Constitution and Canons
OF THE
Missionary District
OF
Porto Rico
1907
At the First Annual Convocation of the Missionary District of Porto Rico, in May, 1905, the following was adopted and referred to the House of Bishops, for its canonical approval. Canon 13, Section IV (i):

[Attest] JAMES H. VAN BUREN, Bishop.

SAN JUAN, P. R., August 3, 1907.

HOUSE OF BISHOPS,
TWELFTH DAY OF THE SESSION,
RICHMOND,
October 16, 1907.

The undersigned has the honor of certifying that the House of Bishops has given its canonical approval to the proposed Constitution and Canons of the Missionary District of Porto Rico as adopted by its First Annual Convocation, in accordance with Canon 13, Section IV (i)

SAMUEL HART, Secretary.
CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I.
Of the Authority of the Church.

This Missionary District, as a constituent part of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, hereby accepts and adopts the Constitution and Canons of that Church, and acknowledges its authority.

ARTICLE II.
Of the Convocation.

There shall be held a Convocation of this Missionary District every year, on the second Tuesday and Wednesday in May, unless otherwise ordered by the Ecclesiastical Authority, at the place designated by the preceding Convocation, unless changed by the Bishop for good and sufficient reason.

ARTICLE III.
Officers.

The officers of the Convocation shall be a Bishop, Secretary, Treasurer, Chancellor and Registrar. With the exception of the Bishop and the Chancellor, these shall be chosen by ballot each year, and hold office until their successors are chosen. The Chancellor shall be appointed by the Bishop.

ARTICLE IV.
Of Membership and Representation.

The members of the Convocation shall comprise the officers mentioned in Article III, all Presbyters canonically resident in the District not less than three months previous to the meeting, together with two Lay Delegates from each parish or mission in the District, chosen at the preceding Annual Meeting of the parish or mission, or else appointed by the minister in charge. Each member shall be entitled to
of the Convocation shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VI.
Of Deliberating and Voting.

The clerical and lay delegates shall deliberate in one body, and a majority vote shall decide, but a vote by orders shall be taken whenever three members request it.

ARTICLE VII.
Of Finance.

The Bishop, the Treasurer and one other member of the Convocation chosen by the Bishop, shall constitute a Finance Committee, who shall estimate the necessary expenses of the next Convocation, and report ways and means for providing the same.

ARTICLE VIII.
Of the Bishop's Support.

A Committee of three members shall be chosen annually and hold office till their successors are chosen by ballot of the Convocation, who shall use their endeavors to create and increase an Episcopal Fund, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the General Canons in regard to the support of the Bishop. (Canon 52, Article V, Sections 1 and 2.)

ARTICLE IX.
Of the Appointment of a Bishop.

As the appointment of Missionary Bishops is provided for in the General Canons of the Church, legislation on this point is reserved until this Missionary District becomes a Diocese, in accordance with the provisions of the General Canons.

ARTICLE X.
Of the Journal.

Within two months from the adjournment of each annual Convocation, the Secretary shall publish a Journal of its proceedings, in which Journal shall also be included the Bishop's Address, the Parochial Reports of the Several Clergy, the Official Acts of the Bishop during the preceding convocation year, the Reports of the Chancellor, Registrar, Secretary and Treasurer, a list of Officers and members of the Convocation, a summary of the statistics required by the General Canons, and such other matters as may tend to throw light upon the state and progress of the Church in the District. The number of Journals, and the cost of publication, to be determined and provided for by the Convocation.

ARTICLE XI.
Of the Auditing of Accounts.

A Committee of three members shall be appointed by the Bishop at each Convocation, whose duty it shall be to audit all accounts of the Convocation, including those of the Treasurer, and their certificate shall accompany all accounts in the publication of the Journal.

ARTICLE XII.
Of Alterations and Amendments.

This Constitution may be altered or amended as follows: The proposed alteration or amendment must be proposed in one annual meeting and referred to the Committee on Constitution and Canons, and when reported by that Committee, although with modifications not affecting the substance, they may be voted upon in the next annual Convocation, and if approved by a majority of the Convocation voting by orders, they shall become valid and obligatory.
CANONS

CANON 1.
Of a List of Clergy.

The Bishop shall prepare and transmit to the Secretary of the Convocation, not less than one week previous to the date of the Annual Meeting, a list of the clergy canonically resident, together with the names of their respective cures, and shall indicate on the said list those who are entitled to seats in the Convocation, the said list to be published in the Journal, together with the names of the Lay Delegates.

CANON 2.
Of Attendance.

It shall be the duty of every Clergyman and Lay Delegate having a seat in the Convocation to attend every meeting of the same, or send a reasonable excuse to the Bishop for his absence.

CANON 3.
Of Certificates.

A certificate of election shall be presented to the Secretary of the Convocation, by each Lay Delegate, the said certificate to be signed by the Clergyman of the Parish or Mission. In case of doubt as to the right of any member to his seat, the Secretary shall refer the question to the Committee on Membership, who shall report to the Convocation immediately after the organization for business on the first day, and the question shall be determined by vote of the Convocation.

CANON 4.
Of Deputies to the General Convention.

SECTION 1. At the Annual Meeting next preceding the triennial meeting of the General Convention, one clerical and one lay delegate, together with one alternate of each order, shall be chosen by ballot, to represent this District, as provided in the General Constitution of the Church in the United States of America. In case of a vacancy in this representation, one of the alternate deputies shall serve, on notification by the Bishop, or, in case of inability, the Bishop shall appoint to fill the vacancy, or if there be no Bishop, the Standing Committee shall appoint.

Sec. 2. It shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Convocation to supply the deputies or the alternate deputies with the certificates provided by the Secretary of the General Convention, duly signed and attested, which certificates shall be presented by the deputies as required, to the Secretary of the General Convention.

CANON 5.
Of Expenses.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer of the Convocation to transmit to the minister of each parish or mission the statement of the amount required from his parish or mission for the expenses of the Convocation, as reported by the Finance Committee, and this statement he shall transmit not less than one month after the annual meeting of the Convocation.

CANON 6.
Of Self-support of Parishes and Missions.

It shall be the duty of every parish and mission in this District to take such measures as may be open to it for the proper support of its minister and for other necessary expenses of the Church.

CANON 7.
Of Special Offerings.

It shall be the duty of each parish or mission to contribute, either by special offering or otherwise, each year, for the following objects: The Convocation expenses, the relief
of aged and infirm clergy or their widows and orphans, the missionary apportionment for general missions, the support of the episcopate, and for mission work in Porto Rico.

CANON 8.
Of Wardens and Vestrymen.
Each parish shall elect a Vestry of not more than twelve nor less than three members, two of whom shall serve as Wardens, at such time and in such manner as each parish may prescribe. Vestrymen and Wardens shall serve until their successors are chosen.

CANON 9.
Of Missions.
All missions, not yet organized as parishes, shall be organized by the appointment by the missionary of a Finance Committee, whose duties shall be those of a Vestry, so far as the circumstances will allow. This Committee shall cooperate with the missionary in everything that will promote the growth and progress of the mission in temporal and spiritual well-being.

CANON 10.
Of Parish By-Laws.
It shall be the duty of each parish to provide itself, as soon as may be, with a Constitution and By-Laws, which shall not contradict the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention nor of this District, but shall prescribe the duties of the several Officers of the Parish, and determine such other details of parochial management as are usually determined in a parish or mission.

CANON 11.
Of the Title of Church Property.
All deeds and titles of property acquired by a parish, mission or other institution in this Missionary District, shall be vested in the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, as Trustees, to hold said property in trust for the use of the Church in this District forever. And in the event of this District becoming a Diocese, a Committee of five shall be appointed, of which the Bishop and the Chancellor shall be members, to recommend such action as may be necessary for the Convocation to take, for the security of the several titles as aforesaid.

CANON 12.
Of the Standing Committee.
Forasmuch as it is made the duty of a Missionary Bishop to appoint annually a Council of Advice (see Canon 13, IV (11), whose duties are defined by the General Canons, it is hereby further enacted that the said Council of Advice shall be, for all the usual purposes, a Standing Committee. It shall be their duty to choose their President and Secretary, to determine the times of meeting, and to govern themselves in accordance with the customary rules for similar bodies.

CANON 13.
Of the Committee on Constitution and Canons.
At each annual meeting of the Convocation a Committee shall be chosen by ballot, to consist of three members, two clergymen and one layman, who shall be the Standing Committee on the Constitution and Canons. They shall hold office till their successors are chosen, and to them shall be referred without debate all proposals for alterations, additions or amendments to the Constitution and Canons, action on the same to follow their report.

CANON 14.
Of the Committee on Qualifications.
At each Convocation the Bishop shall appoint, immediately after the opening service, a committee of one clergyman and one layman, to act as the Committee on Qualifications, to whom all questions as to the rights of delegates and the admission of new members shall be referred, action to follow upon their report.
CANON 15.
Of the Legal Voters in Parishes and Missions.
All persons of twenty-one years of age or over, who have been regular attendants upon the worship, and contributed regularly to the maintenance of a parish or mission for the six months preceding, shall be entitled to vote at the parish meetings or meetings of the mission.

CANON 16.
Of Discipline.
Provision being made in the General Constitution and Canons of the Church, regarding offences for which a Bishop, Priest or Deacon may be tried, and the mode of trial of a Bishop being also therein set forth, it is hereby enacted that in the trial of a Priest or Deacon, the Ecclesiastical Authority of this Missionary District is to be governed by the provisions of the Diocese of West Virginia, in the Canons thereby made and provided.

CANON 17.
Of Rules of Order.
For the transaction of the business of the Convocation, Rules of Order shall be adopted by the First Annual Meeting, and shall continue in force until repealed or suspended by a majority vote.

Note.—The Rules of Order are contained in the Journal of the Convocation.

CANON 18.
Of Voting by Proxy.
No voting by proxy shall be admissible.

CANON 19.
Of Alterations and Amendments.
These Canons may be altered or amended, in the same way as is hereinafter provided for the alteration or amendment of the Constitution. (See Article XII.)