

# House of Deputies Study Committee on Church Governance and Polity

## Membership

The Rev. Tobias Stanislas Haller BSG, *Chair*  
The Rev. Dr. James B. Simons, *Vice-Chair*  
The Rev. Vanessa Glass, *Secretary*  
The Rev. Canon Ernest L. Bennett  
Sally A. Johnson, Esq.  
The Very Rev. Charles E. Osberger  
Mrs. Susannah W. Perkinson  
The Hon. Byron Rushing  
Mrs. Katherine Tyler Scott  
The Rev. Dr. Francis H. Wade (until Jan 2011)  
The Rev. Jan Nunley, *Advisor*

## Summary of Work

### Mandate

To present to the House of Deputies at the 77th General Convention a study of the history, theology, political structure and practical realities of our Church's governance and polity, and to explain why we believe it is essential to empower each order of ministry "to take their place in the governance of the Church" and what kind of theology is embodied in such a polity; what strengths flow from our system of government and what challenges this presents; and to make recommendations based on its findings to strengthen our self-understanding.

The Committee is framing its primary response to this mandate in the form of a book to be published by Forward Movement, consisting of a collection of essays addressing the topics mandated. This book will be distributed to all Deputies, and made available through Forward Movement to others both within and outside The Episcopal Church who are interested in its polity and governance. The Committee also plans to cooperate with the General Convention Office and Secretariat in refining resources of immediate use to Deputies in the exercise of their ministry with General Convention.

### Meetings

Full minutes of meetings are available on the General Convention website. This is a brief summary of the business undertaken at each meeting.

#### **November 17-20, 2009: Chicago Marriott O'Hare Hotel- Chicago**

The first meeting took place as part of a gathering of all CCABs, and the Committee took advantage of this opportunity to meet briefly with the Committee on Structure as well as developing an initial plan for its own work in a brainstorming session on the various areas of polity that required particular attention. This included a number of grey areas (enigmas) as well as clear core values. A resource list was put together, and members of the committee took on assignments to begin to research the areas designated.

#### **May 13, 2010 (Tele/Web conference)**

This virtual meeting worked on refining the final product goal, and included chapter breakdowns and assignments. Additional resources were identified.

#### **February 7-9, 2011: Maritime Institute of Technology, Linthicum MD**

The Committee further refined the goal to focus on the book-length resource, supplemented by a resource in "user guide" form as well as a "quick reference" guide. The possibility of a Power Point resource available for Province meetings was also identified. The Committee reviewed the material gathered to date and noted a few areas needing

further exploration as well as some that had not been included; members were tasked with filling in these gaps. A production schedule for the primary resource was sketched out.

Since this meeting the Committee have worked largely through e-mail and the GCO Extranet. The primary resource was completed in draft form, somewhat behind schedule due to job changes and other delays. The draft was reviewed by members of the General Convention secretariat and the President of the House of Deputies Council of Advice, and revisions were incorporated. The final manuscript, as of this report, is in the hands of the Rev. Scott Gunn of Forward Movement, and production should begin shortly.

## Budget Report

<b>Date</b>	<b>Expense Amount</b>	<b>Account Balance</b>	<b>Notes</b>
		\$20,000.00	Initial Balance
<b>December 10, 2010</b>	(739.20)	19,260.80	Travel
<b>January 18, 2011</b>	(123.52)	19,137.28	Conference Call
<b>February 23, 2011</b>	(1,586.01)	17,551.27	Expense reimbursements
<b>February 23, 2011</b>	(5,246.34)	12,304.93	