

1 **BY-LAWS**

2 **ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

3 **(As amended January 2017)**

4 **ARTICLE I: Title, Location, and Jurisdiction**

5 The Rector, Wardens, Vestry, and People of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church,  
6 545 South East Avenue (Cook County), Oak Park, Illinois, constitute a canonical parish of the  
7 Episcopal Church of the Diocese of Chicago under the pastoral jurisdiction of The Bishop of  
8 Chicago. St. Christopher's Episcopal Church recognizes the canonical jurisdiction of the Bishop  
9 Of Chicago, the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Chicago, and the Constitution and  
10 Canons of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

11 **ARTICLE II: The Parish**

12 Section 1: The parishioners of St. Christopher's Church, Oak Park, Illinois, qualified to  
13 vote under the provisions of Article II, Section 2 of these by-laws are declared to be the  
14 Congregation of the Parish of St. Christopher's Church for all statutory and other legal purposes.

15 Section 2: The parishioners qualified to vote for Wardens and members of the Vestry and  
16 upon all questions coming before the congregation at any Annual Meeting or Special Meeting  
17 thereof shall be only the following: All baptized persons, male or female, of age 16 years and  
18 upwards who regularly attend the public services of St. Christopher's Church and are recognized  
19 as members of the parish by the Rector and at least one of the Wardens, or if there be no Rector  
20 present, by the two Wardens, and whose names appear on the books of the Parish  
21 Treasurer as having contributed by pledge or otherwise to the funds to meet the expenses or  
22 obligations of the Congregation during the six months immediately previous to the Meeting, it  
23 being understood that the pledge or obligation for such contributions shall have been incurred  
24 prior to the said six months, and who, in addition, declare themselves conscientiously attached to

25 the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal Church.

26 **ARTICLE III: Meetings of the Parish**

27 Section 1, Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting of the Parish shall be held in the month  
28 of January of each calendar year as the Rector, Wardens, and members of the Vestry may  
29 previously by vote appoint, with due and sufficient time, however, in each case being allowed for  
30 the Treasurer to close the books and prepare a financial report.

31 Section 2, Notice of Annual Meeting: Public notice of the Annual Meeting shall be given  
32 from the chancel on the two Sundays immediately preceding such Annual Meeting by the Rector,  
33 or if there be no Rector, by one of the Wardens, and in writing in the parish bulletin at least four  
34 Sundays in advance. The agenda of the Annual Meeting shall be made available to parishioners  
35 on the Sunday preceding the Meeting.

36 Section 3, Special Meetings: Special Parish Meetings may be called by the Rector or, if  
37 there be no Rector, by both Wardens.

38 Section 4, Notice of Special Meetings: Notice of Special Parish Meetings and their  
39 purpose shall be given at the Sunday morning services by the Rector immediately preceding the  
40 meeting or, if there be no Rector, by the Wardens or any three members of the Vestry.

41 Section 5, Place of Meetings: All Annual and Special Meetings of the Parish shall be held  
42 at the Church address unless otherwise specified in the notice of the meeting.

43 Section 6, Quorum: At all duly called Parish meetings, 33 percent of the legal voters of  
44 the Parish, as then canonically reported, shall constitute a quorum, except as otherwise provided  
45 in the Canons. In all other cases in which a Canon of the Diocese of Chicago directs a duty to be  
46 performed, or a power to be exercised, by any body consisting of several members, a majority of  
47 said members, the whole having been duly called to meet, shall be a quorum; and a majority of  
48 quorum so convened shall be competent to act, unless the contrary is expressly required by the

49 Constitution or Canons.

50 Section 7, Conduct of Meetings: At all Parish meetings the Rector shall preside as  
51 Chairman, or in the case of his or her absence or a vacancy, one of the Wardens shall preside. If  
52 no Warden is present, a member of the Vestry chosen by the meeting shall preside. The Clerk of  
53 the Vestry shall serve as Secretary of the meeting. In the absence of the Clerk, the meeting  
54 shall elect a Secretary. When the meeting is called for the purpose of electing members of a  
55 Vestry, two tellers shall be appointed by the Chair, and the results of the ballots shall be declared  
56 by the Chair and recorded by the Secretary before the adjournment of the meeting. Ballots shall  
57 not be collected and counted until at least one-half hour after the stated time for holding the  
58 meeting and all qualified persons present have had due opportunity to cast their ballots. Each  
59 member of the Vestry shall be notified by the Secretary of his or her election, and the new  
60 Vestry shall be convened for organization and business as soon as practicable after the election.

61 **ARTICLE IV: The Vestry**

62 Section 1, Structure: The Vestry shall consist of the Rector as Chair, two Wardens  
63 designated as Junior and Senior Wardens, and nine members. The Junior Warden shall be  
64 nominated from current members of the Vestry or from among those who have served on the  
65 Vestry at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in the past, and shall succeed the Senior Warden.  
66 Any change in the numerical membership of the Vestry must be approved by a two-thirds  
67 majority of the Vestry, meeting in a regular monthly meeting.

68 Section 2, Appointment of a Nominating Committee: At least 60 days before the Annual  
69 Meeting in January, the Rector, after consultation with the Wardens, shall appoint a Nominating  
70 Committee consisting of the four persons and the Rector as *ex officio*. The Nominating  
71 Committee may consist of retiring or current members of the Vestry and Wardens and shall  
72 include at least one member of the Parish not currently on the Vestry. The Committee shall

73 have the duty of nominating candidates for election to the Vestry. The appointment of the  
74 Nominating committee shall be announced to the Parish at least 45 days prior to the Annual Meeting.  
75 Section 3, Wardens and Vestry Nominations: Nominations for Wardens and Vestry made  
76 by the Nominating Committee shall be published to the Parish at least three weeks before the  
77 Annual Meeting, after consent has been obtained from those nominated. To enable consideration  
78 of other nominations from the Parish at large, nominations for Vestry may also be made by any  
79 member of the Parish qualified to vote at the Annual Meeting, provided that each nomination is  
80 submitted in writing, with the consent of the nominee, to the Clerk of the Vestry at least two  
81 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. The names of all nominees shall be published or posted the  
82 Sunday immediately prior to the Annual Meeting. Nominees qualified to serve as members of the  
83 Vestry or Warden shall be parishioners as defined in Article II, Section 2, with the following  
84 exception: Nominees shall be of age 18 and upwards.

85 Section 4, Vestry Terms: There shall be three classes of three persons each who shall be  
86 elected to the Vestry for a term of three years. A class shall be so defined except when vacancies  
87 are caused by unfinished terms, provided, however, that any person appointed or elected to fill  
88 any unfinished term shall be a member of the same class as the Vestry member whose term was  
89 unfinished. All persons elected shall be assigned to a Vestry class by the drawing of straws.  
90 Providing that the unfinished term shall be one year or less, the person so appointed or elected is  
91 eligible to stand for re-election to a full term. If the term being completed is more than one year,  
92 the person appointed or elected is not eligible for re-election for at least one year following the  
93 completion of said term. The Junior Warden shall be elected to a one-year term and shall succeed  
94 the Senior Warden for a one-year term. In the event that the Junior Warden does not succeed as  
95 Senior Warden, both Junior and Senior Warden shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. At the  
96 Annual Meeting, in addition to other business which may be transacted, the parishioners who are  
97 qualified and entitled to vote as prescribed and defined in Article II, Section 2, shall elect by ballot  
98 by a plurality of votes, three members to replace those of a class whose term is expiring and shall

99 elect the Wardens as necessary.

100 Section 5, Vacancies and Unfinished Terms: Any vacancy or unfinished term among the  
101 Wardens and Vestry may be filled by appointment by the Rector with the consent of the Vestry,  
102 or with the consent of the Wardens if there be no Rector, or, upon the decision of the Vestry, may  
103 be filled by election at any duly called meeting of the Parish.

104 Section 6, Period of Office: Terms of office shall begin at the first meeting of the Vestry  
105 following the Annual Meeting at which the incoming class is elected and shall terminate at the last  
106 Vestry meeting prior to the Annual Meeting at which the term of that class expires.

107 Section 7, Powers, Duties, and Responsibilities: The Rector, Wardens, and members of  
108 the Vestry are understood to comprise the Vestry. At any time the Church is without a Rector,  
109 the full rights, privileges, and duties are vested in and devolve upon the Wardens and Vestry,  
110 consistent with the Canons of the Diocese of Chicago. When a rector is present, the Vestry exists  
111 in order to assist him or her in governing the temporal affairs of the Parish, to serve in an advisory  
112 capacity in all other matters pertaining to the Parish, to provide for all direct and indirect services  
113 required by the Rector in the performance of his or her duties, and to provide for both the needs  
114 and the expression of views of the members of the congregation in all things pertaining to public  
115 worship, education, social affairs, and evangelism with suitable participation of the congregation  
116 in any and all of these programs. The Vestry shall transact the temporal business of the Parish,  
117 seeing that all things necessary for public worship be provided and that all outstanding fiscal  
118 obligations, including but not limited to the payment of salaries, be attended to punctually and at  
119 intervals agreed upon.

120 Section 8, Non-performance of Duties: The seat of any member of the Vestry absent  
121 without excuse from three regular meetings in succession shall be declared vacant and be filled  
122 according to the provision of Section 5 *supra*.

123

**ARTICLE V: Meetings of the Vestry**

124 Section 1, Meetings: Vestry meetings may be called by order of an upon due notice by  
125 the Rector, or in case of his or her absence or inability to act, or if there be no Rector, by the  
126 Warden or Wardens, at any time deemed expedient. Meetings of the Vestry may also be called  
127 upon the request in writing of a majority of its members, declaring the object or objects of such  
128 meetings.

129 Section 2, Notice: The date, time, and place of any regularly scheduled or special meeting  
130 of the Vestry shall be made public and shall be open to members of the Parish, except that if the  
131 Rector and a majority of the quorum so vote, discussion of issues involving Parish personnel or  
132 pastoral care may be deferred to executive session.

133 Section 3, Quorum: No meeting of the Vestry shall be held to be valid in which there shall  
134 not be present either a Rector or at least one Warden. A majority of the members of the Vestry  
135 shall constitute a quorum; and a majority of the quorum so convened shall be competent to act,  
136 unless otherwise expressly required by the Constitution, the Canons, or specific provisions of  
137 these by-laws. Vestry meetings may be adjourned from time to time by a vote of members  
138 present though less than a quorum.

139

**ARTICLE VI: Officers and Committees of the Vestry**

140 Section 1, Officers: A Clerk and a Parish Treasurer, who may or may not be members of  
141 the Vestry but must be voting members of the Parish, shall be annually elected by the Vestry at  
142 the first meeting following the Annual Meeting to serve for a term or one year or until their  
143 successors in office are chosen. Any such officer may be removed by the Vestry and a successor  
144 appointed at any time.

145 Section 2, The Clerk: The Clerk shall attend all meetings of the Vestry, take Minutes of  
146 the proceedings, and when approved by the Vestry, enter and attest the same in the record of the  
147 Minutes, preserve all other Vestry records, send and receive correspondence as directed by the  
148 Rector and Vestry, and preserve all written reports submitted by the standing or *ad hoc*  
149 committees of the Vestry. The Clerk's records are the property of the Parish and shall be handed  
150 over to any successor. In the Clerk's absence another Vestry member shall be appointed as acting  
151 Clerk for the duration of the meeting.

152 Section 3, The Treasurer: The Treasurer shall receive all monies collected under the  
153 authority of the Vestry and shall have oversight for ensuring that expenditures take place within  
154 the limits of the budget approved by the Vestry and reported at the Annual Meeting. The  
155 Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping all such records of income and expenditures as are  
156 prescribed by Canon and shall report on the same to each regularly scheduled meeting of the  
157 Vestry and to the Annual Meeting. All such records are always subject to the inspection of the  
158 Rector, Wardens, or Vestry and shall be submitted for an internal review not less than once every  
159 two years. Records of individual pledges are open only to the Treasurer and the Rector.

160 Section 4, Committees: Committees of the Vestry are appointed annually by the Rector in  
161 consultation with the Vestry for a term of one year following the Annual Meeting. Voting  
162 members of the parish as defined in Article II are eligible to serve. The Rector and Wardens are  
163 *ex officio* members of all committees. Committees shall upon request provide written summaries of  
164 their activities as part of the agenda for Vestry meetings and in any case shall provide an annual  
165 written report to accompany the agenda of the Annual Meeting of the Parish.

166 Section 5, Finance Committee: The Rector, with the advice and consent of the Vestry  
167 shall appoint a Finance Committee, of which at least two members may come from the Parish at  
168 large. In addition to the *ex officio* members listed in Section 4 *supra*, the Treasurer shall serve  
169 *ex officio* on the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee, after consulting all existing Parish  
170 committees, officers, and staff of the church, and any member of the Parish who wishes to appear

171 before it, shall prepare the first draft of the budget for the ensuing fiscal year (January 1 -  
172 December 31) prior to its submission to the Vestry. The Finance Committee may conduct  
173 inquiries into issues of fiscal policy and long-range budgetary planning as directed by the Rector  
174 and Vestry.

175 Section 6, Other Committees: The Rector and/or a majority of the Vestry present in a  
176 valid meeting may appoint other committees, standing or ad hoc, to carry out the purposes of the  
177 Parish. The Vestry and Rector shall, in all cases of dispute, determine to which  
178 committee a particular matter may be referred.

179 Section 7, Executive Subcommittee: At the discretion of the Rector, an Executive  
180 Subcommittee composed of the Wardens and Treasurer may meet with the Rector for the  
181 discussion of Parish business between Vestry meetings. Where a formal transaction of the  
182 Executive Subcommittee involves the commitment of funds of the Parish, a record of the  
183 transaction must be submitted to the next regular or special meeting of the Vestry for review  
184 and final action.

185 **ARTICLE VII: Amendments, Jurisdiction, Effect**

186 Section 1: Amendments to these by-laws require the action of two-thirds of the Vestry  
187 and two-thirds of the voting members in attendance at the next Annual or Special meeting of the  
188 Parish. Any motion to amend must be submitted to the Vestry and Parish respectively at least  
189 30 days in advance of the meeting at which action is called for.

190 Section 2: In the event of any conflict with the Constitution or Canons of the Diocese of  
191 Chicago or the Episcopal Church or of any amendment of said Constitution or Canons which  
192 would dictate a corresponding amendment in these by-laws, the language of the Constitution and  
193 Canons will take precedence and these by-laws be considered to have been amended thereby.

194 Section 3: These by-laws supersede any previously existing by-laws for St. Christopher's



195 Episcopal Church, Oak Park, and shall take effect following approval by the Vestry and the  
196 Parish according to the provisions of Section 1 of this Article.

197 **ARTICLE VIII: Restricted Funds**

198 **(As amended at the Parish Annual Meeting held on January 28, 2001)**

199 Section 1, St. Christopher's Endowment: The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry shall establish  
200 and maintain the St. Christopher's Endowment from the Richard James Aldworth Foundation  
201 Bequest and any subsequent gifts allocated to the Endowment.

202 Amounts may be withdrawn from the Endowment from time to time to fund special projects,  
203 as determined by the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry, *provided however, that the amount or*  
204 *amounts so withdrawn in any calendar year shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the*  
205 *Average balance of the Endowment in each of the eight calendar quarters immediately*  
206 *preceding such calendar year. The remainder of the Endowment shall continue to be*  
207 *invested in the manner determined by the Rector, Wardens, Treasurer, and Vestry.*

208 Section 2, Housing Fund: The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry shall establish and maintain  
209 The Housing Fund from the proceeds of the sale of the Parish rectory and any subsequent gifts  
210 allocated to the Fund. The Fund shall provide long-term interest income for unrestricted use by  
211 the Parish. The principal and at least \$120.00 per month of the interest shall be restricted to  
212 investment purposes only. Said investments shall be determined by the Rector, Wardens,  
213 Treasurer, and Vestry. Any monthly interest income in excess of \$120.00 may be transferred  
214 to the Parish's operating budget as unrestricted income.

