

DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

REPORT TO 2009 ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION:

At its two meetings this year, our Committee examined several canons. We provided input to others with respect to resolutions proposing amendments to the Diocesan Constitution or Canons. We also reviewed proposed revisions to the Articles and Bylaws of our Diocesan corporation (which the Committee had not reviewed since 1995). Amendments to the Diocesan corporate articles are set forth in a separate document, but the Committee's remaining recommendations are set forth below.

Second Vote on Changes to Constitution

Our diocesan Constitution provides (in Article XXI) that it may be amended by a majority vote of the two orders voting separately at two successive annual meetings of Convention.

Article VII, Section 4(f) (Process for Regional Ministries to Select Young Adult Lay Delegates):

It was suggested that Convenors of Regional Ministries be reminded of their opportunity to select a young adult lay delegate to the Diocesan Convention under Article VII of our Constitution. It was also suggested that Regional Ministries be allowed to select such delegates before their last pre-Convention meeting so that they would have more time to get involved in the process. The Committee therefore recommends the following amendment:

Article VII, Section 4(f) of the Constitution would be amended as follows:

The Lay members of Convention shall consist of: ...

One young adult (ages 16-21) selected by each Regional Ministry ~~in its last regular meeting~~ prior to Convention.

First Vote on Changes to Constitution

Article VII, Section 4 (Lay Members of Convention)

It was recommended to include members of the Diocesan board of directors as lay members of Convention. It was also suggested to clarify the requirement in Section (g) that all lay members of Convention must be adult Communicants in Good Standing.

In the list of categories of lay members, the current Section 4(g) reads as follows:

- (g) All lay members must be adult Communicants in Good Standing

The Committee proposes to replace this language as follows:

- (g) Lay members of the Board of Directors of the Diocese of Olympia, Inc. during their terms in office
- (h) All lay members described in this Section 4 must be adult Communicants in Good Standing.

Votes on Changes to Canons:

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

Canon 2, Section 4: It was suggested that the requirement for submission of Convention delegate names be relaxed to conform with current practice, as follows:

As a condition to voting in the Annual Convention, a ~~C~~ongregation shall complete and return its form to the Secretary at least ~~one~~two months prior to the Convention.

Canon 12, Section 3 and Canon 23, Sections 2 and 3 (Recommendations for Diocesan Compensation)

Section 3 of Canon 12 (Business Methods in Church Affairs) currently provides:

The Diocesan Council shall periodically recommend the establishment of a minimum annual compensation applicable to all clergy employed by any parish, Mission or other diocesan institution. Once adopted by Convention, written compensation payments shall not be less than the established minimum without the written concurrence of the Bishop.

The actual practice, as described in Sections 2 and 3 of Canon 23, is that the Commission on Personnel makes these recommendations.

To eliminate the seeming conflict, to be consistent with actual practice, and to consolidate the language on this subject in a single canon, the Committee recommends deleting Section 3 of Canon 12 (and renumbering Section 4 as Section 3), and consolidating some of its language into Sections 2 and 3 of Canon 23 as follows:

Section 2

...No later than July 1 of each year, the Commission shall ~~advise recommend to~~ the Diocesan Council ~~as to proposed overall~~ compensation changes that bear upon development of the proposed Diocesan Program and Budget for the following year. Within the canonical deadline for submission of resolutions to Convention, the Commission shall also recommend cost of living adjustments and levels of minimum annual compensation applicable to all clergy employed by any Parish, Mission or other diocesan institution, which recommendations shall to be presented at the fall Regional Ministry meetings and the annual Diocesan Convention.

Section 3

By resolution of Convention, ~~the recommendations~~ of the Commission may be adopted as either advisory guidelines or as policy applying to the Diocese and its ~~p~~Parishes and ~~m~~Missions.

Canon 23, Section 1(b):

In the canon on the Commission on Personnel, it is also suggested to delete the word "confirmed", so that confirmation is not a requirement for members of the Commission. The requirement of confirmation is not generally imposed on members of other Diocesan commissions or committees.

Canon 16 (Stated Offerings)

This canon currently reads:

The person in charge of a Parish or Mission in this Diocese shall take the following offerings at the times and for the purpose hereinafter stated:

Section 1: The Church School Lenten Offering, for special missionary purposes designated by the Executive Council of the General Convention.

Section 2: An offering on Thanksgiving Day or the Sunday previous or following, for the Episcopal Charities Appeal or for such other purposes as the Convention or Council may determine.

This canon fails to put congregations on notice of an additional requirement in the national canons (Title III, Canon 9.5(b)(6)) for a special monthly ingathering, and an additional problem arises because the Executive Council of the General Convention does not regularly perform the function described in Section 1.

The Committee therefore proposes to reword the canon as follows:

Section 1: Every congregation shall solicit offerings for the poor to the extent required by the National Canons (see, e.g., Title III, Canon 9.5(b)(6) as it may hereafter be amended).

Section 2: Every congregation is encouraged to solicit Church School Lenten Offerings for special missionary purposes to be designated by the Bishop

Section 3: On Thanksgiving Day or the Sunday previous or following, every congregation shall solicit offerings for the Episcopal Charities Appeal or such other purposes as the Convention or Council may determine.

The Committee is pleased to present this report through Rev. Stephen Moore. The Committee chair very much regrets that a longstanding commitment in Philadelphia prevents his presentation of the report, and if the Bishop suffers him to continue in office for another year he will make every effort to be there.

Faithfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION
& CANONS

Douglas Oles, Chairman
Judith L. Andrews, Chancellor
Duncan Bayne, Vice Chancellor
Dede Moore, Diocesan Staff
The Reverend Stephen Moore
The Reverend John Schaeffer