon 5***

### ***Selection of a Bishop***

#### **Section 1. Criteria for Selecting a Bishop**

A Bishop is called by God and the Church to be a shepherd who feeds the flock entrusted to his care. A Bishop is an overseer of the flock and as such is called to propagate, to teach, and to uphold and defend the Faith and Order of the Church, willingly and as God directs. He must not be greedy for money but be eager to serve, not lording the authority of his office or position over those entrusted to his care. He

must be a humble, wholesome example to the entire flock of Christ. By the tradition of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, Bishops are consecrated for the whole Church and are successors of the Apostles through the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them. They are chief missionaries and chief pastors, guardians and teachers of doctrine, and administrators of godly discipline and governance.

To be a suitable candidate for Bishop a person must:

- Be a man of prayer and strong faith;
- Be pious, have exemplary morals and exhibit Godly character;
- Have a zeal for souls;
- Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit;
- Possess the knowledge and gifts that equip him to fulfill the office;
- Be held in high esteem by the faithful;
- Be a male Presbyter at least 35 years old;
- Have significant leadership and governance experience and wisdom in parish life;
- Have demonstrated the ability to lead and grow the Church.
- Have suitable theological education

## **Section 2. The Process for Selecting a Bishop**

The initial process for selecting a bishop shall be as follows:

- The Dean of the Cathedral and/or the Canon to the Ordinary, with the help of the District Council will engage all congregations to participate in a process of prayer, fasting and discernment leading to the selection of candidates for the office of Bishop.
- All should be educated on both the role of the Bishop and the selection process.
- After prayer and discussion, the District Council shall reach consensus on the names of at least two individuals to be forwarded, in a single sealed envelope, to the College of Bishops. That envelope also shall contain any reflections that the group as a whole deems appropriate for the bishops' consideration.
- The selection process for a successor shall be the same as the process just described, except that the District Council shall have the option of forwarding the name of a single individual to the College of Bishops.
- In the event that all candidates are rejected by the College of Bishops, the Bishop or the District Council shall promptly convene to discern one or more additional candidates to be recommended to the College of Bishops for their consent.
- A Bishop Coadjutor may be selected according to this same process, subject to the provisions of the Provincial and District Constitution and Canons.

### ***Canon 6***

#### ***Vacancy in the Office of the Bishop***

### **Section 1. Death, Retirement or Removal of the Bishop**

Upon the death, retirement or removal of the Bishop, if there is no Bishop Co-Adjutor, the District Council shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of Via and shall elect either the Dean of the Cathedral, or the

Canon to the Ordinary to preside. The Bishop's Council may also request the College of Bishops to appoint an Acting Bishop to be in charge of Via until a Bishop can be elected.

### **Section 2. Disability or Impermissible Absence of the Bishop**

If the District Council should determine upon careful deliberation that the Bishop is under a disability or has absented himself without permission from or consultation with the District Council for more than two months, it may with the consent of the Archbishop declare the Office of the Bishop vacant. In such a case, the Bishop Co-Adjutor, if there is one, shall take charge until the District Council, with the consent of the Archbishop, declares the Bishop restored. If there is no Bishop Co-Adjutor, the District Council shall serve as the Ecclesiastical Authority of Via until the District Council with the consent of the Archbishop declares the Bishop to be restored.

### **Section 3. Succession in Case of Death, Retirement, or Removal of the Bishop**

A Bishop Co-Adjutor shall become the District Bishop upon the death, retirement, or removal of the current District Bishop.

## ***Canon 7***

### ***Committees of the District***

#### **Section 1. The Bishop's Council**

The Bishop may appoint a group of advisors which shall be called the Bishop's Council.

#### **Section 2. Other Committees**

The District Council may appoint other Committees as necessary

## ***Canon 8***

### ***Of Congregations and Parishes***

Any group of the faithful may seek to affiliate as a Congregation with Via. A Congregation shall normally consist of a group of the faithful meeting together regularly for worship. A Parish may consist of one of more Congregations united for common mission, led by a Rector, is financially self-sufficient, and has a local board overseeing them.

Part of agreeing to affiliate with Via is the commitment to support the purposes of Via by following the biblical principle of tithing. This means that all approved Congregations and Parishes are committed to Via's purposes and will give 10% of their general income to seeing those purposes met. Additionally, the Rector or Vicar of approved congregation will give a tithe as support for Via's purposes. No other members of the congregation will be required to do so.

#### **Section 1. Application Procedure**

- a) Any group of faithful seeking to affiliate as a Congregation with Via, whether a new congregation from within or an established congregation from without Via, shall submit its request to the Canon of the Ordinary to be confirmed or denied by the Bishop after consulting with the District Council. All new congregations shall be received at the next District Assembly. A congregation

joining Via shall agree in writing to become subject to the Constitution and the Canons of the Province and of Via, and will make the necessary changes to their local constitution and canons within 12 months of the written agreement.

- b) A Congregation attached to another District, Diocese or Cluster of the Province, desiring to become a member of Via, shall follow the procedure outlined in Section 1a of this Canon. The Congregation must receive the consent of the Bishop of the jurisdiction to which it has been attached.

## **Section 2. Establishing New Congregations**

Via encourages the establishment of new congregations:

- a) A Priest or a Deacon may be charged to plant a new Congregation and then shall follow the procedure outlined above in Section 1a of this Canon to be recognized by Via.
- b) A layperson may lead in the establishment of a new mission under the guidance of the Canon to the Ordinary, a local Rector, Vicar or the Bishop, and then may follow the procedure outlined above in Section 1a of this Canon when the mission is ready to be registered as a congregation.

## **Section 3. Appointment of a Rector or Vicar to an Existing Congregation**

- a) A Congregation's governing body or other duly constituted team selected by the Congregation for such purpose, may select the Rector or Vicar of a Congregation when a need arises.
- b) A prayerful process shall be undertaken in consultation with the Bishop and Canon to the Ordinary in the search and calling of a Vicar or Rector to a Congregation.
- c) Before extending an offer to a candidate, the Congregation's governing body must obtain the approval of the Bishop.
- d) Once the Rector has been chosen, the Bishop will be called to officially install the new Presbyter as Rector of the local parish.

## **Section 4. Governance, Organization, and Business Affairs of a Congregation or Parish**

Each Parish shall have a governing body, hereafter in this document referred to as the Parish Council.

- a) The Rector shall chair the Parish Council with members and officers chosen by the Congregation or Parish under rules that Congregations and Parishes may establish for that purpose. In addition to the Rector, a Congregation may have such other officers as allowed by its governing documents.
- b) The Parish Council shall be responsible for the financial oversight of the Congregation or Parish in accordance with Provincial and District Constitutions and Canons, and may or may not task an additional Committee to be responsible for preparation of the annual budget.
- c) Each Congregation or Parish shall provide an annual report to the Bishop and District Council in a format provided to them by the Bishop or District Council that may include such information as finances, membership, etc.
- d) Congregations or Parishes with multiple Congregations shall develop documents that articulate their structure for governance and organization, and shall comply with the laws of the jurisdiction where they are located.
- e) Every member of the Parish Councils shall affirm the following declaration: *"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God and to contain all things*

*necessary for salvation and I do yield my hearty consent to the doctrines, discipline, and worship of Christ as the Anglican Church of Via Apostolica, and the Anglican Church in North America has received them. I promise that I will faithfully lead and serve as I am called as a member of this local congregation to the best of my ability.”*

## **Section 5. The Laity and Membership**

The people of God are the chief agents of the mission of the Church to extend the Kingdom of God by presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that people will come to put their trust in God through Him, know Him as Savior, and serve Him as Lord in fellowship of the Church. The effective ministry of the Church is the responsibility of the Laity no less than it is the responsibility of the Bishop and the Presbyters and the Deacons. It is incumbent for every Lay member of the Church to become an effective minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one who is spiritually qualified, gifted, called, and mature in the faith.

- a) Congregations and/or Parishes are expected to equip the ministry of the Laity.
- b) Congregations may establish their own discipleship process designed to prepare people for ministry and help members become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who are fully incorporated into the Body of Christ. The discipleship process is expected to include instruction of all candidates for membership in the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as the Church has received them.

## **Canon 9**

### ***The Rector and the Pastoral Relationship***

#### **Section 1. The Pastoral Relationship**

A prayerful process of discernment, including due diligence, shall be undertaken in the calling of a Rector to a Parish. The Parish Council (board of directors) or designated search committee shall obtain the approval of the Bishop before extending an offer to a candidate.

#### **Section 2. Other Clergy**

The hiring of all clergy will be done by the Rector of the local Parish. Even if the newly hired member of clergy is of the same office as the Rector (i.e., a presbyter), the newly hired clergy must be in submission to the Rector's vision for the Parish. Equality of office, does not mean equality of authority in local parish matters.

If, for any reason the Rector must terminate the employment of another other member of the clergy from his staff, the Rector must first consult with the bishop before notice of termination is issued.

#### **Section 3. Restrictions upon the Rector's Resignation or Removal**

Except for reason of age or disability, a Rector may not resign as Rector without giving the remainder of the Parish Council such notice as it may require. A Rector may not be removed against his will except as hereinafter provided or as provided in Section 5 of this Canon.

#### **Section 4. Procedure When Pastoral Relationship is Imperiled or Hindered**

Whenever a Rector or a majority of the Parish Council believes the pastoral relationship between the Rector and the Parish to be imperiled or hindered by reasons of dissension, either or both may present the matter to the Bishop.

- a) Upon notification of such imperilment or hindrance, the Bishop shall promptly seek reconciliation by whatever means he believes appropriate. The Bishop, or his appointee, shall hold conferences with the Rector and the remainder of the Parish Council, who shall participate cooperatively in the process. The Bishop may issue such interim recommendations appropriate to the cause before issuing final judgment. Prior to issuing final judgment, the Bishop shall consult with the District Council and may also retain legal counsel should he choose to.
- b) The Bishop shall make the final judgment after praying over the matter and taking into consideration the recommendations of the Parish's Parish Council and consulting with the District Council. The recommendations may include a leave of absence with pay if appropriate for the Rector, a continuation of the pastoral relationship on a provisional basis, or dissolution of the pastoral relationship.
- c) If the relationship is to be dissolved, the terms of judgment may include terms and conditions for compliance by both parties and may include an equitable financial settlement that is just and compassionate if appropriate. The Rector or the remainder of the Parish's governing body may petition the Bishop to review and/or modify the financial terms of the judgment if any. The Bishop shall in all cases render pastoral support to the Rector.
- d) If for any reason the Rector shall refuse to comply with the judgment of the Bishop, the Bishop may suspend the Rector from the exercise of the ministry of a Presbyter until he complies with the judgement.

#### **Section 5. Removal of the Rector**

A Parish may request the removal of the Rector from his office, for cause, with the consent of the Bishop after showing that cause for removal exists. If the Parish Council desires the Bishop to remove the Rector for cause, it shall consult with the Bishop prior to any action in the circumstances. As used in the Canon, the term "cause" shall mean the Rector has been found to be incapable of fulfilling his job description, has been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, or the Parish Council has been presented with evidence that it deems substantial and credible of any of the following:

- a) the commission of a crime involving moral turpitude;
- b) habitual insobriety or drug addiction;
- c) dishonest or fraudulent conduct;
- d) embezzlement, theft or intentional destruction of property; or
- e) sexual misconduct.

### ***Canon 10***

#### ***Congregation, Parish, Cathedral, and District Property***

##### **Section 1. No District or Via Trust in Congregational, Parish or Cathedral Property**

All real and personal property owned by or held for the benefit of a Congregation, Parish or Cathedral shall belong to that Congregation, Parish or Cathedral exclusively, and it shall be free of any trust or other claims by Via or the Province.

**Section 2. Via Empowered to Own Its Own Property**

Via may own its own property to be held in whatever form determined by the District Council, and any such property shall be free of any claim of trust or ownership by the Province.

**Canon 11**

***Financial Affairs of Congregations and Via***

The Office of the Bishop in consultation with the District Council shall develop and maintain a suitable Customary on Guidelines for Financial Affairs of Congregations and Via consistent with the teaching of Holy Scripture, the Constitution and Canons of Via, and the Constitution and Canons of the Province.

**Canon 12**

***Cathedral Church of Via***

Via Apostolica Church Lethbridge, Alberta, shall be the sole and permanent Cathedral of The Anglican Church of Via Apostolica, a Missionary District of the Anglican Church of North America. The Bishop shall be resident at the Cathedral, from which his ministry will flow. The Bishop shall appoint, with the Parish Council, a Dean of the Cathedral who will exercise all the duties of the office of Rector that he does not delegate to one or more individuals of his choosing.

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**TITLE II**

**WORSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS**

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**Canon 1**

***Conformity with Provincial Canons***

Worship and the Administration of the Sacraments in Via shall be in conformity with Title II of the Provincial Canons and Title II of these Via Canons.

**Canon 2**

***Of Authorized Translations of the Bible***

The Lessons used in service of public worship shall be read from translations of the Holy Scripture as authorized by the Bishop of Via.

**Canon 3**

### ***Of Authorized Forms of Public Worship and Authorized Editions of the Book of Common Prayer***

It is the prerogative of the Bishop, in consultation with the Bishop's Council to determine that the forms used in Public Worship and the Administration of the Sacraments do not contradict the Anglican Faith and Order and that nothing is established that is contrary to the Word of God as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

#### ***Canon 4***

##### ***Of Christian Marriage***

Via affirms our Lord's teaching that the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is in its nature a union lifelong and permanent of one man and one woman. Christian marriage in Via shall be in conformity with Title II, Canon 7 of the Provincial Canons. The Bishop, in consultation with the Bishop's Council shall prescribe:

- 1) Minimum required preparation for marriage; and
- 2) Requirements for a person who has received a civil divorce to be married in the Church.

#### ***Canon 5***

##### ***Of Standards of Morality and Ethics***

###### **Section 1. Exemplary Style of Life**

Clergy and Laity of Via are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality. This is a condition of being appointed to or remaining in a position of office or leadership.

###### **Section 2. Sanctity of Marriage**

In view of the teaching of Holy Scripture, the Lambeth Conference 1998, and the Jerusalem Declaration, Via upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those not called to marriage and cannot legitimize or bless same-sex unions or ordain persons who engage in homosexual behaviour. Sexual intercourse should take place only between a man and a woman who are married to each other.

For this reason, without Bishop's approval, the clergy who are canonical residents in Via are not to perform Marriage ceremonies for anyone outside of the membership of Via approved Congregations.

###### **Section 3. Sanctity of Life**

God, and not man, is the creator of human life. The unjustified taking of life is sinful. Therefore, all Clergy and Laity are called to promote and respect the sanctity of every human life from conception to natural death.

###### **Section 4. Pastoral Ministry**

Clergy and Laity are called upon to show Christ-like compassion to those who have fallen into sin, encouraging them to repent and receive forgiveness, and offering the ministry of healing to all who suffer physically or emotionally as a result of each sin.

## TITLE III

### OF MINISTERS, THEIR RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, ORDINATION, OFFICE, PRACTICE, AND TRANSFER

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#### *Canon I*

##### *Of Holy Orders in this District*

The Congregation and or Parish in which an aspirant for Holy Orders is a member, shall engage in the discernment of aspirants for Ordination under the oversight of the Bishop, the District Council, and Canon to the Ordinary in Via.

##### **Section 1. Threefold Office of Ministry as Described in Scripture**

Via affirms what Anglicanism has always held in common, namely the normality and sufficiency of the threefold ministerial offices of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon as described in Holy Scripture. Persons shall be admitted to the office of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon in this Church and allowed to exercise any of these office, who have been called, examined, and ordained according to an authorized ordinal of this Church or ordained in some church whose orders are recognized and accepted in this Church.

##### **Section 2. Ministerial Offices of Deacon, Priest, and Bishop Affirmation**

Via affirms the scriptural teaching and historical tradition of the Church that the Christian ministerial office of deacon (διάκονος), of priest (presbyter – πρεσβύτερος) and bishop (ἐπίσκοπος) are male (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

##### **Section 3. Canonical Obedience**

Any person who has received authority to be a Presbyter or Deacon within Via owes canonical obedience in all things lawful and honest to the Bishop having jurisdiction, and the Bishop of Via owes canonical obedience in all things lawful and honest to the Archbishop of the Province.

##### **Section 4. Formulating Requirements Consistent with Scripture**

The Canon to the Ordinary shall assist and advise the Bishop in formulating the needs and requirements for the present and future ministry in Via, regarding the manner of selection of person for ministry, and regarding the guidance of all postulants and candidates for ordination to Holy Orders. The recruitment, preparation, ordination, office, practice, and transfer of Ministers, shall be consistent with the teaching of Holy Scripture (especially, but not limited to, 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:17; and Titus 1:6-9), the Constitution of Via, and the Constitution and Canons of the Province.

##### **Section 5. Qualifications in Provincial Constitution and Canons**

The qualifications for persons seeking ordination into Holy Orders in Via shall, except as provided herein, conform to the standards of ordination for clergy that have already been established in the Constitution and Canons of the Province.

#### *Canon 2*

### ***Of Religious Orders in the District***

The Congregation and/or Parish, in which an aspirant for Religious Orders is a member, shall engage in the discernment of aspirants for Ordination under the oversight of the Bishop, the District Council, and Canon to the Ordinary in Via.

#### **Section 1. Lay Orders in The Church**

Via affirms that the ministry of the Laity is indispensable to the work of Via and that this ministry originates within each Congregation. It is also the belief of Via that there is a call to an “ordered ministry” that lies outside of Holy Orders, traditionally known as Religious or Lay Orders. With this in mind, all clergy who lead Parishes, Congregations and other Missions of Via are strongly encouraged to equip the laity for this type of ordered ministry in their communities and the world. To this end, these same clergy may admit members of the Laity to discern, train, and be licensed by the Bishop to the Religious Order set apart by the Bishop.

### ***Canon 3***

#### ***Concerning Ordination and Reception of Ministers***

##### **Section 1. Aspirant Steps**

Persons aspiring to be ordained in Via, and ministers from other jurisdictions who seek to be received into Via, shall apply in writing to the Bishop or those to whom the Bishop delegates such authority. Aspirants shall be provided a copy of this Canon 3 and, should they wish to continue seeking ordination or reception, they shall follow the process established by the Bishop and those whom the Bishop delegates such authority and in accordance with these canons. The ordination or reception process shall include, but not be limited to a criminal record check and a vulnerable sectors check.

##### **Section 2. Declaration of Belief**

No person shall be received as clergy in Via until they shall have subscribed in writing and agree to annually re-subscribe to the follow declaration:

*I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary to salvation, and I consequently hold myself bound to conform my life and ministry thereto, and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of Christ as this Church<sup>1</sup> has received them.*

##### **Section 3. Marriage After Ordination to Holy Orders**

If, someone being already ordained to Holy Orders, has the will and desire to marry, this person must consult with the Bishop for affirmation that the vows of Marriage in this circumstance will not inhibit the vows made in their ordination to one of the three offices of the Church (Bishop, Priest, Deacon).

##### **Section 4. Bishop’s Satisfaction of Qualifications**

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<sup>1</sup> The Anglican Church of Via Apostolica, a Missionary District of the Anglican Church of North America.

The Bishop, being fully satisfied of a person's theological, ministerial and other qualifications, and soundness in the faith, and upon successful completion of examination as provided in the Ordination, Transfer or Reception Path of Via Apostolica, may ordain persons in Via, or receive clergy from other churches or jurisdictions into this District as provided in this Canon 3.

**Section 5. Receiving Bishops to Serve**

The Bishop, being fully satisfied of a person's theological, ministerial and other qualifications, and soundness in the faith, may receive bishops from other jurisdictions of the Province into Via, with or without examination, to serve as Vicar/Rector of a congregation/parish or as a Bishop in Residence in a Congregation, or to serve in a ministry in Via. A Bishop so received shall owe canonical obedience in all things lawful and honest to the Bishop of Via.

***Canon 4***

***Of all other Lay Ministry***

Clergy who oversee Parishes, Congregations, and Missions should train and approve members of the Laity to areas of ministry within their local congregations. These roles may include but are not limited to ministerial areas such as evangelism, pastoring, administrating, program directing, eucharistic serving, and prayer ministry.

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**TITLE IV**

**ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE**

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***Canon 1***

***Discipline***

Every member of the clergy canonically resident in Via or licensed by the Bishop to exercise ministry in Via shall be subject to the disciplinary provisions of Title IV of the Canons of the Province and to the provision of these Canons. Every member of the Laity of Via shall be subject to the disciplinary rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer authorized by the Bishop and in use in the layperson's Congregation.

***Canon 2***

***Rules and Procedures***

Consistent with these Canons and those of the Province, the Trial Court shall develop and maintain its own Customary on Rules and Procedures for Ecclesiastical Discipline.

***Canon 3***

***Compliance with the Applicable Canons of the Province***

In conducting a trial, the Trial Court shall comply with all applicable Canons of the Province.

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**TITLE V**

**ENACTMENT, AMENDMENT, AND REPEAL OF CANONS**

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***Canon I***

***Amendments***

The District Assembly at any regular meeting or any Special Meeting called for that purpose may amend the Canons of Via. No amendment shall be adopted until it is reviewed by Bishop, and the Bishop in consultation with the District Council and its recommendations given to the District Assembly for approval.

Notwithstanding, any provision in these Canons to the contrary the District Assembly may by two-thirds (2/3) majority allow the consideration of proposed amendments to Via Canons.