

**DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA
COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS**

REPORT TO 2019 ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION:

At its two meetings this year, our Committee considered clarifications to several canons and provided input to others with respect to resolutions that might involve amendments to the Diocesan Constitution or Canons. The following are changes that the Committee recommends for passage at Convention.

1 **First Vote on Changes to Constitution**

2 Our diocesan Constitution provides (in Article XXI) that it may be amended by a majority
3 vote of the two orders voting separately at two successive annual meetings of
4 Convention. The following amendments are proposed for their first vote.

5 **Constitution Article VIII: (Officers of Convention)**

6 **Section 2:** Canon 29 has traditionally specified that Diocesan elections take effect
7 “upon adjournment” of the Convention meeting where they occur. Section 2 of Article
8 VIII provides that the officers of Convention “serve until the following Annual Meeting,”
9 leaving some ambiguity as to who serves during the hours of Convention. To clarify this
10 point, the Committee suggests the following amendment to Section 2:

11 “...the following officers shall be elected to serve until the close of the following
12 Annual Meeting:...”

13 **Section 3:** The Committee proposes the following clarification of the process by which
14 the Diocesan Chancellor is approved by Convention:

15 At each Annual Meeting of the Convention the Bishop shall appoint, subject to
16 the approval by a simple majority vote of the members of the Convention,
17 present, a Chancellor of the Diocese who shall be a lay member, an adult
18 Communicant in Good Standing of the Church and regularly admitted to practice
19 law in the State of Washington.

20 **Constitution Article XIV (Nominations and Elections)**

21 The Committee proposes to clarify that a “written ballot” may be electronic:

22 **Section 1:** All elections provided for in this Constitution shall be by written ballot,
23 unless consent by unanimous vote of the Convention is given to dispense with
24 the requirement. In the event of a failure to elect at any Convention, the person
25 or persons already in office shall continue in office until the successor or
26 successors shall have been appointed as provided in Article VIII, Section 4. For
27 purposes of this section, written ballots may include an electronic ballot.
28

29 **Second Vote on Changes to Constitution**

30 The following amendment is proposed for its second vote:

31 **Constitution Article II (Acceding to General Convention~~National Constitution and~~**
32 **~~Canons~~)**

33 The Church in the Diocese of Olympia accedes to the Constitution and Canons
34 ~~for government~~ of the ~~Protestant~~ Episcopal Church ~~in the United States of~~
35 ~~America~~ and recognizes the authority of the General Convention of the same.

36 **Votes on Changes to Canons:**

37 Pursuant to Canons 28 and 29, canons can be enacted or amended by a "vote of a
38 majority of each Order". These amendments "take effect upon the adjournment of the
39 meeting of Convention at which they are enacted" unless the Convention votes
40 unanimously for the changes to take immediate effect.

41 **Canon 16: (Stated Offerings)**

42 This Canon requires revision for more than one reason. First, the cross-reference to
43 Title III, Canon 9.5(b)(6) in Section 1 is incorrect; the correct reference would be Canon
44 9.6(b)(6). Second, the General Convention canons do not require solicitations of funds
45 as indicated in Section 1. Third, the Episcopal Charities Appeal as referenced in Section
46 3 has been renamed Episcopal Community Action and is not being strictly implemented
47 as indicated in the Canon. The Committee therefore recommends updating the Canon
48 as follows:

49 The person in charge of a Parish or Mission in this Diocese shall take and
50 allocate the following offerings at the times and for the purposes hereinafter
51 stated:

52 **Section 1**

53 Every congregation shall ~~allocatesolicit~~ offerings for pious and charitable uses
54 ~~the poor~~ to the extent required by the ~~National Canons of the Episcopal Church-~~
55 ~~(see, e.g., Title III, Canon 9.5(b)(6) as it may hereafter be amended).~~

56 **Section 2**

57 Every congregation is encouraged to solicit ~~C~~church ~~S~~school Lenten ~~O~~offerings
58 for special missionary purposes to be designated by the Bishop.

59 **Section 3**

60 On Thanksgiving Day or the Sunday previous or following, every congregation
61 shall solicit offerings for ~~the Episcopal Charities Appeal or~~ such other charitable
62 purposes as the ~~Convention or~~ Council shall determine, with advice from the
63 Bishop.

64 **Canon 18 (Pensions):**

65 Each congregation shall be responsible for reporting information and making
66 payments for its clergy to the Church Pension Fund to the extent required by the
67 Canons of the Episcopal Church's National Canons.
68

69 **Canon 27 (Procedural Rules):**

70 Commissions, ~~and~~ committees, and boards established by the Constitution or
 71 Canons of the Diocese may adopt and amend written rules for their own
 72 operation, which rules and amendments shall be submitted to and subject to
 73 approval by the Bishop. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly
 74 Revised shall determine questions of procedure not specifically provided for in
 75 the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese.

76 **Canon 28 (Amendment or Repeal):**

77 ~~These~~ Canons may be enacted, amended or repealed ~~or new ones enacted~~ at
 78 any Annual Meeting of Convention by ~~vote of~~ a majority of each Order voting
 79 separately. Such changes, ~~new Canons, or the repealing of a Canon now in~~
 80 ~~effect~~ shall first be submitted to the Committee on Constitution & Canons as set
 81 forth~~provided~~ in Canon 4.

82 **Canon 29 (Date of Taking Effect):**

83 All Canons or amendments hereafter enacted, shall take effect upon the
 84 adjournment of the meeting of Convention at which they are enacted, and all
 85 elections at Convention shall similarly take effect upon adjournment of the
 86 meeting, provided that elections of Convention Secretary and Treasurer under
 87 Article VIII of the Constitution shall take effect immediately, and further provided
 88 that amendments and/or elections may take effect immediately upon a two thirds
 89 vote of each Order, voting separately.

90 **Canon 30 (Communications):**

- 91 a. Members of any committee, commission or other Diocesan entity may
 92 participate in a meeting by conference telephone or alternative electronic
 93 technology ~~similar communications equipment~~ so that all persons participating in
 94 the meeting can hear each other at the same time. Participation by that method
 95 constitutes presence in person at a meeting.
- 96 b. Unless expressly prohibited by applicable Constitutions or Canons or
 97 prevailing law, written notices or communications required herein may be
 98 provided by electronic mail, ~~facsimile~~, or other electronic media that generate a
 99 contemporaneous record of the transmission and its date and time. Such
 100 communications must be capable of being reproduced in a tangible medium by
 101 both sender and recipients.

Faithfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION & CANONS

Douglas Oles, Chair; Judith L. Andrews, Chancellor; the Rev.
 Jedediah Fox; Bryan Krislock; Sarah S. Mack; Ann McCartney;
 Donna R. McNamara; the Rev. Stephen Moore. Diocesan staff:
 Dede Moore, Canon for Governance & Human Resources; the Rev
 Dr. Canon Marda Steedman Sanborn, Canon to the Ordinary.