

## Alternate Deputies to General Convention

### **Canon 16.02**

*Resolved*, that Canon XVI of the Canons of the Diocese of California be amended to add a new section following Section 16.01 as follows:

#### **Sec. 16.02. Alternate Deputies to General Convention.**

Whenever the Convention of the Diocese elects deputies to the General Convention, it shall also elect an equal number of alternate deputies in the lay and clergy orders. A vacancy among the alternate deputies due to appointment as a deputy, death, resignation or inability to serve may be filled by the Ecclesiastical Authority by appointment of any person eligible to be elected deputy. The name of any person appointed to fill a vacancy among the deputies or alternates shall be transmitted forthwith by the Secretary of the Convention to the Secretary of the House of Deputies.

#### ***Proponent's Explanation:***

While it has been customary for many years to elect the same number of alternate deputies to General Convention as we elect deputies, and while the forms prepared by the Secretary of the House of Deputies suggest that is normal, there is in fact no mention of alternates in the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The matter is left up the individual dioceses. (The Rules of Order of the House of Deputies give a nod to the existence of alternates, but only to state that they may not sit on the floor of the house along with regular deputies and that they should identify themselves as alternates when testifying before a committee.)

Our own diocesan Constitution and Canons specify that the Bishop may appoint an alternate to replace a deputy and that alternates function as part of the deputation when electing the deputation leadership. But again, there is nothing about how many alternates are elected, when they are elected, or if they can be replaced. In the past, the Bishop has been asked to appoint a replacement if an alternate needed to drop out, but there was no rule explicitly allowing for that.

It is customary in this diocese for alternates to be fully active members of the deputation, attending General Convention, monitoring the work of committees, reporting back to the deputation, and participating in the analysis of the deputation's position on critical legislation. The deputation feels that if an alternate is not able to attend General Convention, it is important to be able to replace that person or the deputation would be significantly hampered in its ability to carry out its work.

Because little can be known in advance about the timing and circumstances concerning the filling of a vacancy, especially the availability of potential replacements, it is important that the procedure be as simple as possible and that the Bishop be given wide discretion.

It is not the intention behind this amendment to change any current practice, but to clarify our customs with regard to alternates and make them part of the canons.

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*As approved by the Committee on Canons (September 6, 2017)*