



CHRIST OUR HOPE
ANGLICAN CHURCH

VALPARAISO, INDIANA · ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF THE GREAT LAKES

Bylaws

ADOPTED · DATED FEBRUARY 15, 2026

PREAMBLE

Christ Our Hope Anglican Church of Valparaiso, hereafter referred to as the “Congregation,” is a church in the Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes (“ADGL”). The Congregation expressly adopts and recognizes the authority of the Constitution and Canons of the ADGL and commits to upholding and propagating the historic Faith and Order as set forth in the 2019 Book of Common Prayer.

I. GOVERNANCE

The Rector/Priest-in-Charge (“Rector”) and the Vestry/Mission Council (“Vestry”) shall be the governing body of the Congregation, and they shall constitute its Board of Directors and select its officers.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. To be a Member of the Congregation, a person must:

1. have been baptized with water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;
2. be a communicant, sixteen (16) years of age or over, recognized by the Rector and Wardens as a regular attendee at services;
3. be on the Treasurer’s records as a regular contributor to the revenues of the Congregation.

- B. The Rector and Wardens shall maintain a current list of the Members of the Parish. In the event of any dispute as to membership status or eligibility to vote, the matter shall be referred to the Rector and Vestry for resolution.
- C. Article II.A shall be read prior to the holding of elections or posted in the church no later than two (2) Sundays immediately preceding the Annual Meeting or any Special Meeting.

III. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- A. A meeting of the Congregation shall be held annually, for the election of members of the Vestry and for such other business as may properly come before the Congregation.
- B. The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held each year on or before the 15th of March at a time and place to be fixed by the Vestry. Notice thereof shall be given by the Rector or an Assistant Minister or by one of the Wardens at public worship services on the two (2) Sundays immediately preceding such Annual Congregation Meeting.
- C. Those Members of the Congregation assembled after notice given as in Section III.B above shall constitute a quorum, and all Members who are present shall be entitled to vote on all matters that properly come before the Congregation for a vote.
- D. Any Member of the Congregation may vote by absentee ballot for election of members to the Vestry provided they are unable to attend the meeting and submit their votes prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting on a ballot provided by the Secretary for that purpose.
- E. The Rector shall preside as chairperson at all Congregational Meetings of the Congregation. In case of vacancy or the absence of the Rector, the meeting shall be chaired by the Senior Warden, or, in their absence, by the Junior Warden. If none of these are present, the meeting shall elect its own Chairperson by simple majority.
- F. Special Meetings of the Congregation may be called by the Rector, by both Wardens acting jointly, or by any three (3) other Members of the Vestry, or upon the written request of ten (10) members of the Congregation. Notice shall be given as stated in Section III.B and shall include the purpose or purposes of the special meeting. The provisions regarding the qualification of voters for the Annual Meeting shall be applicable.

IV. ELECTION OF THE VESTRY

- A. New Vestry members shall be elected by Members of the Congregation at the Annual Meeting by simple majority.
- B. The Vestry shall be composed of two groups consisting of two members each, each group to serve for a term of two years on a rotating basis. At each Annual Meeting, the vacancies created by the retiring group shall be filled by election. No member of the Vestry who has served two full, regular terms or four consecutive years without interruption may begin to serve another regular term until one year following their previous service.
- C. The Rector and Vestry shall be responsible for establishing the slate of candidates to stand for Vestry election, and each such candidate shall meet the qualifications set forth in Section V below. Each candidate shall stand for election separately.
- D. At the first Vestry meeting subsequent to the Annual Congregational Meeting, the Rector shall appoint a Senior Warden from the members of the Vestry. The Vestry shall elect a Junior Warden from its own members. The Vestry shall also elect a Secretary, a Treasurer, Finance Committee, and such other officers as the Vestry deems necessary. The Vestry officers shall be elected for a term of one (1) year only, but they shall be eligible to succeed themselves in office as long as they are members of the Vestry.
- E. In the event of a vacancy in the Vestry, the remaining members may fill that vacancy with a qualified member of the Parish who shall serve until the next annual meeting of the Parish.

V. QUALIFICATIONS FOR VESTRY MEMBERS

- A. Only Members of the Congregation who are at least 18 years of age and have also been confirmed or received by a Bishop of the Province of the Anglican Communion or who are desirous thereof, shall be eligible to serve on the Vestry. The Vestry may establish additional standards for becoming a member and shall develop a method for dealing with potential conflicts of interest. Spouses of clergy assigned to the Parish may not serve as voting members of the Vestry.

- B. Qualification for Vestry membership should be based on Titus 1:6–9. Candidates should aspire to have the following characteristics:
1. A mature Christian.
 2. One who maintains an active prayer life.
 3. One whose life is in order.
 4. Known and respected among the Congregation.
 5. One who has been or is currently active in ministry.
 6. Known as a cheerful giver, not only of money but of time; and
 7. One who understands, has counted the cost of, and is committed to fulfilling the responsibilities and duties of a Vestry member.
- C. Every person elected a Vestry member shall attest in writing the following declaration and promise:

“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 through Our Lord Jesus Christ and I do yield my hearty consent to the fundamental declarations set forth in Article I of the Constitution, and to the discipline and forms of worship of the Anglican Church in North America. I promise that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of Vestry member of this Parish to the best of my ability.”

VI. MEETINGS OF THE VESTRY

- A. Regular meetings of the Vestry shall normally be held every month.
- B. Special Meetings of the Vestry may be held upon three (3) days’ notice from the Rector, or the Wardens acting jointly, or at the written request of three (3) members of the Vestry directed to the Rector, or in his or her absence, to either of the Wardens, or upon such occasion as the entire membership of the Vestry shall be present and by unanimous consent agree to hold a meeting. Also, a special meeting may be held at any time without three (3) days’ notice provided that those not able to be present have signed waivers and there is a quorum present.
- C. At all regular or special meetings of the Vestry, unless it be herein otherwise provided, a majority of the Vestry shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Each Member of the Vestry shall have one vote and the Rector shall have one vote.

- D. If all Members of the Vestry consent in writing (including electronic) to any action taken or to be taken for and on behalf of the Vestry and the writing evidencing their consent is filed with the Secretary, the action shall be as valid as though it had been authorized at a meeting of the Vestry.
- E. The Rector shall preside at all meetings of the Vestry. In the absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden presides. In the absence of both Rector and Senior Warden, the Junior Warden shall preside. The Vestry shall not meet to conduct business without at least one of the Rector, Senior Warden, or Junior Warden being present.
- F. Three consecutive absences of any member of the Vestry from its regularly scheduled meetings, or an ongoing pattern of absence such that a member misses more than half of regular Vestry meetings in a twelve month period, shall constitute sufficient cause to empower the Vestry to require the resignation of that member.

VII. DUTIES OF THE VESTRY

- A. The Vestry shall at a minimum have the following duties:
 - 1. Provide for the financial support of the Rector and the Rector's family.
 - 2. Support the Rector in all aspects of the Rector's ministry, including ensuring the Christian formation, biblical literacy, and spiritual maturity of the members of the Parish.
 - 3. Provide an adequate place for regular worship.
 - 4. Provide for the elements necessary for the celebration of Sacraments, music, hymnals, prayer books, and Bibles as needed for use by the Congregation.
 - 5. Provide for the compensation of staff members.
 - 6. Establish an adequate insurance program for the Congregation that includes, at a minimum, property damage, liability, personal injury, errors and omissions, counseling, and sexual misconduct.
 - 7. Be familiar with the Constitution and Canons of the Province and of the Diocese and provide for compliance therewith.
 - 8. Establish a biblically based program of financial giving by members of the Parish.
 - 9. Conform with the financial askings of the Diocese; or have a plan to do so.
 - 10. Strive for unity and adopt the principles found in Matthew 18 as the standard for resolving conflict that may develop within the Vestry, the Congregation, the Diocese, and the Province.

- B. Subject to Article IX (“Duties of the Rector”) below, all administrative powers of the Congregation shall be vested in the Rector and the Vestry, which shall have control and management of the property, affairs, and funds of the Congregation. It shall be the duty of the Vestry to take care that the financial affairs of the Congregation are administered faithfully, the property of the Congregation is adequately maintained, the salary of the Rector, other clergy and lay staff is paid regularly, and provision is made for payment of the current expenses of the Congregation.
- C. At the close of each fiscal year, the Vestry shall make arrangements to have the Treasurer’s books of account reviewed by a Certified Public Accountant or another qualified person or persons, or shall complete the annual financial review procedures required by the ADGL.
- D. The Vestry shall provide for a Finance Committee, which shall prepare a budget for adoption by the Vestry. The Congregation may not operate on a deficit budget without adequate reserves to cover such deficit.
- E. The Rector, Wardens, and members of the Vestry shall have authority to appoint such agents as may from time to time be deemed advisable to carry out their respective responsibilities.
- F. The Vestry shall not mortgage, encumber or convey any part of the real estate of this Congregation without the concurring affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of all the members of the Vestry.
- G. For so long as the Congregation is defined to be a “Mission” by the ADGL Canons rather than an independent “Parish,” the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the ADGL shall carry in whole the authority and duties of the Vestry of the Congregation, and may delegate that authority to the Vestry/Mission Council at their sole discretion.

VIII. ELECTION OF THE RECTOR

A. The Rector shall be elected by the Vestry as follows:

1. The affirmative vote of three quarters (3/4) of all of the members of the Vestry shall be necessary to make valid the election of a Rector.
2. The person to be elected Rector must have been openly nominated at a previous meeting of the Vestry, duly convened.
3. For a meeting of the Vestry at which such elections are intended, notice shall be given in the manner provided by the ADGL and in these Bylaws expressing such intention. No such election shall be held until one week shall have elapsed after the nomination and until thirty (30) days shall have elapsed after notice of the intention to hold such election shall have been given to the Bishop of the ADGL.

B. Vacancy of the Rectorship:

1. Except for reasons required by infirmity, the Rector may not resign without the consent of the Vestry and the Bishop.
2. The Rector may not be removed against his or her will except as provided in the ADGL Canons.
3. In case of vacancy in the Rectorship of the Congregation, the ministerial duties of the Rector shall be placed under the control of the Bishop of the ADGL until such time as a new Rector is installed in accordance with the Canons of the ADGL. The administrative and fiduciary duties of the Rector will be the responsibility of the Senior Warden.

IX. DUTIES OF THE RECTOR

A. The Rector shall lead the Church as pastor, priest, and teacher, sharing in the councils of this Congregation and of the whole Church, in communion with the Bishop of the ADGL. By word and action, at all times informed by and consistent with the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America and of the ADGL, the Rector shall proclaim the Gospel, love and serve Christ's people, nourish them, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

B. The Rector, in subordination to the Ecclesiastical Authority and Canons of the ADGL, shall be responsible for and have charge and care of all the spiritual concerns, music, and ritual observances of the Church.

C. The Rector shall keep a written record of all worship services, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals, and visitations of bishops and other clergy.

- D. All assistant clergy and lay employees of the Congregation shall serve under the direction of and at the pleasure of the Rector.
- E. The Rector is a member *ex-officio* of every guild, group, team, committee, or task force in the Congregation.
- F. For so long as the Congregation is defined to be a “Mission” by the ADGL Canons rather than an independent “Parish,” the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the ADGL shall carry in whole the authority and duties of the Rector of the Congregation, and may delegate that authority to the Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge at their sole discretion.

X. WARDENS AND OTHER OFFICERS

- A. The Wardens shall supervise the property of the Congregation, in accordance with the Canonical responsibilities and limitations placed upon them in relation to the Rector and the Vestry, and they shall take care that other officers of the Vestry perform their respective duties in a satisfactory manner. Among the wardens’ duties shall be the following:
 - 1. To make sure that the Church be kept in good repair, fit for use, and used exclusively for the purpose of its consecration.
 - 2. To maintain order within the congregation during the time of Worship Services.
 - 3. In the event of a vacancy in the Rectorship, to notify the Bishop of the ADGL and to ask for ministerial services. During any such vacancy, the Wardens shall take charge of the Congregation Register, Church Books, and other movable property.
 - 4. In case of the search and subsequent election of a Rector, to notify as soon as possible the Bishop of the ADGL of such and forwarding the name of the persons being considered and compensation to be paid.
 - 5. To report to the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority any violation of the Canon Law of the Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes or Rubrics of the Prayer Book on the part of the Rector.
 - 6. To have and to exercise all such rights and perform such duties as are imposed upon them by the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes.

- B. The Treasurer shall submit financial reports at each regular meeting of the Vestry. He or she shall receive all the revenues of the Congregation and disburse the same under orders of the Vestry. The Treasurer or their designee shall maintain records electronically or in hardcopy, in accordance with standard generally accepted accounting principles, all sums received from any and all sources as well as all disbursements made for any and all purposes, which shall be subject to the inspection of the Vestry and also of the Certified Public Accountants or others annually appointed to examine the Treasurer's records.
- C. The Secretary shall keep the Minutes of the Vestry in a book or electronic file and duly notify the members of its special meetings and other meetings of which notice may be required and perform generally all such duties as appertain to the office. The Secretary shall have the minutes of each meeting of the Vestry transcribed in report form and shall distribute such report to each member of the Vestry as soon as practicable after each meeting.

XI. LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION

- A. Except for responsibility or liability of a Vestry member pursuant to any criminal statute or for payment of taxes pursuant to local, state or Federal law, a Vestry member shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken or any failure to take any action unless:
1. such Vestry member has breached or failed to perform his or her fiduciary duties as provided in Section XII.B hereof and,
 2. the breach or failure to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness.
- B. A Vestry member shall stand in a fiduciary relationship to the Congregation and shall perform his or her duties in accordance with, and have the benefit of, the standards set forth in the codes and laws of the state of Indiana. Absent breach of or failure to perform his or her fiduciary duty, which constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness, actions taken as a Vestry member or any failure to take action shall be presumed to be in the best interest of the Congregation.

C. As long as the Congregation is qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, no Vestry member or officer of the Congregation who serves without compensation, other than reimbursement for actual expenses, shall be liable for any civil damages as a result of any acts or omissions relating solely to the performance of his or her duties as a Vestry member or officer, unless:

1. the conduct of such Vestry member or officer falls substantially below the standards generally practiced and accepted in like circumstances by similar persons performing the same or similar duties; and
2. it is shown that the Vestry member or officer did an act or omitted doing an act which he or she was under a recognized duty to another to do, knowing or having reason to know that the act or omission created a substantial risk of actual harm to the person or property of another.

It shall be presumed that any Vestry member acting in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes shall be acting in good faith and in the best interest of the Congregation.

XII. BYLAWS

- A. In all other respects the Constitution and Canons of the ADGL shall govern this Congregation.
- B. The Constitution and Canons of the ADGL prevail if there is any nonconformity of these bylaws to the Constitution and Canons of the ADGL.
- C. These Bylaws may be adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present who are entitled to vote for members of the Vestry at the Annual or Special Meeting, duly announced at the time of public worship, on the two Sundays immediately preceding such meeting.
- D. These Bylaws may be altered or amended only in the following manner: the Amendments shall be proposed in writing at a regular meeting of the Vestry, and if the Amendments are thereupon approved by the Vestry, copies of the proposed Amendments shall be made available to each Member of the Congregation; provided that any Amendments must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the full membership of the Vestry; and provided further that no Amendment shall be valid until it has been approved at any Annual Congregation Meeting or a Special Meeting by a majority of those members of the Congregation present.