

The Diocese of Olympia

2017 Convention Guide

About this guide

This Convention Guide is intended to provide Convention members with practical information concerning the Convention and how it functions. Additional questions concerning the Convention may be addressed to Canon for Governance & Human Resources, [Dede Moore](#).

The Diocese of Olympia

The Diocese of Olympia, encompassing the Episcopal congregations—parishes, missions, parochial missions and designated mission stations—in western Washington State, is bounded by the Cascade Mountains, Oregon, the Pacific Ocean, and Canada. Every baptized Episcopalian resident in western Washington is a member of the Diocese.

The authority of the Diocese is vested in and exercised by the Bishop, the Convention, and the Standing Committee. The Diocese is governed by its Constitution and Canons (laws). A copy of the [Constitution and Canons](#) is provided to each congregation and is available on the diocesan website.

The Diocese of Olympia is incorporated under the laws of Washington State, under the name of “The Diocese of Olympia, Inc.” This corporation has responsibility for the custody, control, and investment of all trust funds of the Diocese, and holds legal title to all diocesan property, including the property of all missions, and certain specialized ministries not separately incorporated. A Board of Directors, appointed by the bishop and approved by the Convention, governs the corporation.

The Diocesan Convention

The Diocesan Convention consists of the bishop, (and the bishop coadjutor or the bishop suffragan if there be one); canonically resident clergy who reside or work in the Diocese; lay delegates (an equal number of men and women) elected from each parish

and mission congregation in union with the Convention; lay members of the Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, and Board of Directors; lay conveners and assistant conveners of the ten regional ministries; one young adult (16-21) from each Regional Ministry; and the Officers of the Diocese (if lay persons) [*Article VII*].

Parish and mission representation is based on communicant strength of the congregation [*Canon Two*]:

Under 200	2 delegates
201–400	4 delegates
401–600	6 delegates
601–900	8 delegates
901–1200	10 delegates
Over 1200	12 delegates

Current Officers of the Convention

President	The Rt. Rev. Gregory Rickel
Secretary	Ms. Karen Gusse
Treasurer	Ms Barbara Fox
Chancellor	Ms Judith Andrews, Esq.
Vice Chancellor	Mr. Mike Reynvaan, Esq.
Historiographer	Br. Carle Griffin, OCP
Archivist	Mrs. Diane Wells

What the Convention Does

The Convention elects certain officers, ratifies a budget, sets assessment levels for financing the operation of the Diocese, admits congregations as missions or parishes — and may suspend them, votes upon resolutions, elects General Convention deputies and alternates, hears the bishop’s annual address, and conducts such other business as the Convention may determine. In addition, the meeting of Convention provides an opportunity for worship, information sharing by exhibitors and others, and fellowship.

Order of Business

The Convention adopts an order of business upon recommendation of the Committee on Dispatch of Business.

Rules of Order

Except when in conflict with the Constitution or Canons of the Episcopal Church or of the Diocese of Olympia, the latest revised edition of Robert's Rules of Order governs the conduct of Convention business. By unanimous consent, action may be taken that is not in contravention of any provision in the Constitution or Canons of the Episcopal Church or those of the Diocese of Olympia.

Speaking on the floor of Convention

Any Convention member may speak upon recognition by the president of Convention.

Voting

Most motions are acted upon by a show of green or red cards. Sometimes, for accuracy in counting, a standing or hand vote is required. Written ballots are provided for the election of diocesan officers, members of the Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, Cathedral Vestry, and General Convention deputies and alternates. Laity and clergy deliberate in one body and vote as individuals, with each delegate present entitled to one vote. On most matters, a majority vote is decisive. In some instances, the votes of clergy and laity must be counted separately. This is called a "vote by orders." Upon the request of any five members of the Convention, the two orders vote separately.

Resolutions

Canon Four requires that resolutions be submitted to the Resolutions Committee at least 45 days prior to the Convention. Resolutions submitted by September 12, 2017, will be considered by the Resolutions Committee and included in its report to Convention.

According to Canon Four, any resolution not submitted to the Resolutions Committee at least

45 days prior to Convention may be considered by the Convention only if submitted in writing to the Committee no later than six (6) hours after the convening of Convention, and if consideration of such resolution is approved by a majority vote of the Convention. When any resolution is made on the floor of Convention, or a resolution is amended, a written copy must be immediately provided to the Secretary of Convention.

Annual Diocesan Operating Budget

The bishop and the Diocesan Council prepare the annual diocesan operating budget. In accordance with Canon Six, the operating budget shall be presented to the Convention for ratification; the budget may be amended by the Convention on a majority vote.

Any proposed amendment that calls for new or increased spending must include an estimate of the additional costs and must specify budget line item reductions or other revenue sources that would maintain a balanced budget. Any proposed amendment that calls for reduction in spending must specify the budget line items to be affected. Any proposed budget amendment must be submitted by written resolution at least 45 days prior to the Convention (September 12, 2017).

Assessment

Canon Seven provides that an annual assessment be levied upon each parish and mission congregation of the Diocese, based on the "net disposable income" (NDI) available for general parish/mission purposes. Assessment calculation is based on real-time NDI for the previous month. Thus, January NDI is used as the basis for the February payment, February for March, etc.

The assessment rate is set by the Convention for the second succeeding year following the Convention. Thus, the 2017 Convention will set the assessment rate for 2019.

If it is necessary to increase the rate of assessment for a particular year, the Convention may, by two-thirds affirmative vote, levy a special assessment upon the parishes and missions. Such a special assessment is limited to one year.