

Followers of the Way CONSTITUTION

Article I. Name

This Society shall be known as The Followers of the Way.

Article II. Purpose

The Society exists for the greater glory of God, to be promoted more especially in the four ways following, namely:

- ... to become holy people, having a godly way of life, particularly evidenced in prayer;
- ... to increase effectiveness of our mission and ministry by working and praying in love and companionship with others;
- ... to practice and encourage Christ-like love among all people, especially among clergy and Christian leaders;
- ... to nurture a holy life among The Followers of The Way and in the Church at large.

Article III. Vision

We are a society of believers in Jesus Christ who seek to become holy people of God, living by a defined Way of Life that focuses particularly on prayer. We desire to be contemplatives in action who draw from the wellsprings of intimacy with God as the primary Source of life and ministry. Though we have been sent by God into the world as His missionaries, we recognize that we are also sent by Him into our hearts, minds, and wills so that we can be transformed into His likeness. Our fellowship flows out from our relationship with God the Holy Trinity and with each other as co-laborers in ministry and in discipleship. Although we do not live in physical community, our Mother House is The Abbey of the Way in Worcester, MA (www.abbeyoftheway.us). We are united by a Common Way of Life, a daily Office of prayer, an annual retreat, and occasional days of reflection. In all of this, we wish to glorify, love and serve God ever more faithfully, to minister according to His general and particular calling to us, and to advance the influence of the Kingdom of God. We ask God to use this society and rule to make us more like Jesus.

Article IV. Members

The members of the Society shall be clergy or Christian workers, their spouses who desire to participate, and others who offer themselves to praying for them as Oblates, who are members of or are in agreement with the doctrine and discipline of the Anglican Church in North America, and who are willing to be present at our occasional meetings and worship. No one shall be admitted a member of the Society until after having completed a probation of at least three months, and having made a report to the Abbot of the way in which the Way of Life has been kept. Such person may then be admitted to full membership with the consent of the Abbot, and of the majority of such of the members as are present at any regular Chapter meeting. A list of all current Members and Probationers shall be published after the next Annual Meeting. Members shall engage themselves to the Fellowship for three years following the Annual

Meeting. Within the six months before the Annual Meeting of the Fellowship nearest to the expiration of any triennium, all members who wish to renew their engagement to the Society for the next triennium may do so with the consent of the Abbot. A majority of the members present at such Annual Meeting may by vote extend the period for renewal to a date not later than the next following meeting of the Society at its annual Retreat.

Article V. Probationers

All applications for admission to probation shall be made to the Abbot. If the Abbot consents to receive the applicant, the applicant shall serve a term of three months, before being eligible for membership in the Society. Probationers shall report to the Abbot at the end of three months as to the way in which the Way of Life has been kept. They may withdraw at any time during probationary period by giving notice to the Abbot. At the expiration of three months from the beginning of the term of probation, if the probationer does not apply to the Abbot for admission to full membership, the Abbot shall confer with the probationer. The term of probation may, with the consent of the Abbot, be extended for up to six months, but no second renewal shall be made. If at the expiration of the second term of probation no application for admission to full membership be made, the name of such probationer shall be stricken from the probationers list.

Article VI. Postulants

Any candidate for Holy Orders may apply to the Abbot for admission as a Postulant; and, if accepted, shall endeavor to keep the Way of Life of the Society, provided that modifications may be made in individual cases at the discretion of the Abbot. A Postulant shall report to the Abbot at the end of three months as to the way in which the Way of Life has been kept. If no report is received after three months of Postulancy, the Abbot shall confer with the Postulant. A Postulant failing to report within an additional three-month period shall be stricken from the Postulants list.

Article VII. Withdrawals and Removals

A member desiring, for any weighty reason, to withdraw from the Society before the expiration of a triennium, shall consult with the Abbot. If the Abbot, after consultation with the Council, shall consider the reasons sufficient to justify withdrawal, consent may be given. A member who has failed to pursue the Way of Life or has failed to be in communication with the Abbot, may be removed by the Council at the conclusion of that member's triennium, with the confirmation of members present at the Annual Meeting. Notice of the member's expected removal shall be given to the members no later than one month prior to the Annual Meeting.

VIII. Chapter Meetings

Meetings of the Chapter shall be held at least twice in the year. Special meetings may be called by the Abbot. At any meeting three shall suffice for a quorum for the transaction of business, but for the election of an Abbot five shall be required to constitute a quorum. The meeting nearest to the Feast of the Pentecost shall be the Annual Meeting for the election of officers.

Article IX. Officers

The officers of the Fellowship shall consist of an Abbot, an Assistant Abbot, and a Secretary-Treasurer. The Abbot shall be chosen for a term of three years. The Assistant Abbot shall be chosen for one year, or to serve until a successor has been appointed. The other officers shall be chosen for a term of one year, or to serve until the Annual Meeting next succeeding their election. All the officers are eligible for re-election. The Abbot, Assistant Abbot, and Secretary shall constitute the Council of the Fellowship.

Article X. Appointments

The Abbot will be chosen by the members present at the Annual Meeting. Notice of the election and the date of the Annual Meeting shall be given to all members by no later than two months prior to the Annual Meeting. The other officers of the Society shall be appointed by the Council, with the confirmation of those appointed by the members present at the Annual Retreat. Notice of the appointments and the date of the Annual Retreat shall be given to all members by no later than one month prior to the Annual Retreat. If a majority of the members present at the Annual Retreat fail to confirm the appointments, the Council shall make a second set of appointments, with notice of the appointments given to all members by no later than one month after the date of the Retreat, with confirmation by mail or email to be scheduled no later than two months after the date of the Retreat. A vacancy in the office of the Abbot shall be filled only at the Annual Meeting. When the office of Abbot is vacant the Assistant Abbot shall discharge all the duties appertaining to the same, until the next Annual Meeting. Vacancies in any other office may be filled by appointment of the council, with notice of the appointments given to all members by no later than one month after the date of the vacancy, with confirmation by mail or email to be scheduled no later than two months after the vacancy. A member who cannot be present at a meeting at which an election is to be held or an appointment is to be confirmed may send a statement of their choice for the election and/or their intent to confirm or deny the appointment. No proxy statements shall be allowed.

Article XI. Habit

At its meetings, the members shall wear a wooden cross with the monogram of the Society engraved thereon. No other distinctive dress is recommended.

Article XII. Way of Life

The Way of Life may be amended only by the unanimous consent of those present at any Annual Meeting. Notice of the proposed change shall be given in writing by the Secretary to all the members by no later than two months prior to the Annual Meeting. Members unable to be present to grant their consent may send a statement of their consent or denial of the change. No proxy statements shall be allowed.

Article XIII. Amendments

This constitution shall not be altered nor amended except by consent of two thirds of such of the members as are present at the Annual Meeting. Notice of the proposed change shall be given in writing by the Secretary to all the members by no later than two months prior to the Annual Meeting. Members unable to be present to grant their consent may send a statement of their consent or denial of the change. No proxy statements shall be allowed.

Article XIV. Prayer of Vocation

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly Yours, utterly dedicated unto You; and then use us, we pray, as You will, and always to Your glory and the welfare of Your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.