



MEMORANDUM

TO: Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in North America

FROM: Executive Committee of the Anglican Church in North America

DATE: May 19, 2026

RE: Recommendation to Grant a Waiver and Approve Diocesan Status for the Missionary District of the Mid-South

Executive Summary

The Executive Committee (EC) of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) formally recommends that the Provincial Council modify the minimum standards for diocesan status applicable to the Missionary District of the Mid-South to be no greater than the standards reflected in the District's application for recognition as a diocese and to formally approve its admission as a new diocese within the Anglican Church in North America, to be known as the Anglican Diocese of the Mid-South (ADOMS) at the meeting of the Provincial Council in June 2026.

On April 21, 2026, the Executive Committee adopted a resolution recommending this waiver to the Provincial Council. This recommendation is signed by Bishop Julian Dobbs, Chair of the Executive Committee, and Kelly Yoder, Secretary.

Canonical Basis for Recommendation

Per the ACNA Canons, the Provincial Council has the authority to modify diocesan requirements in exceptional cases. The relevant language is as follows:

Title I, Canon 5 "Of Dioceses," Section 1 - *Concerning Structure*

A Diocese is a grouping of congregations gathered for mission under the oversight of a Bishop (the "Ecclesiastical Authority"). A Diocese is composed of a minimum of twelve (12) congregations with an ASA of at least fifty (50) each and a collective ASA of at least one thousand (1,000). A diocese shall demonstrate that there is sufficient financial support for the office of the Bishop and shall provide financial support to the Province in the spirit of Canon I.9.



Title I, Canon 5 “Of Dioceses,” Section 5 - *Concerning Applying for Diocesan Status*

“A group of congregations that meet the minimum standards for diocesan status may apply to the Council to be added to the Church as a Diocese. In exceptional cases, the Provincial Council may modify these requirements on a case-by-case basis by two-thirds vote upon the affirmative recommendation by the Executive Committee. The application form shall prescribe, at a minimum, basic information concerning the history, mission and legal status of the group, current rules of governance, its individual and collective ASA and Anglican affiliation, and any justification for a modification of applicable requirements....”

Appendix A - Guidelines for Submitting an Application Form to the Provincial Council for Recognition as a New Diocese/Network or as a Diocese/Network “In Formation

“Request for Waiver of Canon I.5.1 Standards. As stated in 1 above, Canon I.5.1 provides for a possible exception to standards for those groupings that may fall short of the numerical standards and yet by virtue of other factors believe that they should not be placed in the temporary ‘In Formation’ status. This section provides the opportunity to describe other factors that the Provincial Council might consider in granting full status as an exception to numerical standards. Such factors could include such matters as falling a bit short of twelve congregations with an ASA of 50 but having a collective ASA well above 1,000 or perhaps falling a bit short in both categories but demonstrating outstanding fruit in areas of evangelism, church planting and congregational growth.”

Analysis of Diocesan Requirements & Mid-South Status

The Executive Committee has reviewed the Mid-South Missionary District application against the canonical requirements for a new diocese, as well as the ongoing standards and requirements laid out for each diocese (e.g., safeguarding, finances, etc.). While the Missionary District of the Mid-South, a Missionary District of the Anglican Diocese of the South (ADOTS), meets or exceeds most standards, a waiver is requested regarding the specific number of congregations meeting the minimum Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) threshold.



Institutional Viability

- **Congregation Count:** The requirement is a minimum of 12 congregations with an ASA of at least 50 each. The Mid-South currently has 14 congregations. While only 9 meet the 50+ ASA threshold, the Executive Committee notes that two others currently slightly under 50 ASA. A church plant is also in progress.
- **Collective ASA:** The requirement is a collective ASA of at least 1,000. The Mid-South significantly exceeds this, reporting 1,279 ASA in 2025 and growing to 1,490 in Q1 2026.
- **Financial Support for a Bishop:** The Mid-South has established an annual budget of \$282,000. This includes \$130,000 for a full-time Bishop's compensation, with alternative options for a Bishop/Rector or Bishop-in-Residence if necessary.
- **Provincial Support:** The application includes a budgeted 10% tithe to the Province, estimated at \$24,700 based on parish contributions of \$247,000.

Governance and Safeguarding

- **Constitution & Canons:** The proposed ADOMS Constitution and Canons have been reviewed by the ACNA Governance Task Force. They include a formal submission to the authority of the Province and provide for an ecclesiastical Trial Court. The Governance Task Force has made some recommendations for revisions to the Mid-South Constitution and Canons. These recommendations are being reviewed by the Mid-South Constitution & Canons Committee, who will make recommendations for changes at Synod in November.
- **Financial Accountability:** The Missionary District of the Mid-South has adopted the ADOTS Financial Manual for Parishes (November 2025) to ensure proper recordkeeping, audits, and bonding of financial officers.
- **Safeguarding:** The Missionary District of the Mid-South plans to implement the ADOTS Adult Misconduct Customary and Sexual Misconduct Policy. These protocols include established Reports Receivers and a reporting protocol. The Safeguarding Office has made some recommendations. The Steering Committee and Constitution & Canons Committee of the Mid-South will review these recommendations along with the revised ACNA Title IV (assuming ratification). Post Provincial



Council and Provincial Assembly, the Mid-South Steering Committee and Constitution & Canons Committee has committed to updating its safeguarding protocols and Policy for the Protection of Children and Adults, to ensure continued compliance with any updated canonical standards.

Transitional Provision

The parishes and clergy of the Mid-South will continue to operate under the jurisdiction of the bishops of the Anglican Diocese of The South (ADOTS) until a bishop for ADOMS has been consecrated. This includes the continued use of the ADOTS financial and misconduct policies during the transition.

The new diocese, if approved, will follow the process outlined in the new Episcopal Election Customary that is pending approval by the College of Bishops.

Available Materials

The following materials are available to delegates upon request (please email Deborah Tepley, Executive Director, at: dtepley@acna.org):

- The full formal application and Missionary District history.
- Individual parish and vestry letters of intent.
- Financial Manual and Misconduct Customary.
- Complete proposed Constitution and Canons.