St. Brendan the Navigator Episcopal Church
Constitution and Bylaws as Amended 7/31/16

- Proposed Bylaw Revisions and Explanations-
July 26, 2020

(Important note: Any proposed bylaw changes approved by the parish are subject to Diocesan review and approval.)

The goals for proposing the following revisions of our Bylaws at this time are:

- *To bring our Bylaws into conformity with our present practices in the parish;*
- *To clarify the terms of office for vestry members in the parish;*
- *To update language to current usage in the Church and to omit provisions no longer applicable to the parish's life and ministry.*

The annotations in red are for explanation purposes only and are not proposed for adoption by the parish at its Annual Meeting.

Article I
NAME

Proposed Section 1 Revision: The name of this parish shall be The Rector, Wardens and vestry of St. Brendan the Navigator Episcopal Church in Stonington. It may conduct its affairs using the name St. Brendan the Navigator Episcopal Church ~~of~~ in Deer Isle, Maine. ~~and Stonington, or St. Brendan the Navigator Episcopal Church.~~

*(**Explanation**: Updated name changes emphasizing that the boundaries of the Parish include the whole of Deer Isle.)*

Section 2. The parish accepts the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and promises obedience to the Constitution and Canons thereof and of the Diocese of Maine. - *Unchanged*

Article II
MEMBERS

Section 1. Any baptized person who is at least fifteen (15) years old, is a stated contributor to the parish, is a stated worshipper at its services, has signified an intention of attaching to this parish, and has accepted the terms of this Constitution and Bylaws, shall be considered a member of the parish. - *Unchanged.*

Section 2. ~~Communicants in good standing, as that term is defined by the Canons of the Diocese of Maine, or in the absence of such definition~~ All members of the parish are eligible to hold office and vote at any annual or special meeting of the parish.

(***Explanation***: *This is to be in conformity with the Parish's Values to engage as many of our parishioners as possible.)*

Article III
THE VESTRY

Proposed Section 1 Revision: There shall be a vestry ~~elected by members of the parish~~ consisting of a Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clerk, Treasurer, and three (3) Members at Large. Members of the vestry shall be elected by the members of the parish. ~~from among their number~~.
~~Note: This Section is effective at the Annual Meeting held in 2017.~~
~~Until the Annual Meeting held in 2017 there shall be four members at large~~.

*(**Explanation**: Changed to reflect a broadening of eligibility to vote and to hold office at St. Brendan's and to omit a note concerning the Annual Meeting held in 2017.)*

Section 2. ~~The officers of the parish and the members at large of the vestry shall all be lay communicants in good standing, stated contributors to and worshippers in the parish, and shall meet all the requirements of the Constitution of the Diocese and the laws of the State of Maine. Wardens shall be at least 20 years of age. Five members shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the vestry.~~

Proposed Section 2 Revision: The officers and the Members at Large of the vestry shall be members of the parish. Five vestry members shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the vestry.

*(**Explanation**: Changed to simplify and clarify eligibility.*

Section 3. ~~The terms of the office of the Wardens, Clerk and Treasurer shall be one (1) year, and no person shall serve more than three (3) successive full terms as a Warden, Clerk or Treasurer. At the annual meeting held in 2011 a member at large shall be elected for a three year term, a two year term and a one year term. Thereafter all members at large will be elected for a three (3) year term. Members of the vestry may serve an aggregate of six (6) successive years in a combination of any offices, such as Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clerk, Treasurer and member at large. No person having served as a member at large for a complete three (3) year term shall be re-elected as a member at large until an interval of at least one (1) year has passed. In the event of the resignation or death of any member of the vestry, the vestry may appoint a member of the parish to serve until the next annual meeting or may call a special meeting of the members of the parish to elect someone to serve for the remainder of that person's unexpired term. Otherwise an election for a person to serve for the remainder of an unexpired term shall be held at the annual meeting.~~

Proposed Section 3 Revision: The term of office of the Wardens, Clerk and Treasurer shall be one (1) year, renewable up to two times after which there shall be an interval of one year before a person may return to serving in that office. The term of office for Members at Large shall be three (3) years, renewable once. Members of the vestry may serve an aggregate of six (6)

successive years in a combination of any offices, such as Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clerk, Treasurer and Member at Large. No person having served as a member of the vestry for six (6) successive years shall be re-elected to serve as a member of the vestry until an interval of at least one (1) year has passed.

(***Explanation**: Changed to allow any elected person to serve a maximum total of six years in any combination of Vestry positions before having to step down for at least a year before being eligible for election to the Vestry*.)

Proposed (*new*) Section 4: In the event of the resignation or death of any member of the vestry, the vestry may appoint a member to serve until the next annual meeting. Or, the vestry may call a special meeting of the parish to elect a member to serve for the remainder of that person's unexpired term. Otherwise, an election for a member to serve for the remainder of an unexpired term shall be held at the annual meeting.

*(**Explanation**: Changed and added as Section 4 to reflect the filling of unanticipated Vestry vacancies.)*

Article IV
MEETINGS

Section 1. ~~The Annual Meeting shall be held in July of each year, on a date to be specified by the vestry. Special meetings may be called by the priest in charge, or by a majority of the vestry. Notice of the meeting shall be given by mail, e-mail or similar form to members of the parish and by posting notice on the door of the church office at least seven days in advance of the meeting. Twenty-five percent of the eligible voters of the parish, a majority of which must be Maine residents, shall constitute a quorum; and a quorum being present, a majority thereof shall control.~~

Proposed Section 1 Revision: The Annual Meeting of the parish shall be held in July of each year on a date to be specified by the vestry. Special meetings of the parish may be called by the Rector or Priest in Charge, or by a majority of the vestry. Notice of the meeting shall be given by mail, e-mail or similar form to members of the parish and by posting notice on the door of the church office at least seven days in advance of the meeting. Twenty-five percent of the members of the parish shall constitute a quorum at a meeting of the parish.

*(**Explanation:** Changed to reflect a broadening of eligibility to vote and to refer here and in subsequent sections to the clergy person of the Parish as "Rector or Priest in Charge," so as to include whichever title is currently designated by the Diocese of Maine for the priest of this Parish.)*

Section 2~~. The Rector, or in the absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden, shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the parish. The Junior Warden, in the absence of the Senior Warden, shall assume all duties of the Senior Warden .~~

Proposed Section 2 Revision: The Rector or Priest in Charge, or such other member of the vestry designated by the Rector or Priest in Charge, shall preside in all the meetings of the parish and the vestry. In the absence of the Rector or Priest in Charge, the Senior Warden shall preside in all parish and vestry meetings. The Junior Warden, in the absence of the Senior Warden, shall assume all duties of the Senior Warden.

*(**Explanation**: Changed to allow the Rector or Priest in Charge the option of designating a member of the Vestry to preside at meetings of the Parish and/or of the Vestry- otherwise unchanged.).*

Proposed (new) Section 3: All meetings of the parish may legally be conducted by teleconference or by video communications. Notice of any meeting of the parish, and whether it will be conducted in person or by teleconference or video communications shall be given by mail, e-mail or similar form to members of the parish and by posting notice on the door of the parish office at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

*(**Explanation**: Added to affirm the legality of meetings conducted by electronic means and the necessity of notifying parishioners in advance of by what means meetings will he conducted.)*

Article V
DISPOSITION OF ASSETS

Proposed Revision: In the event of the dissolution of the parish, its assets shall be distributed to the Bishop of the Diocese of Maine to be used for the benefit of the residents of Deer Isle, Stonington, **and of the Blue Hill Peninsula**, Maine.

*(**Explanation**: Changed to reflect the Mission of St. Brendan's: "to serve the needs of one another and of those on the island, the peninsula, and throughout the world.")*

Article VI
AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any annual, regular, or special meeting of the parish, provided notice of such amendment shall have been inserted in notice of the meeting, and provided that no amendment to Article I, Section 2 shall take effect until it shall have been approved by the Bishop of the Diocese of Maine. -*Unchanged*

~~**Notes of some relevance:**~~
~~**Sec. 3**. All communicants of this Church who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, are to be considered communicants in good standing.~~

~~**Sec. 3**. Unless it conflicts with the law as aforesaid, the Rector, or such other member of the Vestry designated by the Rector, shall preside in all the meetings of the Vestry.~~

*(**Explanation**: Not necessary or relevant given proposed revisions.)*