

The General Board of Examining Chaplains

Membership

Bishops

The Rt. Rev. Larry R. Benfield, Vice Chair	Arkansas, 2015
The Rt. Rev. William O. Gregg	North Carolina, 2012
The Rt. Rev. Barry R. Howe, Chair	Western Missouri, <i>retired</i> , 2015
The Rt. Rev. Sean W. Rowe	Northwestern Pennsylvania, 2015

Clergy with Pastoral Responsibilities

The Rev. Katharine C. Black	Massachusetts, 2012
The Very Rev. Canon Mark R. Kowalewski	Los Angeles, 2012
The Rev. Stephen E. Moore	Olympia, 2012
The Rev. Canon Juan A. Quevedo-Bosch	Long Island, 2012
The Rev. Elena Thompson	Georgia, 2015
The Rev. Tanya R. Wallace	Vermont, 2015

Members of Faculties

The Rev. Stephen C. Holmgren	Western Michigan, 2012
The Rev. Vesta M. Kowalski	Maine, 2012
The Rev. Lloyd A. Lewis	Virginia Theological Seminary, 2015
The Rev. Patrick L. Malloy	General Theological Seminary, 2012
The Rev. Frederick W. Schmidt, Jr.	SMU-Perkins School of Theology, 2015

Lay Persons

Br. Reginald-Martin Crenshaw	New York, 2015
Dr. Sandra D. Michael	Central New York, 2012
Dr. Donn F. Morgan	California, 2015
Ms. D. Rebecca Snow	Oregon, 2012
Dr. Kristine T. Utterback	Nebraska, 2015
Dr. Peter W. Williams	Southern Ohio, 2012

Executive Director and GOE Administrator

Mr. Duncan C. Ely, 150 Melrose Avenue, Tryon, NC 28782-3327

Administrative Assistant

Ms. Margaret A. Leach

Board representatives at General Convention

Bishop Larry R. Benfield and Deputy Stephen E. Moore are authorized to receive non-substantive amendments to this Report.

Summary of Work

The canonical mandate for the General Board of Examining Chaplains [Canon III.15.2 (a)] reads: “The General Board of Examining Chaplains, with professional assistance, shall prepare at least annually a General Ordination Examination covering the subject matter set forth in Canon III.8.5 (g) and (h), and shall conduct, administer and evaluate it in respect to those Candidates for Holy Orders who have been identified to the Board by their several Bishops.”

During the triennium 2010-2012, the General Board of Examining Chaplains (GBEC) continued its professionally vetted policy of evaluating the General Ordination Exam (GOE) at a single reading session to foster a higher level of training and much improved consistency of evaluation. Beginning in 2010, the GBEC moved the readers’ conference to Kanuga Conferences, Inc., in Hendersonville, North Carolina – in part to save money, in part due to its location, in part to be an Episcopal conference center, and in part because Kanuga’s facilities are a particularly good fit. Annual feedback from volunteers and diocesan and seminary administrators continues to reveal a positive response both to the high level of consistency in evaluations and to the timely distribution of the results. In carrying out its canonical responsibilities, the board:

- Worked throughout each year individually, in groups and as a whole board to prepare the General Ordination Examination; Question-Writing Team chairs met by video conference in June of each year; and the entire Board convened in October of each year to prepare the final draft of the GOE and produce the background material for the guidance of the volunteer readers who evaluated the candidates' papers;
- Arranged for the electronic administration of the GOE annually at all Episcopal seminaries and at forty to fifty additional locations throughout the United States and abroad to 211 candidates in 2010, 187 in 2011 and 201 in 2012;
- Recruited, trained, supervised and assisted 100 to 115 volunteer readers, editors and office staff in the annual professionally vetted evaluation process;
- Reported annually the examination results and recommendations to candidates, their diocesan authorities and seminary deans;
- Informed seminary deans about how their candidates compared with those from other seminaries; in this comparison, the GBEC did not identify seminaries by name but by an arbitrary alphabetical designation;
- Through a Planning Committee and as a whole board, evaluated each year's GOE, its administration and results, and its volunteer readers, editors and office staff; adapted and altered subsequent exams and procedures in response to solicited feedback from candidates, volunteers (readers, editors and office staff), diocesan authorities and others.
- Continued to improve a dedicated web site used to impart information about the GBEC and its ministry and the GOEs, and to transmit GOE questions, receive GOE answers and transmit results to candidates, bishops and seminary deans, considerably improving communication and reducing postage and printing costs;
- Created an extensive set of Frequently Asked Questions for the GBEC website and for electronic and print distribution explaining the GBEC's history and purpose, the GOE and its administration and evaluation, and tips for taking the exam; and posted the past seven GOEs on its website;
- Reported to the interim meetings of the House of Bishops, as required by Canon;
- Prepared and administered a survey of all bishops about how they use the GOE and its importance in their evaluation of candidates, the desirability of church-wide standards, and who should develop these standards, and presented the survey results to the House of Bishops at its September 2010 meeting;
- Proposed a resolution calling for the creation of a special committee to develop a church wide dialogue to consider such standards for formation and ordination and to report to the 78th General Convention in 2015;
- Accepted the resignation of executive director and GOE administrator Rev. Richard F. Tombaugh and elected to that position Mr. Duncan C. Ely, who relocated the GBEC offices to Tryon, North Carolina and hired administrative assistant Margaret Leach; and
- Greeted the Rev. Patrick L. Malloy appointed by the presiding bishop to replace the vacancy left by the resignation of the Rev. Richard D. McCall.

Goals and Objectives for the 2013-2015 Triennium

The GBEC's principal objectives during the next triennium will be to continue to fulfill their canonical responsibilities as described in Title II, Canon 15.2(a), namely to develop annually a General Ordination Examination; to administer it to certified candidates; to evaluate the results; and to report the results to candidates, their diocesan authorities and their seminary deans.

In addition, the GBEC will:

- Continue to work to create examinations the answers to which will provide diocesan authorities with useful information for diagnosis and assessment of their candidates;
- Continue to provide seminaries and dioceses with statistics about performance on the annual GOE;
- Continue to look for ways to cut costs and leverage resources such as improving efficiency and increasing use of electronic technology (the GBEC has reduced number of meetings by 1/3 and number of attendees by 1/3 during the 2009-2012 triennium).
- Continue refining the GBEC website to reflect the GBEC's transparency about its work, to provide easy access to information about the GBEC and the GOE, and to make as user-friendly as possible the electronic administration of the GOE;
- Anticipate working with other church-wide, provincial and diocesan groups involved in theological education to better serve bishops, students and their dioceses;
- Look forward to beginning and continuing a church-wide dialogue about theological education, the best way to test for it, and ways in which the GBEC can adapt to be of greatest service to The Episcopal Church.

Proposed Resolution

Resolution A148 Special Committee to Consider Standards for Formation and Ordination

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the Standing Commission on Ministry Development establish a committee to initiate and coordinate a Churchwide conversation regarding what essential learnings (knowledge and skills) The Episcopal Church expects its candidates for priest and deacon to have at the time of ordination, and to develop a process that will engage a wide range of participants in writing sets of appropriate standards in the respective areas of study set out in the canons to guide those people assisting in the formation of ordinands and in assessing their proficiency (priests) or competence (deacons) in the several areas of study specified in the canons, and shall report its recommendations through the Standing Commission on Ministry Development to the 78th General Convention. The committee shall consist of 13 persons who have demonstrated a commitment to theological education, reflecting the diversity of The Episcopal Church, including two representatives each of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development, the General Board of Examining Chaplains, diocesan training programs, and Commissions on Ministry; three representatives of accredited seminaries, 2 from Episcopal seminaries and 1 from a seminary with an Episcopal/Anglican studies program; and two at large members. The final composition of the committee shall include at least two bishops, priests, deacons, and lay persons. Two persons for whom English is not their first language should also be on the committee; and be it further

Resolved, that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider adding \$45,000 to the budget of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development for the work of this committee.

Explanation

Good theological education and formation is critical for the ministry and mission of all members of The Episcopal Church. A central part of this educational endeavor is the preparation of candidates for ordination as deacons and priests. Although the normative process for formation of priests in the 20th century was a three-year seminary program, reading for orders had long been an accepted path to ordination. In the 1970's when The Episcopal Church first approved local training of priests for service in remote and isolated communities, dioceses began developing their own formation programs for both priests and deacons. In the last twenty years diocesan training programs have become quite common and the latest amendment to the canon on ordination to the priesthood no longer distinguishes candidates based on where they come from or are expected to serve (see Canon III.8); neither does it prescribe any particular type of formation program. As a result, the persons who are now ordained in The Episcopal Church both represent and have experienced a great diversity of formation programs (diocesan, Episcopal seminaries, non-Episcopal seminaries, and mixtures thereof).

This resolution arises out of the GBEC's belief that, because of the many ways theological education is provided, The Episcopal Church needs common standards, which would include agreed upon definitions of what it means to be "proficient" and "competent" as described in the national canons. This concern for consistent standards is not new. In 1970, as ordination opportunities were being expanded, the General Convention created the General Board of Examining Chaplains in response to a concern among the bishops that approval of candidates for ordination was completely dependent on inconsistent diocesan processes, as well as a concern among ordinands that they were at the mercy of potentially idiosyncratic diocesan processes. In both cases the wider church had no assurance of a minimum standard of preparation. The GBEC was charged with preparing, administering and assessing an annual General Ordination Examination to attempt to ensure consistency of readiness among all those being ordained. Today the GBEC's task is complicated by the diversity both of candidates for ordination and of their formation programs. More significantly, because fewer ordinands are seeking seminary training, the usefulness of the GOE as a tool for achieving consistency of education and training may be diluted.

Given the many styles of learning and preparation for ordination, The Episcopal Church must face the question of how to fulfill its need and desire for consistency in baseline proficiency and how to fairly assess the results of different modes of preparation. The GBEC has important information and experience to contribute to this conversation, but it is not a policy making group. The issues raised in this resolution fall squarely within the mandate of the Standing Commission on Ministry Development. The conversation needs to extend very broadly throughout the church, with the other constituencies identified in the resolution included in the conversation. Indeed the committee's members need to be conduits, enabling many constituencies to have voices in this critically important work affecting the ministry and mission of the whole church. For example, it is particularly important to be intentional in seeking out the concerns of non-domestic dioceses so that the standards and definitions adopted can be equally useful to them. Extra funding in SCMD's budget will be required to do the thorough and wide-ranging job envisioned for this committee.

Budget Report

The General Board of Examining Chaplains has reduced its meetings and their attendees by a third and overall GBEC expenses by 75% (and office expenses by 88%) since the 2007-2009 triennium.

	2010 Actual	2011 estimated	2012 estimated	Total
Income				
Exam Fees	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
Expenses				
Salaries/Benefits	58,479	60,493	61,808	180,780
Reader's Meetings	111	80,000	80,000	200,111
Office Expenses	22,572	11,900	11,900	46,303
Total	\$ 81,162	\$ 152,324	\$ 153,708	\$ 427,194

Notes: Income figures represent \$500 per candidate in exam fees, estimated at 200 candidates per year. Expenditures estimate benefits such as health insurance, pension payments, and 50% of Social Security; \$40,000 of 2010 expenses posted to a different year.

Budget Appropriation

	2013	2014	2014	Total
Income				
Exam Fees	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
Expenses				
Salaries/Benefits	63,500	65,300	67,300	196,000
Reader's Meetings	80,000	80,000	80,000	240,000
Office Expenses	9,500	9,700	9,700	29,000
Total	\$ 153,000	\$ 155,000	\$ 157,000	\$ 465,000

Notes: Income figures represent \$500 per candidate in exam fees, estimated at 200 candidates per year. Expenditures estimate benefits such as health insurance, pension payments, and 50% of Social Security.

Board Travel and Meetings

The General Board of Examining Chaplains will meet nine times during the next triennium, requiring \$20,000 for 2013, \$20,000 for 2014 and \$20,000 for 2015, for a total of \$60,000 for the triennium.