

THE CHARTER
LAWS AND RULES
OF THE CORPORATION
FOR THE RELIEF OF THE
WIDOWS and CHILDREN
OF THE
CLERGY
OF THE
Protestant Episcopal Church
IN MARYLAND

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CHARTER

 AN ACT

To provide a fund for the relief of the Widows and Children of the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this State (Maryland). Passed November Session, 1784 ch. 78.

Whereas, it hath been represented to this General Assembly by the Rev. William Smith, Doctor in Divinity, the Rev. William West, John Andrews and Thomas John Claggett, that they are a committee appointed by and in behalf of the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this State, (formerly denominated the Church of England), to solicit an Act of Incorporation to enable the clergy of the said Church to raise and manage a fund for providing small annuities for the distressed widows of the said clergy, and for the education of their children; and this General Assembly is earnestly desirous to promote every pious and charitable design for the relief and assistance of the widows and fatherless, and especially those of the respectable and useful body of clergy of all denominations, who are often obliged through the uncertainty and scantiness of their support in many places, to leave their families in very necessitous circumstances: ---
Therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, That the said Protestant Episcopal Clergy; namely, William Smith, John Gordon, John M'Pherson, William Thompson, Samuel Keene, William West, Walter Magowan, John Andrews, Thomas John Claggett, George Goldie, Edward Gantt, Francis Lauder, Jos. Messenger, John Bowie, Walter Harrison, Thos. Gates, James Wilmer, Hamilton Bell, Francis Walker, John Stewart, Samuel Tingley, Leonard Cutting, Ralph Higginbotham, Mason Weems and Edward Gantt, Jr., and such other Clergymen in the orders and communion of the said Church, as may hereafter become residents of this State, and shall be contributors to the said funds of the Corporation, herein erected, and as may be admitted into the said corporation, by a majority of the members thereof for the time being, shall be and they and their successors are hereby declared to be, one community, corporation and body politic, forever, by the name of "the Corporation for the relief of the Widows and Children of the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Maryland," and by the same name they and their successors shall and may, at all times hereafter, be persons able and capable in law to purchase, take, have and enjoy, to them and their successors in fee, or for any less estate or estates, any lands, tenements, rents, annuities, pensions and other hereditaments, within this State, by the gift, bargain, sale, or devise, of any person or persons, bodies politic and corporate, capable to make the same; and such lands, tenements, rents, annuities, pensions and other hereditaments, or any less estates, rights, or interest; of or in the same at their pleasure to alien, sell, transfer or lease, in such manner as they may judge most conducive or furthering the pious design of this charitable incorporation, and according to the nature of such estate as they may have in the same; and also that they and their successors may take and receive any sum or sums of money, and any kind, manner or portion of goods and chattels, and may or shall be given, sold or bequeathed unto them by any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, capable to make a gift, sale or bequest

thereof, and to employ the same, either in their immediate payment of annuities to the widows aforesaid, and other declared purposes of this incorporation, or in providing a fund, or capital sufficient to produce a yearly interest, revenue or income, for answering the good purposes of the same; provided that the clear yearly value of the said capital, funds, stock and other hereditaments and real estate of the said Corporation, do not exceed fifteen thousand Spanish milled dollars of the present current weight; namely seventeen pennyweight and six grains each dollar, above all taxes and assessments.

3dly. *And be it enacted*, That the members of the said Corporation, and their successors, may meet together on the fourth Tuesday in May every year, and at such other time or times, and at such place or places, within this State; and upon such public notice given, as may be fixed and agreed upon, for the purposes of forming such rules and regulations, and as may be necessary for answering and carrying into effect the pious purposes of this Act; provided such rules and regulations be not repugnant to the constitution and laws of this State.

4thly. *And be it enacted*, That the said Corporation and their successors, by the name aforesaid, shall be forever thereafter able and capable in law to sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, answer and be answered unto, defend and be defended, in all or any courts of justice, and before all or any judges, officers or other persons whatsoever, in all and singular, actions, matters and demands whatsoever; and that it shall and may be lawful for them and their successors, forever thereafter, to have a common seal for their use, and in their affairs and business; and the same, at the will and pleasure of them and their successors, to change, alter, break and make anew, from time to time, as they shall think best; and shall in general have and exercise all such rights, franchises, privileges and immunities, as by law are incident and necessary to corporations of this kind, and which may be necessary to the Corporation herein and hereby constituted and erected, to enable them duly and fully in the law, to execute all things touching and concerning the design and intent of their said incorporation, for the benefit, succor and relief of the widows of such clergymen in the orders and communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church aforesaid, as may or shall become contributors to the funds of said Corporation, agreeable to such rules and by-laws as may be established for the management and payment of annuities to the said widows, and for the education of their children, and settling them in some useful business or profession.

As used in this Charter, the word "widow" shall mean "widower" when used to refer to the spouse of a female member. 4/21/80

AN ACT

To amend and enlarge the powers granted by the Act entitled "An Act to provide a fund for the relief of the Widows and Children of the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Maryland" passed November Session, 1784, Chapter 78.

WHEREAS, in the period of one hundred years since the passage of the Act herein referred to, the number of persons to be benefited by the Corporation thereby created has largely increased and their needs and necessities have multiplied in various forms; and although the ability of the Corporation to meet those wants has also increased, it yet requires further

enlargement and more liberty in the use of its income, in order thoroughly to accomplish the various charitable purposes that may be sub-served thereby; therefore,

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland*, That the proviso in the Act entitled “An Act to provide a fund for the relief of the Widows and Children of the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Maryland,” passed November Session, 1784, Chapter 78, which limits the clear yearly value of the capital fund, stock and other hereditaments and real estate of the Corporation thereby created to a sum not exceeding fifteen thousand Spanish milled dollars or the then current weight of seventeen pennyweight and six grains, each dollar above all taxes and assessments, be and the same is hereby repealed; and the said corporation is hereby authorized to hold such funds, stocks and other hereditaments and real estate as authorized by the Act aforesaid. ~~provided that the net income arising from the same shall not exceed the sum of fifty thousand dollars per annum.~~ 11/18/68

Sec. 2. *And be it enacted*, That it shall be competent for the said Corporation to admit new members by the votes of two-thirds of those members who may be present at any annual meeting of said Corporation.

Sec. 3. *And be it enacted*, That the said corporation be and it is hereby authorized, *at any annual meeting, by a vote of a majority of the members present at the meeting*, to distribute any surplus of the preceding year remaining after the settlement in full of all expenses and claims upon the said Corporation for that year to the following objects **below**, ~~in the order named, and in such proportion as to it may seem best~~, unless as herein otherwise specified, viz:

Firstly. The Corporation shall be and it is hereby authorized to distribute any surplus of the previous year 11/18/68

~~Secondly.~~ to the payment of the Widows and Children of deceased members, as now authorized under the by-laws of the Corporation to receive annuities, of such sums, in addition to their annuities as their respective needs and the amount to be distributed may warrant.

In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the Corporation, the assets then existing will be distributed among the Dioceses of Maryland, Easton and Washington of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in such proportions as the members shall determine at a duly called meeting for that purpose. 11/18/68