

**Adopted: February 7, 2021**

**Trinity Episcopal Church  
Collinsville, Connecticut  
By-Laws**

**Preamble**

Trinity Parish, Collinsville, Connecticut, has been duly constituted as such by the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Connecticut. It is organized and exists as a non-profit religious corporation under an act of the Connecticut State Legislature on March 23, 1877, as appears in the Connecticut General Statutes Section 33-265. The Parish promulgates the following as its By-Laws, and hereby rescinds all By-Laws hitherto in effect.

**Article I**

As a Parish of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Connecticut and of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, Trinity Parish is subject to the constitutions and canons of both ecclesiastical governing bodies insofar as these affect parishes generally and Trinity Parish specifically.

**Article II – Membership**

**Canon 1 Sections 4 and 5 of the Episcopal Diocese of CT.**

**Section I.**

Membership in the Parish shall be affirmed as provided in the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut. Of the members of the Parish, only those shall be entitled to vote at any Parish meeting who shall be adult communicants age sixteen (16) and over and who for at least six months prior to that meeting shall have been faithful attendants at the services of the Church and the Parish, unless for good cause prevented, faithful contributors to its support, and faithful in working, praying and giving for the spread of the kingdom of God; these facts to be determined in each case by the Vestry in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut.

**Article III – Officers**

**Canon 1 Sections 7, 8, and 9 of the Episcopal Diocese of CT**

**Section 1.** The officers of this Parish shall be a Rector or Priest in Charge, two (2) Wardens, a Treasurer, and a Clerk. These and six (6) other adult communicants of this Parish and up to two (2) Trinity youth (age 14 or older) communicants, all in good standing, will constitute the Vestry of this church: the Rector or Priest in Charge will be the chairperson *ex-officio*. We recognize the contribution that youth members make to Trinity and desire their full participation in the life of the Parish. These Youth Vestry members will have voice only on the Vestry in church matters and will be granted vote only at the state of Connecticut's legal age of 18.

**Section 2.**

The members of the Vestry, the Clerk and the Treasurer shall be elected at the annual Parish meeting from the members of the Parish who are eligible to vote in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Connecticut; the Wardens shall be elected in like manner from members of the Parish so eligible to vote; they shall all hold office for three years, and until others are chosen and qualify. Any vacancy occurring by death or otherwise in the office of Warden during the course of the year may be filled at a special Parish meeting duly called for that purpose. Any vacancy in any other office may be filled for the unexpired balance of the term at the next annual meeting or at a special meeting duly called for that purpose, and may be filled until the next annual meeting by the Vestry, as the Vestry at its discretion may determine.

Youth Vestry member terms of office will be one (1) year each with the possibility of serving three (3) consecutive terms of one (1) year each. Youth terms of office vary from adults for the sole reason that youth of said age may enter college and not be physically available for the normal Vestry term of three (3) contiguous years. Whereas there may be years when no youth of minimum age of 14 is available to stand for election, the Nominating Committee will make every effort to present two (2) youth members at each Annual Meeting herewith.

- a. **The Clerk:** The Clerk of the Parish shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of the duties and (1) shall be the Clerk of the Vestry *ex-officio*; (2) shall attend all general meetings of the Parish and all meetings of the Vestry or shall make suitable arrangements to the end that full and proper records of the proceedings are made and preserved; (3) shall see that an accurate role of the legal members of the Parish is maintained and that such role is available at every general meeting of the Parish; (4) shall be official custodian of the files, records and archives of the Parish; (5) shall perform such other duties as the Parish as assigned.
- b. **The Treasurer:** The Treasurer of the Parish shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of the duties and (1) shall collect, receive, hold custody and disburse all monies belonging to the Parish; (2) shall make records of such collections, receipts and disbursements in such a form and manner as will provide the basis for satisfactory accounting of the same; (3) shall keep records of all trust and permanent funds showing at least the source and date, terms governing the use of principal and income, to whom and how often reports of conditions are to be made, and how the funds are invested; (4) shall attend the meetings of the Vestry

and shall furnish the Vestry a financial report of condition for the month recently ended together with a statement of receipts and disbursements since the last report; and (5) shall perform such other tasks as the Parish as assigned.

- c. **The Wardens and Vestry:** The Wardens and Vestry shall be sworn to the faithful discharge of their duties.
- d. **The Rector or Priest in Charge:** The Rector or Priest in Charge shall at all times be entitled to the use and control of the Parish buildings with the appurtenances and furniture thereof for the purposes of the office and for the full and free discharge of all functions and duties pertaining thereto.

**Section 3.** The term of any Parish Officer, except for the Rector or Priest in Charge, may be terminated at anytime, by vote at the Annual Parish Meeting, or of any Special Parish Meeting called for that purpose, provided that notice of such proposed action is included in the call to meeting and written notice is given simultaneously to the person affected thereby, and that such person is given due opportunity to be heard at such meeting. A vacancy occurring as a result of such action shall be filled by election at the same time, or subsequent Parish Meeting.

**Section 4.** The Parish Clerk shall be Clerk of the Vestry *ex-officio*.

**Section 5.** Except as provided by the Law of the State, or of the Diocese, the Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and relations of the Parish to the Clergy.

**Section 6.** The regular meetings of the Vestry shall be held monthly. Special Meetings of the Vestry may be called by the Rector or Priest in Charge, or by three (3) members of the Vestry upon one (1) week's notice to all members. One of the Vestry meetings in July and August may be either cancelled or used for purposes other than specific Parish business, such as continuing education or spiritual renewal for the Vestry members, by a vote of the Vestry. At all Vestry meetings, five (5) members shall constitute a quorum. All matters at such meetings shall be decided by a majority of those present. All Vestry meetings may be conducted in person or by any means of audio or visual systems by which all participants may simultaneously communicate with each other during the meeting. An individual participating in a Parish meeting by means of audio or visual systems that permit simultaneous communication with the other participants shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

## **Article IV – Parish Meetings**

### **Canon 1 Section 11 of the Episcopal Diocese of CT**

**Section 1.** There shall be an Annual Meeting of the members of this Parish on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Sunday of February, or on such other date in the month of January or February as designated by the Vestry, for the purpose of electing Parish Officers, other than the

Rector or Priest in Charge, Vestry persons, and lay delegates to Annual Convention, and for transacting such other business as may legally come before the meeting.

Special Parish Meetings will be called by vote of the Vestry or upon written request of ten percent (10%) of the voting members of the Parish.

All Parish meetings may be conducted in person or by any means of audio or visual systems by which all participants may simultaneously communicate with each other during the meeting. An individual participating in a Parish meeting by means of audio or visual systems that permit simultaneous communication with the other participants shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

Notice of all Parish Meetings shall be signed by the Clerk, or if absent, by one of the Wardens; and will be posted at the door of the Parish Church and/or sent by the Clerk to every member of the Parish, at least one (1) week before the time of the Meeting.

Notice of any Parish Meeting, except the Annual Meeting, will contain a statement of purpose for which the meeting is called; and at all meetings the Rector or Priest in Charge of the Parish, if present, will preside. In the absence of the Rector or Priest in Charge of the Parish, one (1) of the Wardens will preside.

**Section 2.** At the Annual Meeting, the Nominating Committee shall present the following slate of nominations:

- Two (2) Wardens
- Clerk
- Treasurer
- Two (2) Vestry Persons
- As many as two (2) youth Vestry Persons
- Four (4) Delegates – Two (2) of whom become delegates to the Diocesan Convention and two (2) become the alternates.
- Up to two (2) representatives to the North Central Region convocations

**Section 3.** A majority of the voting members will constitute a quorum at any Parish meeting.

**Section 4.** Except as may be otherwise provided herein or by Canons, all questions will be decided by a majority vote of those persons.

**Section 5.** Voting on questions will be by voice vote or show of hands at the discretion of the Chair, provided that upon demand of a majority of those members present, voting will be done by written or electronic ballot. With respect for candidates for office, in the event that there is one candidate or one slate of candidates presented, the Parish Clerk may be directed by unanimous vote to cast one (1) ballot for the candidate or slate.

**Section 6.** Any question of parliamentary procedure, not herein covered, will be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article V – Committees**

**Section 1.** The standing committees of Trinity Parish shall be the finance, property, and stewardship committees, serving under the authority of the Vestry.

The Chairpersons of the standing committees will be appointed by the Rector or Priest in Charge and/or the Vestry.

The Standing Committees are defined as per the approved Standing Rules of Trinity Episcopal Church, Collinsville, CT.

**Section 2.** Each Committee will include at least one (1) member of the Vestry.

## **Article VI – Amendments**

**Section 1.** The By-laws may be altered, amended or repealed at any validly called and convened meeting of members of the Parish entitled to vote by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of such members present at such meeting.

**Section 2.** These By-Laws will be reviewed by a committee of church members appointed by the Rector or Priest in Charge at least every ten (10) years. This committee will report to the next Annual Parish Meeting following their appointment.

**Adopted by the Vestry January 19, 2021**

**Amended and adopted by Parish Meeting: February 7, 2021**