

# STANDING COMMISSION ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

## Membership

Mr. Thomas A. Little, *Chair*, 2015  
The Rev. Vanessa Glass, *Vice Chair*, 2018  
Ms. Joan Geiszler-Ludlum, *Secretary*, 2015  
Mr. J.P. Causey, 2015  
Mr. Vincent Currie, Jr., 2015  
The Rt. Rev. Martin Field, 2018  
Mr. Jack Finlaw, 2018  
Ms. Louisa Hallas (until 2012)  
The Rt. Rev. Don Johnson, 2018  
The Rev. Paul Lebens-Englund, 2018  
The Rt. Rev. David M. Reed, 2018  
The Rev. Bob Sessum, 2015  
Vacancy, *Executive Council Liaison*  
Mr. Alex Baumgarten, *Staff*

### *Representation at General Convention*

Deputy Thomas A. Little and The Rt. Rev. Martin Field are authorized to receive non-substantive amendments to this report at General Convention.

## Summary of Work

**Mandate:** To study and make recommendations concerning the structure of the General Convention and of The Episcopal Church. It shall, from time to time, review the operation of the several Committees, Commissions, and Boards to determine the necessity for their continuance and the effectiveness of their functions and to bring about a coordination of their efforts. Whenever a proposal is made for the creation of a new Committee, Commission, Board or Agency, it shall, wherever feasible, be referred to the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church for its consideration and advice.

**Meetings:** The Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church (“the Commission,” or “SCSC”) met in St. Louis, Missouri in November 2012 and in Chicago, Illinois in October 2014. In addition, the Commission met via video or telephone conference nine times. Detailed accounts of the Commission’s proceedings are available at the Commission’s web page on The Episcopal Church Web site: <http://www.generalconvention.org/ccab/roster?id=404>.

The Commission's specific assignments from the 2012 General Convention were Resolutions A122 (Financial Oversight and Budgeting Process); A076 (Strengthen Small Congregations); and D062 (Amend Canon V.3, Of Bodies of General Convention). In addition, the Commission devoted considerable attention to the ongoing work of the Task Force for Reimagining The Episcopal Church (TREC) pursuant to Resolution C095 from the 2012 General Convention.

Additionally, the Commission reviewed and continued some of its work in the prior triennium that continues to have relevance for the Church, namely diocesan viability and vitality, and Church structure “agencies” issues.

### **Review of Canonical Mandate**

The canonical mandate of the Commission is from Canon I.1.2.(n)(10):

(10) A Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church. It shall be the duty of the Commission to study and make recommendations concerning the structure of the General Convention and of The Episcopal Church. It shall, from time to time, review the operation of the several Committees, Commissions, and Boards to determine the necessity for their continuance and the effectiveness of their functions and to bring about a coordination of their efforts. Whenever a proposal is made for the creation of a new Committee, Commission, Board or Agency, it shall, wherever feasible, be referred to the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church for its consideration and advice.

The Commission renews its support of the governance and polity assumptions and values expressed in its 2012 report (see the excerpts, below). The Church must adhere to these assumptions and values as it evaluates the performance and usefulness of its governance structures and processes. The Commission plays an important, ongoing role in holding the Church accountable these assumptions and values. In view of the many substantial changes to structure, governance, and polity coming from TREC, the Commission should play a critical role in the next two triennia.

The Commission's ongoing review of, and reflection on, the materials published to date by TREC prompt it to recommend changing its canonical mandate to include "governance" and "polity." These areas are implicit in "structures," but it is desirable to make them explicit. Accordingly, the Commission recommends the following Resolution.

A097: AMEND CANON I.1.2(N)(10)

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Canon I.1.2(n)(10) be amended to read as follows:

(10) A Standing Commission on the Structure, *Governance and Polity* of the Church.

It shall be the duty of the Commission to study and make recommendations concerning the structure, *governance and polity* of the General Convention and of The Episcopal Church. It shall, from time to time, review the operation of the several Committees, Commissions, *Agencies* and Boards to determine the necessity for their continuance and the effectiveness of their functions and to bring about a coordination of their efforts. Whenever a proposal is made for the creation of a new Committee, Commission, Agency or Board, it shall, wherever feasible, be referred to the Commission for its consideration and advice.

EXPLANATION

The Resolution changes the Commission's name to reflect the scope of the Commission's work in fulfilling its mandate. Governance and polity issues are inherent in most changes to the Church's structures. Other revisions are for consistency's sake.

**Reflections on the Commission's 2012 *Blue Book* Report**

In light of the 2012 General Convention's passage of Resolution C095 establishing the governance reform — the Church reimagining task force that became the Task Force for Reimagining The Episcopal Church (TREC) — and in consideration of what TREC has published up to the date of this report, the Commission finds it important to review and reflect on its 2012 *Blue Book* report.

Fundamentally, the Commission stands by its 2012 assumptions, values, findings, and conclusions, particularly concerning the essential importance and role of the Church's core governance elements — General Convention, Executive Council, and leadership from among all three Orders. We have faith that these structures and the people who lead and work within them should, can, and will discern and implement ways and means through which to make these governance structures more effective and more efficient in deploying God's resources.

Portions of that report are reprinted below, followed by our reflections.

**Executive Council Resolution GAM-009**

At its February 2011 meeting, the Executive Council adopted Resolution GAM 009, directing the Commission to coordinate concurrent efforts by Committees, Commissions, and Task Forces regarding strategic planning and structural change. It directed the Commission to hold a consultation with the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance; the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements; the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons; the Budgetary Funding Task Force; the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church; and three of Executive Council's standing committees. It further asked for an interim report ten days later with recommendations and a timeline for implementation.

The Commission convened the consultation on May 30-31, 2011, to coordinate concurrent efforts by the represented interim bodies regarding strategic planning and structural change for the Church. At the conclusion of this consultation the Commission reflected on what was heard, synthesized central themes and concerns, and adopted a preliminary version of the following report to present to the Executive Council at its June 2011 meeting as recommendations for next steps. What follows is the Commission's final version of that preliminary report, which includes recommendations for eleven Resolutions.

Several working assumptions undergirded our deliberations:

- We agreed that the governance structure of The Episcopal Church is a representative, unitary government with the General Convention at its head.
- While the General Convention has ultimate authority and responsibility to determine structural and policy issues and to articulate a broad mission vision, the Church's structures disperse significant power and responsibility for carrying out mission to the diocesan level, and within each diocese, to the congregational level.
- Thus the structure is necessarily multi-layered and complex. To honor it well requires regular reassessment.
- We find no conflict between the hierarchical nature of the Church and the fulfillment of its mission at more local levels, when they have or can be provided with the resources for appropriate ministry responses.
- At its best, our structure embodies our values and provides for creative tension between institutional stability and fluidity for mission.
- We see as foundational the need to hold up the ministry of all the baptized, by striving to ensure that all voices have an equal opportunity to be heard.

The key values reflected in these assumptions are:

- the need for and expectation of innovation at every level coordinated with the giving and receiving of support among all levels;
- application of structural flexibility to better respond to God's call; and
- commitment to increasing diversity in the Church's governance. Using these values as a lens, and recognizing that they often don't overlap with current realities, we offer a number of proposals generated in our post-Consultation discussions.

We do not offer them as final answers to what a re-energized structure might look like; rather we want to assure that the right questions are asked so that all members of the Church can live out their baptismal ministries in a structure that honors effectiveness over efficiency and provides the stability necessary to support an atmosphere of flexibility and nimbleness for ministry and mission.

**Encouraging Subsidiarity**

We are called today in The Episcopal Church to witness and serve in a time characterized, in both the domestic and international parts of our body, by fast-changing needs of populations who are driven by experiences and values quite different from those of earlier generations and of each other. Yet we are one body as Paul teaches us, united by and in the love of God incarnated for us in Jesus Christ, whose values do not change. In this time of

social and cultural upheaval and widespread catastrophes of diverse kinds, how is this manifestation of the body of Christ called the Church able to respond? Clearly there is no single right answer to the pressing questions that present themselves daily to the Church. But we also know from Paul that the body has many parts, each with its own gifts and talents suitable to particular tasks, yet unable to say to any other part “I have no need of you.” Our challenge is empowering the best and most effective use of our gifts and talents in the circumstances that call out for action while also maintaining our unity as a body.

Because General Convention is the center of our structure, it creates and symbolizes our ecclesial unity, which is reinforced by the Book of Common Prayer in expressing and symbolizing our theological unity. Within that unity, authority to govern dioceses and congregations and to exercise the ministry of all the baptized is broadly dispersed making room for as wide a vision of ministry responses as human imagination, guided by the Holy Spirit and supported by other parts of the body, can devise. Still, hierarchy, and our history of clericalism, can be experienced as stifling innovation when the present times call for a plethora of local initiatives and experiments, which can be quickly conceived, executed, evaluated and, where appropriate, shared widely.

“Subsidiarity,” as applied to the Church, is a term that signifies the appropriate balancing between the unity of the whole and the roles and responsibilities of its parts, all working toward and measured against a sense of the good of the whole. In searching for that proper balance, decision makers must be attuned to the capacity for effective action at any given level, so that those stepping out in ministry are neither over-burdened nor under-burdened. General Convention — the Church gathered in its fullest embodiment — sets the parameters of “the good of the whole” through its resolutions, which are then turned into action by the several “members of the body” through their diverse ministries. Keeping true to the “good of the whole” requires reciprocal communication and assessment so that all parts may be held accountable by each other to those commonly identified parameters.

Since all the baptized are the hands and feet of Jesus, ministry must be empowered at the local level, whether diocesan or congregational, formal or informal. We recognize these local faith communities to be organic building blocks where members are formed for mission and service at the local, diocesan, provincial and Churchwide level. At the same time, we recognize that successful ministries at the parish level may depend on support and oversight from the diocesan level, and support for the parish from the diocesan level may depend on support from the province or from the Church Center. Facilitating communication and resource sharing, while still honoring local initiative, will be critical forms of support for maintaining the effectiveness of the several parts of the body as well as their awareness of being part of, and responsible to, the whole.

An outline of an answer is clear. Given the unitary structure set out in the Constitution from its earliest versions, governance of this Church and its relations with the Anglican Communion and other faith communities must be exercised at the level of General Convention. General Convention must also decide, through the Constitution and Canons, whether, when, and how to delegate or share governance responsibilities. General Convention may also describe a larger vision of Churchwide mission. Only the dioceses, however, can discern their particular piece of the larger mission vision in the circumstances in which they and their congregations find themselves. The consultation focused on the need to ensure that practices and organization of Churchwide structures, such as the Church Center, CCABs, provinces, General Convention, and the House of Bishops, do not become barriers to local innovation and effective ministry responses. The interrelatedness of all such entities requires any consideration of structural change to take into account the impact of a change in one area on the others. As part of this effort, The Episcopal Church must be mindful of local realities when setting Churchwide financial and administrative standards, particularly those that require dioceses and congregations to assume new costs.

The question of how the Church best honors and encourages local initiative raises other basic questions:

- At which level are the voices of all the baptized going to be heard most clearly?
- How can those voices be reflected at other levels?
- At which level are the ministries of the baptized going to be most fully realized and nourished?

- *At which level is the development of specialized or specific ministries most effectively supported?*

*We must also ask more practical questions:*

- *What tasks are most effectively performed at the congregational, diocesan, provincial, regional or Churchwide levels?*
- *Is the Church best served by a robust staff gathered in one location with Churchwide, specific programmatic responsibilities, or by a leaner central staff dedicated to ministries best pursued at the Churchwide level but working in tandem with other staff located at provincial or regional levels?*
- *Does our current headquarters building meet the Church's needs?*
- *Is the gathering of resources to meet particular needs of local and regional ministries best done on the Churchwide, regional or local level?*

*There are important policy questions as well:*

- *Do the Church's Constitution and Canons and the policies that guide our work encourage and support innovative ministry responses?*
- *Does our current formula for diocesan apportionment support the model of ministry we want to encourage?*
- *Do our current models of leadership reflect a commitment to encouraging initiatives?*
- *Where are we already successful in promoting risk taking and the search for creative solutions?*

The Commission has followed TREC's work closely, striving to be available for assistance when asked, but to not be perceived as horning in on the tasks assigned to TREC by General Convention. We believe the Commission has been successful in this regard. In its 2012 report, the Commission recommended that it be the oversight body for the Church's structure- and governance-reform efforts during the current triennium. General Convention instead enthusiastically established TREC for that purpose, giving it autonomy and a broad scope of work.

The Commission appreciates TREC's perspective and the boldness and vision with which it has pursued its goals. As noted earlier, however, the Commission reaffirms the importance and continuing validity of the assumptions and values declared in its 2012 report, and offers them as continuing guidance as the Church approaches the 78th General Convention.

Accordingly, and in the spirit of the 2011 GAM consultation and the TREC work, the Commission re-offers the following resolutions (A090 and A091 from 2012) to the 78th General Convention:

**A098: ENDORSE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY**

*Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention embrace the principle of "subsidiarity" as embodying a fundamental truth about effective ministry; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Executive Council incorporate the principle of "subsidiarity" into its work, governance, and actions, measuring its decisions about where and by whom ministries will be conducted against the standard of what most advances the common good as identified by General Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the Executive Council, in consultation with the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church and other appropriate church bodies, undertake a thorough review and evaluation of whether current or proposed programs, staffing, offices, office locations (including 815 Second Avenue in New York City), provinces, and budgets are consistent with the principle of vigorously encouraging the exercise of any given ministry by the parts of this Church most appropriately gifted to undertake it; and be it further*

Resolved, That the Executive Council report its research, findings, actions, and recommendations to the 79th General Convention.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution would endorse the principle of “subsidiarity” as defined within this report: “the appropriate balance between the unity of the whole and the roles and responsibility of its parts, all working toward and measured against a sense of the good of the whole”; and make it the yardstick that Executive Council uses to measure its work against in the future. It would also require the Executive Council to evaluate the administrative parts of our structure using the same yardstick, and to report back to the 2018 General Convention.

**A099: REDUCE DIOCESAN APPORTIONMENTS**

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 77th General Convention direct the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to reduce diocesan apportionments to allow more monies to remain at the diocesan, and thus parish and regional, levels to support greater encouragement of widespread, effective innovation.

**EXPLANATION**

To free up resources for more innovation in ministry at the diocesan and congregational levels, this resolution urges a reduction in the funding formula applied to dioceses.

**Viability and Vitality of Dioceses**

One of the Resolved clauses of Resolution 2009-A127 directed the Commission to study "the current diocesan configuration and suggest whether adjustments thereto would be appropriate." This mandate reflected the awareness that in 2009, several dioceses were struggling to support their bishops and a variety of active ministries given their limited resources. In many cases, those problems persist.

The Commission continues to see dioceses gathered around bishops as the iconic building block of any Anglican church and of The Episcopal Church. Thus, the effectiveness and vitality of dioceses is a key aspect of all our ministries. Our dioceses are diverse in many ways, including in geographic size, in number of congregations and clergy, in funding, and in organization and staffing.

Dioceses are also subject to changing circumstances as they grow or shrink and as the world around them changes. In some cases, decisions made on diocesan alignments years ago may not fit well the current environments in which those dioceses exist. Notwithstanding those changes, dioceses are communities of faith, and their histories and successes as communities should be respected and valued.

As the Commission discussed what might be desirable characteristics of a diocese, and models of diocesan effectiveness and vibrancy, it was obvious that the question, “What enables a diocese to thrive?” raises significant issues that are critical to the structure of our Church.

The Commission considered a data-driven survey to gather information to aid in developing some measures of diocesan effectiveness and vitality and, hence, viability. After considering a possible data-driven survey and after speaking with The Rev. Dr. Rob Voyle about his Appreciative Inquiry approach, the Commission abandoned its plans for a data-driven survey in favor of a more qualitative and forward-thinking approach to encourage creative ways to assess and enhance the vitality and viability of dioceses.

The Commission noted several developments that indicate positive attempts to focus creatively on the vitality and viability of dioceses, including:

- The juncture of the Dioceses of Chicago and Quincy
- The recent process of considering a possible juncture of the Dioceses of Eau Claire and Fond du Lac

- Ongoing study in the Diocese of Easton on a vision for that diocese
- The election of less-than-full-time Bishops or Bishops Provisional in several dioceses
- Partnerships formed between neighboring dioceses to meet common needs such as joint, localized, diaconal and presbyteral formation programs; sharing of Title IV officers; shared staff (communications, financial management, etc.); and shared formation events for laity and clergy, among other efforts at partnering.

The Commission applauds such creative, positive steps and encourages bishops and dioceses to continue to creatively seek ways to increase the vitality of their dioceses, even to the point of combining dioceses or certain diocesan functions. Sharing what bishops and dioceses are doing in this regard can help others deal with their own issues, and the Commission believes that communicating initiatives to increase the vitality of dioceses (and ensure their viability, where appropriate) can be helpful.

The Commission recommends the following resolution for consideration by the 78th General Convention.

**A100: ASSESS DIOCESAN VIABILITY AND VITALITY**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention encourages Bishops and Dioceses to prayerfully engage in a candid assessment of the viability and vitality of their Dioceses and to seek creative possibilities for enhancing the viability and vitality of their Dioceses, and be it further

*Resolved*, That the Standing Commission of the Structure of the Church support these efforts by developing and making available tools and processes for such processes and by facilitating conversations and communications about processes for increasing the viability and vitality of Dioceses.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution encourages Bishops and diocesan leadership to engage in enhancing the viability and vitality of their dioceses, and charges the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church with facilitating that work.

The Commission also considered provisions in the Constitution and Canons that might be obstacles to improving the vitality and viability of Dioceses. Two such possible obstacles were identified, as follows:

**Proposed Constitutional Amendment:** In reviewing the current provisions for reconfiguring dioceses, the Commission noted that the Constitution does not allow a diocese to take formation actions in the absence of a Bishop. This provision is well-founded, since a weighty decision by a diocese to combine the diocese with another diocese should not be taken without Episcopal leadership. However, an episcopal vacancy might well be a fertile time for a diocese to consider such a step, and avoiding the time and expense of a full election of a new Bishop could be both expeditious and financially prudent. The Commission concluded that when two dioceses are considering combining into a new diocese, their process should not be delayed by the absence of an elected bishop in one of them, provided that the Diocese has a Bishop who has provisional charge of that Diocese and can thus provide the appropriate episcopal leadership during the process.

The Commission therefore proposes the following Constitutional amendment to the 78th General Convention.

**A101: AMEND ARTICLE V.1 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention amend Article V, Section 1 of the Constitution to read as follows:

**ARTICLE V**

**Sec. 1.** A new Diocese may be formed, with the consent of the General Convention and under such conditions as the General Convention shall prescribe by General Canon or Canons, (1) by the division of an existing Diocese; (2) by the junction of two or more Dioceses or of parts of two or more Dioceses; or (3) by the erection into a Diocese of an unorganized area evangelized as provided in Article VI. The proceedings shall originate in a Convocation of the Clergy and Laity of the unorganized area called by the Bishop for that purpose; or, with the approval of the Bishop, in the Convention of the Diocese to be divided; or (when it is proposed to form a new Diocese by the junction of two or more existing Dioceses or of parts of two or more Dioceses) by mutual agreement of the Conventions of the Dioceses concerned, with the approval of the Bishop of each Diocese. In case the Episcopate of a Diocese be vacant, ~~no proceedings toward its division shall be taken until the vacancy is filled~~ a Bishop given the provisional charge and authority of the Diocese under the provisions of Canon III.13.1 may act under the provisions of Article V, Section 1. After consent of the General Convention, when a certified copy of the duly adopted Constitution of the new Diocese, including an unqualified accession to the Constitution and Canons of this Church, shall have been filed with the Secretary of the General Convention and approved by the Executive Council of this Church, such new Diocese shall thereupon be in union with the General Convention.

EXPLANATION

This resolution amends Article V, Sec.1 to allow a Bishop with provisional charge of a Diocese to participate in the Diocese’s approval of a plan to form a new Diocese by joining two or more Dioceses, or parts of them, without requiring the election of a Bishop to oversee the combining of the Dioceses.

**Proposed Canonical Amendment**

Canon III.12.4(a) requires that “each Bishop serving in a Diocese shall reside in that Diocese.” In at least one situation, two Dioceses have creatively elected a Bishop to serve in both Dioceses. This proposed amendment clarifies that in such a situation, the Bishop should have a residence in each Diocese.

A102: AMEND CANON III.12.4(A)

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention amend Canon III.12.4(a) to read as follows:

- (a) Each Bishop serving in a Diocese shall reside in that Diocese., *provided that, if a Bishop serves in more than one Diocese, the Bishop, with the concurrence of the Standing Committees of each Diocese in which the Bishop serves, shall reside in each of the Dioceses in which the Bishop serves.*

EXPLANATION

This resolution proposes to amend Canon III.12.4(a) to provide that a Bishop who serves in more than one Diocese must have a residence in each Diocese.

**Perspectives on the Structure and Vitality of General Convention**

The Commission spent considerable time during this triennium reflecting on the various TREC communications to the Church about ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of General Convention. The members of SCSC embrace the perspective that rule changes are needed to make General Convention more efficient and effective. For example, SCSC is open to a reduction in the number of legislative committees of General Convention and to rule changes that would allow resolutions to die in legislative committees.



The Commission also supports the use of communications technologies that would enable legislative committees to organize and begin the work of reviewing resolutions in the months leading to the convening of General Convention. This would allow legislative committees to begin hearing testimony on resolutions at the outset of General Convention and move legislation to the floor more quickly. Other ideas — such as providing for more joint meetings of the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops during General Convention, requiring that most resolutions to be considered by General Convention be filed by a date certain prior to the convening of General Convention, and streamlining the concurrence of resolutions process — are all supported by the Commission.

While recognizing that the General Convention must be enabled to perform its duties in the most efficient and effective manner, the Commission holds up and celebrates the fact that General Convention is at the center of our governance structure. It creates and symbolizes our ecclesial unity, which is reinforced by the Book of Common Prayer, the expression and symbol of our theological unity. Within that unity, authority to govern dioceses and congregations and to exercise the ministry of all the baptized is broadly dispersed, making room for as wide a vision of ministry responses as human imagination — guided by the Holy Spirit and supported by other parts of the body — can devise.

The Commission is not convinced that limiting the overall length of General Convention, or encouraging its evolution to become a general missionary convocation with networking and sharing around mission and ministries its primary focus, necessarily advance Church-wide mission and ministries. Certainly networking and sharing mission and ministries already are a significant part of the fabric of General Convention. But SCSC also sees that we advance church-wide mission and ministry through the legislative processes of General Convention. A historical review of the significant work of General Convention during the past few decades to lift up the ministry of all the baptized, and to help make The Episcopal Church a leader of inclusive and transformational ministries, supports the proposition that the legislative processes of General Convention are guided by the Holy Spirit and advance church-wide mission.

**A103: SCHEDULE LENGTH OF THE 79TH GENERAL CONVENTION**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements schedule the 79th General Convention (2018) for not fewer than 10 days, in accordance with existing guidelines.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution would direct planners for the 79th General Convention to follow the existing guidelines for scheduling General Conventions. The planning for the 78th General Convention (2015) is already completed.

**A104: CONSIDER BUDGET FOR THE 79TH GENERAL CONVENTION**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider funding in the budget for 2016-2018 for the 79th General Convention to be at least 10 days.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution would press the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to provide adequate funding for the 79th General Convention to last at least 10 days.

**A105: CONSIDER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR DEPUTIES ATTENDING THE 79TH GENERAL CONVENTION**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider establishing a fund for assistance for Deputies from dioceses with financial need, to be administered by the General Convention Office, to ensure that in each Diocese, at least two Deputies from each Order may attend the 79th General Convention.

**EXPLANATION**

Currently a “scholarship fund” exists to help bishops from dioceses with limited resources attend the meetings of the House of Bishops. This resolution would create a similar fund, administered by the General Convention Office, which enables such dioceses to provide broader participation by lay and clergy deputies at General Convention.

**The Future of Commissions, Committees, Agencies, and Boards**

The Commission sees a need to reform and reorganize the current CCAB structure in order to make these bodies more efficient and effective. The Commission values the CCABs as important vehicles for funneling the voices and concerns of the broader Church into General Convention for its consideration in setting mission priorities through budget and policy. The presiding officers who appoint the members of these interim bodies have been diligent in seeking a variety of voices to participate in this work. Interim bodies operate on a more manageable time frame for some who might not be able to make the commitment required by General Convention, and offer a structured and yet less formal context for learning about and contributing to the scope of General Convention and the mission and ministry of the Church.

The experience of members of SCSC who have served as members of various CCABs in prior triennia when in-person meetings were a more regular occurrence — as compared to the current triennium, when resources for in-person CCAB meetings were scarce — validates a concern that a lack of funding for CCAB meetings diminishes the opportunities for meaningful and productive work to be accomplished by these interim bodies.

The Commission has heard from members of the House of Bishops about how valuable their interim meetings are, and how important it is to their ability to do their work that they have regular, in-person gatherings. In-person CCAB meetings are similarly valued by bishops and clergy and lay deputies who serve the Church in this capacity.

To the extent that interim bodies are obedient to their mandates, they tend to work in silos, without established means of interaction with other interim bodies whose work may be of significance to their own assignments. The opportunities for communication and coordination presented by holding the organizing meetings of all CCABs in one place were important gifts to the CCABs in the last three triennia, enabling them to move more quickly into their substantive tasks and to establish connections that could serve them over the ensuing triennium. The joint initial meeting also offers savings in terms of staff time and travel by allowing several of the orientation and training goals for initial meetings to be handled in the larger group. The initial joint meeting should be funded in future triennia.

This is an appropriate place for the Commission to commend the important work completed by a subcommittee of the Executive Council’s Joint Standing Committee on Governance and Administration for Mission, addressing the identity, definition, and functions of “boards” in the Church. That subcommittee, assisted by Paul Nix, Esq., internal legal counsel at the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, achieved clarity around these issues and will assist whosoever continues to work on that end of Church structure and governance in the future. The Commission saw no need to recommend any specific action on this topic.

The Commission does recommend to the 78th General Convention the following resolutions on supporting the work of CCABs, derived from resolutions proposed by the Commission in 2012 that have continuing relevance and merit:

**A106: FUND INITIAL JOINT MEETING OF NEWLY CONSTITUTED CCABS FOLLOWING THE 78TH GENERAL CONVENTION**  
*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider funding in the budget for 2015 for a joint meeting of the newly constituted CCABs following the 78th General Convention late in 2015 or early in 2016.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution would provide funding for a joint meeting of all newly constituted Commissions, Committees, Agencies, and Boards late in 2015 or in early 2016 for shared orientation, training, and development of work plans for the ensuing triennium. This funding will only be necessary if such a meeting has not already been scheduled for the fall of 2015, using the remaining balances in the budgets of all Commissions, Committees, Agencies, and Boards from the current triennium.

**A107: FUND CCAB MEETINGS DURING THE 2016-2018 TRIENNIUM**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider including adequate funding in the 2016-2018 budget of the General Convention Office for at least two in-person meetings of each CCAB during the 2016-2018 triennium.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution would provide funding for each CCAB to meet at least two times in addition to the joint initial meeting.

**A108: BUDGET FOR MID-TRIENNIAL WEB CONFERENCE OF INTERIM BODIES**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider including \$5,000.00 in the 2016-2018 budget of the General Convention Office for a general mid-triennium, web-based meeting of no more than two representatives of each CCAB, or for one or more such meetings of appropriate representatives of CCABs whose work implicates a common topic, for the purpose of sharing the work each has undertaken and its progress on that work and for further coordination and cooperation where appropriate, with the meeting to be scheduled by the Executive Officer of General Convention in consultation with the two presiding officers.

**EXPLANATION**

This resolution (Resolution A099 from 2012) requests funding for a mid-triennium cross-CCAB meeting, or meetings, so that bodies with shared or overlapping assignments may learn about and from each other's work. The Church has had good success with web-based meetings at a low cost. TREC's September 2014 web-based hearing hosted at the National Cathedral demonstrated the impact these events can have. This resolution proposes a relatively small amount be allocated to employ similar technology for a cross-pollinating, virtual meeting of CCABs halfway through the next triennium.

**Resolution 2012-Do62: Publication of Membership of Church Bodies**

Resolution 2012-Do62 was not enacted in 2012, and was referred to the Commission for further review. The Commission took up the resolution and determined to propose that General Convention adopt the first portion of it, to require prompt public posting of the membership of all Church bodies, in the twin spirits of transparency and accountability.

**A109: AMEND CANON V.3**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Canon V.3 is amended by adding a new Section 1 and renumbering the existing Section 1 as Section 2:

### Canon V.3: Of a ~~Quorum~~ Bodies of General Convention

Sec. 1. *The General Convention Office shall publish the membership of all committees, subcommittees, task forces, panels, or other bodies elected or appointed by any body or leader throughout The Episcopal Church including, but not limited to, the House of Deputies; the House of Bishops; the Executive Council; and Standing Commissions, Committees, Agencies, and Boards of The Episcopal Church and their respective Presiding Officers and Chairs within 30 days after election or appointment.*

Sec. 4-2. Except where the Constitution or Canons of the General Convention provide to the contrary, a quorum of any body of the General Convention consisting of several members, the whole having been duly cited to meet, shall be a majority of said members; and a majority of the quorum so convened shall be competent to act.

#### EXPLANATION

The interim bodies of the General Convention accomplish a substantial amount of substantive work between regular meetings of General Convention. Publication of the membership of these bodies and assignment of the responsibility for publication reinforce transparency and accountability.

#### **Resolution 2012-A122: Budgeting Process**

Resolution 2012-A122 asked that "the 77th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church to review, and recommend revisions to, Canons and the Joint Rules of Order regarding the financial oversight and budgeting processes of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and The Episcopal Church."

This resolution emerged from apparent inconsistencies between canonical directives and those of the Joint Rules of Order, particularly regarding budgeting timelines and the functional relationship between the Executive Council and Program, Budget, and Finance both during the triennium and leading up to draft budget submission to General Convention.

Early in the triennium, a subcommittee of Executive Council's Joint Standing Committee on Finances for Mission (FFM) was established to address the budget process. Aably chaired by The Rev. Susan Snook and vice-chaired by Ms. Tess Judge, both members of FFM, the Subcommittee also included three other members of Council's Finances for Mission group, one member of its Joint Standing Committee on Governance and Administration for Mission, and two members each from the Church Center staff, the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church, and the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance.

The Subcommittee met by teleconference in November 2012, and by January 2013 had produced an improved draft budget timeline, which was perfected and presented to Executive Council for adoption at its February 2013 meeting.

The Commission wishes to commend the hard work and clear commitment to collaboration and transparency demonstrated by Executive Council's readiness to address these very real concerns head-on. The members of the FFM Subcommittee on Budget Process were a true delight to work with.

#### **Amendments to the Budget Canons and Joint Rules of Order**

The Commission examined the Budget Canons and Joint Rules of Order, identified various conflicts and inconsistencies, and offers two resolutions to address these problems.

A110: AMEND CANONS I.1.8, I.1.11, I.2.6, AND I.4.6

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Canons I.1.8, I.1.11, I.2.6, and I.4.6 be amended to read as follows:

**Canon I.1.8**

~~Sec. 8. The General Convention shall adopt, at each regular meeting, a budget to provide for the contingent expenses of the General Convention, the stipend of the Presiding Bishop together with the necessary expenses of that office, the necessary expenses of the President of the House of Deputies including the staff and Advisory Council required to assist in the performance of the duties and matters related to the President's office, and the applicable Church Pension Fund assessments. To defray the expense of this budget, an assessment shall be levied upon the Dioceses of the Church in accordance with a formula which the Convention shall adopt as part of this Expense Budget. It shall be the duty of each Diocesan Convention to forward to the Treasurer of the General Convention annually, on the first Monday of January, the amount of the assessment levied upon that Diocese.~~

**Canon I.1.11**

~~Sec. 11. The Treasurer shall submit to the General Convention at each regular meeting thereof a detailed budget in which the Treasurer proposes to request appropriations for the ensuing budgetary period and shall have power to expend all sums of money covered by this budget, subject to such provisions of the Canons as shall be applicable.~~

**Canon I.2.6**

~~Sec. 6. The stipends of the Presiding Bishop and such personal assistants as may be necessary during the Presiding Bishop's term of office for the effective performance of the duties, and the necessary expenses of that office, shall be fixed by the General Convention and shall be provided for in the budget to be submitted by the Treasurer, as provided in the Canon entitled, "Of the General Convention."~~

**Canon I.4.6**

*(a) Starting no later than the second November following General Convention, the Executive Council or a committee thereof shall engage in discussions and meetings with the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance or a committee thereof to collaborate on the development of a proposed budget for the ensuing budgetary period; conduct outreach to the Church concerning the development of a proposed budget; and complete a report and proposed budget.*

~~(a b) Not later than 120 days prior to the next regular meeting of the General Convention, t The Executive Council shall submit to the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance the General Convention at each regular session thereof a proposed the B budget for † The Episcopal Church for the ensuing budgetary period, which budgetary period shall be equal to the interval between regular meetings of the General Convention, and shall transmit to the Bishop of each Diocese and to the President of each Province a statement of the existing and the proposed assessments necessary to support the proposed budget.~~

~~(b c) The budget proposed for adoption by General Convention shall include a €canonical and corporate portion which shall provide for the contingent expenses of the General Convention, the stipend of the Presiding Bishop together with the necessary expenses of that office, the necessary expenses of the~~

President of the House of Deputies, including the staff and ~~Advisory Council of Advice~~ required to assist in the performance of the duties and matters related to the President's office, and the applicable Church Pension Fund assessments, and also the corporate requirements for the administrative support of the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society offices.

(~~e~~ d) The budget proposed for adoption by the General Convention shall include provision for support for the P programs of ~~€~~ The Episcopal Church, ~~–The program so submitted~~ shall include a detailed budget of that part of the program for which it proposes to make appropriations for the ensuing year, and estimated budgets for the succeeding portion of the budgetary period.

(~~e~~) ~~After the preparation of the budget the Executive Council shall, at least four months before the sessions of the General Convention, transmit to the Bishop of each Diocese and to the President of each Province a statement of the existing and the proposed askings necessary to support the Budget for the Episcopal Church. The Executive Council shall also submit to the General Convention, with the budget, a plan for the askings of the respective Dioceses of the sum needed to execute the budget.~~

(~~d~~ e) Revenue to support the B budget for ~~€~~ The Episcopal Church shall be generated primarily by a single asking of the Dioceses of the ~~€~~ Church based on a formula which the General Convention shall adopt ~~as part of its Program, Budget and Finance process~~. If in any year the total anticipated income for budget support is less than the amount required to support the budget approved by the General Convention, the canonical portion of the Budget for the Episcopal Church shall have funding priority over any other budget areas subject to any decreases necessary to maintain a balanced budget.

(f) There shall be joint sessions of the two Houses for the presentation of the B budget ~~for the Episcopal Church~~; and thereafter consideration shall be given and appropriate action taken thereon by the General Convention. During the ensuing budget period, ~~€~~ the Council shall have the power to expend all sums of money covered by the budget and estimated budgets approved by the General Convention, subject to such restrictions as may be imposed by the General Convention, including but not limited to the canonical budget priority ~~declaration set forth in Section 6(d) of this Canon~~. It shall also have power to undertake such other work provided for in the budget approved by the General Convention, or other work under the jurisdiction of the Council, the need for which may have arisen after the action of the General Convention, as in the judgment of the Council reasonably reliable revenues ~~its income will shall warrant~~.

EXPLANATION

The budget provisions in the Canons and Joint Rules of Order are in conflict in important areas, mainly in the respective roles of Executive Council and the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance. While in the 2013-2015 triennium substantial improvements were made in the process for developing the triennial budget, amendments to the Joint Rules of Order and Canons are still in order.

A111: AMEND JOINT RULE OF ORDER II.10

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That Joint Rule of Order II.10 be amended to read as follows:

**II Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance**

**10. (a)** There shall be a Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance, consisting of 27 persons being members of the General Convention (one Bishop, and two members of the House of Deputies, either ~~€~~ lay or ~~€~~ clerical, from each Province), who shall be appointed not later than the fifteenth day of December

following each regular ~~M~~ meeting of the General Convention, the Bishops to be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, the Deputies by the President of the House of Deputies. The Secretary and the Treasurer of the General Convention and the Chief Financial Officer of the Executive Council shall be members *ex officio*, without vote. The Joint Standing Committee may appoint advisers, from time to time, as its funds warrant, to assist the ~~Joint Standing Committee~~ with its work.

**(b)** Organization. The Joint Standing Committee shall elect ~~its~~ a Chair from its membership, and such other officers as needed. The Joint Standing Committee shall be organized in Sections, which shall conform to the major subdivisions of the ~~B~~ budget, as well as Sections on Funding and Presentation, the size, ~~and~~ composition *and chairs* of the several Sections to be determined by the Joint Standing Committee. ~~The Chairs of each Section shall be elected by the Joint Standing Committee;~~ ~~†~~The several Sections shall elect their own Secretaries from among their own membership. The Joint Standing Committee may refer to a Section any of the duties imposed upon it by this rule; *Provided, however,* that final action the ~~B~~ budget shall be taken only by the full Committee, ~~either in~~ meeting assembled or by a vote by mail.

**(c)** During the interim between regular ~~M~~ meetings of the General Convention, the Joint Standing Committee shall act in an advisory capacity to the officers of the General Convention and to the Executive Council, holding such meetings as may be deemed necessary for the purpose. Meetings of the Joint Standing Committee shall be called by the Chair, or upon the request of any five members thereof. ~~In~~ respect of the Budget for the Episcopal Church, the Joint Standing Committee shall have the power to consider, and either by a vote by mail, or in meeting assembled, to make such adjustments therein, or additions thereto, as it shall deem to be necessary or expedient, and which, in its judgment, available funds and anticipated income will warrant; and it shall likewise have the power to adjust the annual askings of Dioceses within the limit established by the General Convention. With regard to the General Church Program, the Joint Standing Committee shall:

- (i) Meet and consult with the Executive Council, ~~or its Administration and Finance Committee,~~ the appropriate committee thereof, on adjustments to the ~~€~~ church program priorities, and on alternate income generating resources;
- (ii) Receive from the Executive Council, ~~not less than four months~~ 120 days prior to the meeting of General Convention, the proposed General ~~€~~ church ~~P~~ program for the upcoming triennium, including a proposed detailed ~~B~~ budget for the year next following that of such Convention;
- (iii) Meet in such places as it shall determine, sufficiently in advance of the next General Convention to expedite its work;
- (iv) *Solicit church-wide comments and* ~~€~~ conduct hearings ~~upon such the~~ proposed ~~P~~ program and ~~B~~ budget; and
- (v) Consider ~~such the~~ Executive Council's proposed ~~P~~ program and ~~B~~ budget, *make any changes deemed necessary or advisable,* and report thereon to the next ~~succeeding~~ General Convention.

**(d)** Not later than the third day prior to the adjournment of each regular meeting of the General Convention, the Joint Standing Committee shall report to a Joint Session, pursuant to Canon, a proposed ~~B~~ budget for ~~†~~ The Episcopal Church for the ensuing *three-year* ~~Convention~~ period, ~~subject to the approval of the said Budgets subject also to increase, reduction, or elimination of items, based on open hearings held during the General Convention and by subsequent concurrent action by the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops.~~ *starting January 1 following that year's General Convention and ending the December 31 following the subsequent General Convention.*

**EXPLANATION**

The budget provisions in the Canons and Joint Rules of Order are in conflict in important areas, mainly in the respective roles of Executive Council and the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance. While in the 2013-2015 triennium substantial improvements were made in the process for developing the triennial budget, amendments to the Joint Rules of Order and Canons are still in order.

**Emerging Church**

The Commission was fortunate to spend time in conversation with The Rev. Tom Brackett, Missioner, New Church Starts & Missional Initiatives, during our initial meeting in St. Louis in the fall of 2012. The following questions served as our starting point: What structural issues, if any, are impeding the emergence of fresh expression faith communities? And what structural fixes, if any, might better enable the emergence of fresh expression faith communities?

Through this conversation, we discovered that the primary inhibitors to the growth of new church forms are related to lack of financial resources and long-term diocesan commitment, and not necessarily structure. There are no obvious obstacles to fresh expressions within the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, which appear to leave sufficient room for our dioceses to incentivize and ease the work of developing new faith communities through creative canonical innovation.

For example, the Episcopal Diocese of Spokane, at its 2013 annual convention, adopted a canon for 'specialized missions,' which are committed faith communities that are formally connected to the Bishop, but that require far less financial and administrative overhead.

At the very least, the Constitution and Canons should be more thoroughly examined for any non-obvious obstacles to this type of innovation for mission and ministry and for appropriate canonical provisions to clarify the relationships of emerging church organizations with The Episcopal Church, dioceses, and congregations, including liability and tax-exempt status. The Commission encourages its successor members in the next triennium to take on this work, and urges other church bodies to explore and report on how to integrate and support emerging church forms and expressions within the structures and polity of our Church.

The Commission wishes to commend the excellent work of The Rev. Brackett to identify, network, and resource endeavors in fresh expressions across The Episcopal Church through the creative use of both online and regional face-to-face gatherings. We believe that this model of collaborative sharing and learning among local practitioners represents the best use of our wisdom and resources at each level of our common life.

**Goals and Objectives for the 2015-2017 Triennium**

The Commission expects that the next 78th General Convention will take action on many resolutions proposing governance and structural and administrative changes. The Commission has faith that it will still exist in the ensuing triennium, as its canonical mandate will be never more important than in that "post-TREC" environment. In that triennium, the Commission will be a critical asset to the Church, as those changes are made operational by analyzing the intended and unintended consequences and proposing appropriate legislation to address problems, oversights, and transition issues.



## Budget

The Commission met in person twice and by video or telephone conference call nine times; and expended \$10,793.84, leaving \$5,206.16 unexpended from its \$16,000.00 budget.

The Commission expects to meet a similar number of times in the next triennium. This will require a budget of \$13,000 for 2016 and \$13,000 for 2017, for a total of \$26,000 for the triennium.