

## DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

### REPORT TO 2011 ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION:

At its three meetings this year, our Committee considered clarifications to several canons and provided input to others with respect to resolutions proposing amendments to the Diocesan Constitution or Canons. We also assisted other diocesan groups in formulating their proposals for canonical changes. The following are changes that the Committee recommends for passage at Convention:

### 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.

Based upon recommendations from a task force created at the direction of the 2009 Convention, the Committee recommends a second and final vote to adopt the following clarification to Article II:

**Article II:** ~~Acceding to the National Constitution and Canon of the General Convention~~

The Church in the Diocese of Olympia accedes to the Constitution and Canons for government of that branch of the Holy Catholic Church known as the of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and recognizes the authority of the General Convention of the same.

### First Vote on Changes to Constitution

#### **Constitution, Article XIV, Section 2:**

To conform the Constitution to recent practice, and based on a diocesan staff recommendation, we offer a clarification as to the number of members on the nominating committee (for Annual Convention), as follows:

At least ninety days prior to the Annual Meeting of Convention, the Bishop shall appoint a committee of not fewer than five members of Convention...

## 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 14 (Dormant Parishes and Aided Parishes):**

Canon 14 has not been updated for a number of years. With input from diocesan staff, the Committee suggests the following updating/clarifying changes:

**Section 1:** If any Parish shall for three consecutive years fail to elect a Vestry, or in any year to submit an Annual Parochial ~~make a r~~Report as required by ~~C~~Canon, the Bishop may report the fact to Convention. Upon consent by the Bishop, its union with Convention may, upon motion and vote, as prescribed in Article XVI of the Constitution, be suspended or dissolved and it may not be restored until it shall comply with such conditions as Convention may prescribe.

**Section 3(a):** After any year in which a Parish fails to do one or more of the following:

...

3. Pay the full amount of the salary and benefits contractually promised to the Rector or to another Parish employee;

the Bishop or a designated representative shall visit the Parish...

**Section 3(b):** After the third consecutive year in which a Parish has failed to meet any of items 3(a)(1-4) above, the Bishop may designate the Parish an “Aided Parish” according to the guidelines of this Canon, ~~and the Parish may be eligible for grants as approved by the Bishop and subject to funding by the Diocese. ...~~

**Section 3(c):** The Bishop may also designate an “Aided Parish” in response to a joint written request from the Rector, ~~Wardens~~ and Vestry of any Parish, which sets forth the reasons and causes for such request.

**Section 3(d):** No later than six months after being designated an “Aided Parish,” such Parish shall provide the Bishop with a written proposal for regaining financial independence ~~at a Parish-level. ...~~

**Section 3(e):** “Aided Parish” status under this Canon shall continue for a term of three years ~~whether or not the Parish shall continue to need financial assistance for each of those three years.~~ The Bishop shall have discretion to extend...

**Section 3(f):** If at the end of its time as an “Aided Parish” under this Canon, the Parish remains unable to meet all the financial obligations described in items 3(a) (1-4) above, then the Bishop shall report said inability to Convention. Upon receiving such report, Convention may, upon motion and vote, prescribed in Article XVI of the Constitution, change the status of the Parish to that of an Organized Mission of the Diocese. If no such change is effected, the Bishop may extend the congregation’s “Aided Parish” status.

**Section 4:** Whenever the status of a Parish is changed to that of a Mission, the Parish corporation shall immediately transfer title to all its property and assets to the Diocese of Olympia, Inc. The officers and members of such Parish corporation shall take all steps necessary to effect such transfer, after which they shall dissolve the Parish corporation.

## Canon 21 (Commission on Church Architecture)

Section 1: There shall be a Commission of the Diocese to be known as the Commission on Church Architecture, which shall consist of the Bishop (or the Bishop’s designee), together with at least two clergymen of the Diocese and fourtwo laymen persons to be appointed by the Bishop. At least two lay members shall be professional architects. Other members shall have experience in a discipline involving design or construction of buildings and/or development of campus sites. The Diocesan property manager shall be a non-voting member of this Commissionhim; and the Bishop shall have the power to add to this number. The Bishop shall appoint members to staggered three-year terms.

Section 2: The Commission is charged to provide experienced guidance and support on matters relating to building design, construction, modifications and site development, to all congregations and property managers in the Diocese, including the Board of Directors. The Commission shall review proposed projects, providing advice in matters of safety to persons and property, concurrence with Diocesan goals, Episcopal practice, general aesthetics, and compliance with applicable codes and regulations. The providing of such advice shall not be construed as providing design and shall not relieve any Diocesan entity from obtaining input from its own properly qualified professional designers.

Section 3: The Commission may adopt rules for submission of projects for consideration, subject to approval by the Bishop.

Section 2: It shall be the duty of every Mission to lay before this Commission the plans of any new church, chapel, or other church building or of proposed changes in any existent church, chapel, or other church building, and no such building may be erected without the approval in writing of such Commission.

Section 43: Missions, Parishes, and managers of properties owned by the Diocese shall present project documents describing any proposed construction or modification of buildings and/or sites to this Commission for review and advice. It shall be the duty of every Parish, by its rector, wardens and-

~~vestrymen, to lay before this Commission the plans of any new church, chapel, or other parish building, or of proposed changes in any such existent building, for their counsel and advice, which counsel and~~ Such advice shall be given in writing within forty-five days ~~one calendar month~~ after the receipt of said documents~~plans~~. As used herein, "modification" does not include reroofing, resurfacing or other routine maintenance of existing facilities.-

### **Canon 22: (The Commission on Ministry)**

At the request of the Commission on Ministry, the Committee recommends the following edits to Canon 22:

**Section 1(a):** One member of the Commission shall be chosen by the Standing Committee from among its members. Such members shall serve a one-year terms and may be re-appointed.

**Section 4:** At the first meeting of the Commission following the Annual Convention, the Bishop shall appoint a Convenor ~~and the Commission shall elect a Secretary from among the members~~. The Secretary for Vocations shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall keep a record of Commission proceedings...

### **Canon 27 (Questions of Procedure)**

To authorize reasonable rule-making authority for committees and commissions, the following edits to Canon 27 are recommended:

#### **Canon 27: Rules and Procedure**

Commissions and committees of the Diocese may adopt and amend rules for their own operation, which rules and amendments shall be subject to approval by the Bishop. The latest Revised Edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall determine questions of procedure not specifically provided for in these Canons.

Faithfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION  
& CANONS

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