Fifty-eighth Annual Diocesan Convention
November 7, 2026

Amendment A-4: Lay Delegate Representation

RESOLVED: That this 58th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Central Florida amend the Canons as follows:

Original Language:

Canon II, Section 4
Members of the Convention

Every Parish in union with the Convention of this Diocese shall be entitled to three lay delegates.

Proposed Changes to Language:

(1) In Canon II, section 4,

(a) Every Parish in union with the Convention of this Diocese shall be entitled to a number of lay delegates determined by its Average Sunday Attendance ("ASA"), as reported in the most recently filed annual Parochial Report, as follows:

(i) Parishes with ASA under 75 shall receive two (2) lay delegates;

(ii) Parishes with ASA between 75 and 149 shall receive three (3) lay delegates;

(iii) Parishes with ASA between 150 and 224 shall receive four (4) lay delegates;

(iv) Parishes with ASA between 225 and 299 shall receive five (5) lay delegates;

(v) Parishes with ASA between 300 and 374 shall receive six (6) lay delegates; and

(vi) Parishes with ASA above 374 shall receive one (1) additional lay delegate for each further increment of 75 in ASA; and

(b) Notwithstanding the above, any Parish which fails to submit its most recently required Parochial Report by the deadline required by Canon shall not be entitled to lay representation until such time as the Report has been filed.

(2) In Canon XV, after section 7, insert a new section 8 as follows,

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Canons, an aided Parish shall not be entitled to more than two (2) lay delegates to any Convention.

Rationale:

The current Canon fixes representation at three lay delegates for every Parish and two for every Mission, without regard to size. Against the Diocese's 78 congregations, this produces a Convention in which a Parish of 25 average Sunday attendance ("ASA") carries the same voice as a Parish of 356. The Diocese's twenty largest congregations account for 52.7% of diocesan ASA but hold only 27.0% of lay delegate votes under the present allocation — a gap this amendment is designed to narrow, not eliminate. Under the proposed schedule, that share moves to 39.1%, still below proportional parity with attendance.

Missions and aided Parishes are held at the floor of two delegates for related but distinct reasons, not merely as a courtesy to smaller congregations. A Mission's Vicar is appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority; the Bishop holds the governing relationship structurally, and Convention representation reflects that. An aided Parish, by contrast, retains the right to call its own Rector under Canon XV and XVII — the autonomy a Mission does not have — but has not met the assessment, compensation, insurance, or reporting requirements of Canon XV, Sections 5 or 6. Aided status is reviewed annually and is intended to be temporary. Holding both categories at the same floor reflects present capacity without collapsing the governance distinction Canon XV preserves between them. A secondary benefit is practical: small congregations already struggle to fill delegate seats, and a uniform floor of two makes quorum easier to reach across the Diocese.

A single governing figure — 75 — sets both the floor and every subsequent increment of the schedule. This is a deliberate drafting choice, not a coincidence: it means the schedule requires no future amendment as congregations grow, since the formula simply continues rather than terminating at a fixed ceiling. Set against the Diocese's actual distribution, a floor of 75 brings seventeen currently under-represented Parishes into a meaningfully revised schedule, rather than adjusting only a handful of outliers at a much lower floor.

Average Sunday Attendance is measured by the most recently filed Parochial Report, consistent with the majority of Episcopal dioceses that tie representation to attendance — Maine at a floor of 50, Georgia at 99, Florida at 150. A single-year measure trades the smoothing effect of a multi-year average for administrative simplicity and precedent among peer dioceses; the existing dispute-resolution mechanism under Canon XXVII, Section 4, giving the Ecclesiastical Authority, in consultation with the Chancellor, authority to resolve a contested ASA or delegate entitlement, is the intended safeguard against an anomalous single year rather than an averaging formula.

Finally, conditioning lay representation on a filed Parochial Report follows precedent elsewhere in The Episcopal Church — the Diocese of Kentucky withholds lay representation entirely from a Congregation more than six months in arrears on required assessments (Kentucky Canon 32, Section 8(a)) — and gives every Congregation a direct incentive to file promptly rather than treating the report as separate from its voice at Convention.