WHEREAS, the Holy Synod of the ECC 2026 has lawfully convened and passed the legislation listed below;

This legislation amends paragraph 7.d of the Sacramental Guidelines in the Statutes which currently reads:

The deacon is called and affirmed by the local faith community. Deacons serve their local church and secular community. The role of deacon is facilitating the apostolic ministry of the local church. The ministry of deacons is to assist the bishop and presbyters in the celebration of Sacraments, pastoral leadership and one of service to those inside and outside the church, marginalized by society, the sick, poor, elderly, etc; and remind the church that it too is diaconal. Deacons work collaboratively with the laity, presbytery and episcopacy.

The proposal replaces paragraph 7.d with the following new text.

The term deacon is derived from "diakonia" and translated as both "ministry" and "service." As recorded in Acts 6, the apostles commissioned the first deacons to serve those in need. Today, deacons of all genders care for the individual needs of parishioners and the broader community, paying special aJen+on to those marginalized by society, such as those who are ill or in poverty. Deacons act as "bridge builders," facilitating connections of communication and service between the laity, the presbytery, and the local bishop, as well as between the local faith community and other religious and secular communities outside its walls. Other clergy begin their ordained life as deacons because the focus on discerning and responding to human needs provides a strong foundation for later pastoral work. Whether their callings are transitional or vocational, deacons are called and affirmed by their local faith communities and work collaboratively with the local bishop, clergy, and laity they serve to determine their roles. The specific functions of individual deacons are necessarily varied and flexible because they stem from both the deacon's particular gifts and the evolving needs of the local congregation and its broader community. Because of this, no list of tasks deacons in the ECC perform can be exhaustive, but deacons' tasks typically fall into four categories:

• Administrative: publishing parish communica+ons, maintaining parish financial and membership records, leading or serving on governance groups (parish council, Diocesan Council, ECC-HOP Steering Committee, community leadership teams), etc.

• Liturgical: assisting the priest at mass, proclaiming the gospel, serving as homilist occasionally, serving as sacristan, providing technical or other practical support for liturgies.

• Pastoral: meeting informally with parishioners, visiting the sick and shut-ins and providing Eucharistic ministry for them, serving as a chaplain, leading education or prayer groups, etc.

• Serving in community: organizing and leading specialized outreach ministries, organizing laity to perform community service or support social justice events, etc.

WHEREAS, the Presiding Bishop has the obligation to either approve or veto said legislation ;

NOW THEREFORE, after due consideration I affix my signature below APPROVING this legislation

Signed this day October 12th, 2026

+ Paul J. Burson

Bishop Paul Burson