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AN ACT to incorporate certain persons as a Society  
by name of St. Stephen's Church in Providence,  
Rhode-Island.

Whereas, divers persons have petitioned this general  
assembly for an act of incorporation, to enable them  
and their associates to establish, uphold, and maintain  
a religious society and worship, according to the rites  
and usages of the protestant episcopal church, in the  
United States of America :

St. Ste-  
phen's  
Church  
Prov.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly as follows :—*

Section 1. Francis Vinton, William Blanding, Gideon Gurnett, Nicholas Stilwell, Joseph Adams, Henry Gardner, William Burrough, Luther Lyon, Wheeler M. Blanding, and Samuel Ames, together with their associates, whose names are subscribed to the petition referred to in the preamble to this act, and such others as may hereafter become members of this corporation,

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they and their successors forever, are hereby created a body corporate and politic, with perpetual succession: in the name of St. Stephen's Church, in Providence, Rhode Island; for the purpose of establishing and sustaining public worship, in any church or place of worship that may be occupied or owned by said corporation, according to the rites and usages of the protestant episcopal church in the United States; and by that name shall be able and capable in law to sue and be sued, to plead and be impleaded, to defend and be defended against, in all courts and places, and before all proper judges and magistrates whomsoever: to take, receive and hold all monies and other property by voluntary subscription, contribution, donations or otherwise accruing to said corporation, within the provisions of this act: also all legacies and devises of real and personal estate, and to have, hold, possess and acquire lands, tenements, and hereditaments, goods and chattels, and property of every description not exceeding forty thousand dollars: and all and singular the estate and property aforesaid to lease, grant, convey, or dispose of in such manner as they may judge expedient at their will and pleasure: to have and use a common seal, and the same to break, alter and renew at pleasure; and at any of their meetings to enact and pass such rules, regulations, and by-laws for the government of said corporation or its officers, and for the management of its affairs, as they may deem it proper and necessary: *Provided*, that the same be not repugnant to the laws of this state and of the United States.

Sec. 2. There shall be a meeting of said corporation on Easter Monday, in every year, at which meeting there shall be, and at any legal meeting if necessary there may be, elected not exceeding thirteen vestrymen, and also a treasurer and secretary of the corporation, which last named officer shall also be clerk of the vestry: and it shall be the duty of said vestry to elect from their number two wardens: the rector shall be ex-officio president and member of the vestry, and the wardens shall be ex-officio vice presidents of the vestry; and at all meetings of the vestry, or either of them any business connected with the affairs of the corporation may be transacted. Eleven members at least, of said

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corporation shall be necessary to form a quorum, and meetings of said corporation at any time may be called, by giving reasonable notice thereof by direction of the minister and wardens for the time being or by a majority of the vestrymen, or by any five members of said corporation: *Provided*, that if said corporation shall at any time fail of holding any of their annual meetings, such failure shall not in any way impair or invalidate this act, nor the commission and authority of the officers of the corporation.

Sec. 3. Each owner, lessee or hirer of a pew in the usual place of public worship that now is or that may be occupied or owned by said corporation, shall by virtue of such qualification be a member of said corporation, and entitled to act as such and to be elected a vestryman: *Provided*, that no member shall be entitled to more than one vote, and that one pew shall at no time qualify more than one person to vote.

Sec. 4. The vestry of St. Stephen's church for the time being may hold meetings at such times as may be appointed by the rector and wardens or as a majority of those elected, shall think proper. A majority shall constitute a quorum, for the purpose of exercising a general superintendence and direction over the concerns and disposition of the funds of the corporation for the purposes specified in this act, and for the promotion of its interest, and for the furtherance of public worship, according to the canons, rites and usages of the protestant episcopal church in the United States: *Provided*, that no assessment of money upon pews or otherwise and no transfer of the permanent funds or property of said corporation shall be valid unless assented to at a legal meeting of the corporation.

Sec. 5. The several persons elected vestrymen, treasurer, and secretary at a meeting of the petitioners held in Providence on the 1st day of April and the 19th day of August, 1839, shall be and they hereby are continued in their respective offices until the annual meeting on Easter Monday next.

Sec. 6. The said corporation, at any legal meeting, previous to which reasonable notice of not less than five days shall have been given from the desk or by posting on or near the church that such business will be acted

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on, shall be, and hereby are empowered to assess and levy on the pews of any church which is or may be hereafter erected or purchased by said corporation for their place of worship, in a rateable proportion to the fixed valuation of such pews, all sums of money they may vote to be necessary for the repairs and insurance of said church: and in case of the failure of said owners, lessees or hirers of said pews to pay said assessment after due notice from the treasurer of said corporation and within ninety days thereafter, the said treasurer shall be and hereby is empowered to sell at public auction all the right, title and interest of said owners, lessees or hirers in said pews: and from the proceeds of the sale to deduct the amount of said assessment and legal charges accruing in consequence of said failure; and the balance, if any, after deducting said amount shall be duly paid by said treasurer to said owners, hirers or lessees, or their order.

Sec. 7. This act of incorporation shall be forever subject to all acts of the general assembly, in amendment or repeal thereof, or in any way affecting the same.

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