

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2022-A154  
**Title:** Revise Canon I.5 Regarding Archives of The Episcopal Church  
**Proposer:** Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and President Gay Jennings  
**Topic:** Archives, Canons

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### Directly Related: (Attached)

1985-A076 Amend and Renumber Canons I.5, 1 as follows:  
Canon I.5 [Add Canon 5: Of the Archives of the Episcopal Church]  
Canon I.1.5 [Repeal Sec. 5: Archives of the Episcopal Church]

**Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.*

# A154 - Revise Canon I.5 Regarding Archives of The Episcopal Church

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and President Gay Jennings

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** Yes

**Has Budget Implications:** No

**Cost:**

**HiA:** HD

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** 17 - Agencies & Boards

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church amend Canon I.5 to read as follows, with the amendment taking effect immediately upon its adoption:

**<Amended text as it would appear if adopted and concurred. Scroll below the line of asterisks (\*\*\*\*\*) to see the version showing all deleted and added text.>**

Canon 5: Of the Archives of The Episcopal Church

**Sec. 1.** There shall be an Archives of The Episcopal Church, the purpose of which shall be to preserve by safekeeping, to arrange and to make available the records of the General Convention, Executive Council, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, and other important records and memorabilia of the life and work of the Church, and to carry out a program of records management, so as to further the historical dimension of the mission of the Church.

**Sec. 2.** For purposes of this Canon, records are defined as all fixed evidential information regardless of method, media, format or characteristics of the recording process, which have been created, received or gathered by the Church, its officers, agents or employees in pursuance of the legal, business and administrative function and the programmatic mission of the Church. Records include all original materials used to capture information, notwithstanding the place or conditions of creation, or the formality or informality of the characteristics of the record. The records and archives of the Church are not limited by the

medium in which they are kept and include such formats as paper records, electronic records, printed records and publications, photo-reproduced images, and machine-readable tapes, film and disks.

**Sec. 3.** The Archives of The Episcopal Church shall be managed by the Archivist.

**Sec. 4.** Upon joint nomination of the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies in their respective roles as the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Council, the Executive Council shall appoint the Archivist who shall serve at the pleasure of, and report and be accountable to the Chair of the Executive Council. If a vacancy should occur in that office, a successor shall be appointed in like manner.

**Sec. 5.**

a. There shall be an Archives Advisory Board which shall consist of the Archivist, the Registrar, the Chief Legal Officer, and between eight (8) and twelve (12) appointed persons, two (2) or three (3) of whom shall be Bishops, two (2) or three (3) of whom shall be Clergy, and four (4), five (5) or six (6) of whom shall be Lay Persons. All appointed Members of the Advisory Board shall serve terms beginning upon the adjournment of the General Convention at which their appointments are confirmed and ending with the close of the second regular Convention thereafter.

b. Bishops shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, and other Clerical and all Lay Members shall be appointed by the President of the House of Deputies, all subject to the confirmation of General Convention. Consideration shall be given to assure that membership includes persons who possess knowledge either of history or archival administration, or are persons skilled in disciplines pertinent to the resolutions of the concerns of the Archives. Positions of Members of the Board which become vacant prior to the normal expiration of such Members' terms shall be filled by appointment by the Presiding Bishop or by the President of the House of Deputies, as appropriate. Such appointments shall be for the remaining unexpired portion of such Members' terms, and if a regular meeting of the General Convention intervenes, appointments for terms extending beyond such meeting shall be subject to confirmation of the General Convention. Because of the special skills and knowledge needed by this Board, a Member shall be eligible for appointment for two successive terms, after which the Member may not be reappointed prior to the next meeting of the General Convention following the meeting at the close of which the second successive term of the Member expired. Members appointed to fill vacancies in unexpired terms shall not thereby be disqualified from appointment to two full terms immediately thereafter.

c. The Archives Advisory Board shall provide advice regarding identification, collection, preservation, management, use, and accessibility of records, and establishment of best practices regarding the same to the Archivist, the Archives, and the Executive Council.

d. The Archives Advisory Board shall meet at least annually, or as requested by the Archivist or the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Council.

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**<Proposed amended resolution text showing exact changes being made:>**

Canon 5: Of the Archives of The Episcopal Church

**Sec. 1.** There shall be an Archives of The Episcopal Church, the purpose of which shall be to preserve by safekeeping, to arrange and to make available the records of the General Convention, Executive Council, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, and other important records and memorabilia of the life and work of the Church, and to carry out a program of records management, so as to further the historical dimension of the mission of the Church.

**Sec. 2.** For purposes of this Canon, records are defined as all fixed evidential information regardless of method, media, format or characteristics of the recording process, which have been created, received or gathered by the Church, its officers, agents or employees in pursuance of the legal, business and administrative function and the programmatic mission of the Church. Records include all original materials used to capture information, notwithstanding the place or conditions of creation, or the formality or informality of the characteristics of the record. The records and archives of the Church are not limited by the medium in which they are kept and include such formats as paper records, electronic records, printed records and publications, photo-reproduced images, and machine-readable tapes, film and disks.

**Sec. 3.** *The Archives of The Episcopal Church shall be managed by the Archivist.*

**Sec. 4.** *Upon joint nomination of the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies in their respective roles as the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Council, the Executive Council shall appoint the Archivist who shall serve at the pleasure of, and report and be accountable to the Chair of the Executive Council. If a vacancy should occur in that office, a successor shall be appointed in like manner.*

**Sec. 3 5.**

a. There shall be a ~~Board of the Archives~~ *an Archives Advisory Board* which shall consist of the Archivist (~~ex officio, with vote~~), *the Registrar, the Chief Legal Officer, and between eight (8) and twelve (12) appointed persons, two (2) or three (3) of whom shall be Bishops, two (2) or three (3) of whom shall be Clergy, and four (4), five (5) or six (6) of whom shall be Lay Persons.* All appointed Members of the *Advisory Board* shall serve terms beginning ~~with~~ *upon the close adjournment* of the General Convention at which their appointments are confirmed and ending with the close of the second regular Convention thereafter.

b. ~~Members shall serve rotating terms for the purpose of continuity on the Board. In the first instance following the adoption of these provisions, one of the Bishops and one half of the Clerical and Lay Appointees shall have terms expiring after the next regular meeting of the General Convention as determined by lot.~~

e b. Bishops shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, and other Clerical and all Lay Members shall be appointed by the President of the House of Deputies, all subject to the confirmation of General Convention. Consideration shall be given to assure that membership includes persons who possess knowledge either of history or archival administration, or are persons skilled in disciplines pertinent to the resolutions of the concerns of the Archives. Positions of Members of the Board which become vacant prior to the normal expiration of such Members' terms shall be filled by appointment by the Presiding Bishop or by the President of the House of Deputies, as appropriate. Such appointments shall be for the remaining unexpired portion of such Members' terms, and if a regular meeting of the General Convention intervenes, appointments for terms extending beyond such meeting shall be subject to confirmation of the General Convention. Because of the special skills and knowledge needed by this Board, a Member shall be eligible for appointment for two successive terms, after which the Member may not be reappointed prior to the next meeting of the General Convention following the meeting at the close of which the second successive term of the Member expired. Members appointed to fill vacancies in unexpired terms shall not thereby be disqualified from appointment to two full terms immediately thereafter.

~~d. The Board of the Archives shall have the duty to set policy for the Archives, to elect the Archivist of The Episcopal Church, and to set forth the terms and conditions with regard to the work of the Archivist.~~

*c. The Archives Advisory Board shall provide advice regarding identification, collection, preservation, management, use, and accessibility of records, and establishment of best practices regarding the same to the Archivist, the Archives, and the Executive Council.*

~~e d.~~ *The Board of the Archives Archives Advisory Board shall meet at least annually, or more often as required as requested by the Archivist or the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Council.*

~~f. The Board of the Archives shall elect its own officers and have the power to create committees necessary for the carrying on of its work.~~

~~g. The Board of the Archives shall adopt procedures consistent with the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church for its organization and functioning.~~

~~h. The Board of the Archives shall report to the General Convention, and the Executive Council, through the office of the Executive Officer of the General Convention, and to the Church.~~

**Sec. 4.** ~~There shall be an Archivist of The Episcopal Church whose duty shall be to manage the Archives, records, and related information resources of the Church at the direction of the Board.~~

## **Explanation**

The General Convention's efforts to gather the records of the Church date back until at least 1835, when it appointed the Rev. Dr. Francis L. Hawks to act as "conservator" of those

records, which were to be maintained in a separate depository at the General Theological Seminary. Since then, the Church's Archives have been housed in various places and had a succession of custodians. The past century has seen the Archives located at the now-defunct Philadelphia Divinity School (1940), at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest (beginning in 1957), and most recently in separate space in Austin, Texas. In that same time period, custodial authority over the collection was first outsourced by the General Convention to the Church Historical Society, which operated the Archives at its discretion, making triennial reports to General Convention until 1985. In that year, the General Convention moved oversight responsibility for Archives operations to a Board of Archives with members appointed by the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies and confirmed by the General Convention. Each of these arrangements has served the circumstances of its time.

Today, the Archives' collections and services have become increasingly sophisticated as well as intertwined with the operations of the Church, including in its role as corporate record-keeper for the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, the New York nonprofit through which the Church does business and employs its staff, including the Archives staff. The vast increase in electronic records and communication requires expertise in information technology, electronic data storage, and greater integration between the Archives and DFMS systems. Record keeping, for both corporate integrity and historical understanding, is now critical, and implicates data privacy, cybersecurity, interstate and international legal compliance, and other such concerns. This new reality suggests that accountability for Archives operations should be placed directly and clearly in those who oversee other Church operational functions. At the same time, the value in having advisors with expertise pertinent to the Archives continues to be critical. Accordingly, this proposal would create an Archives Advisory Board to provide advice to the staff managing the Archives and to the Executive Council overseeing the Archives.





**Resolution Number:** 1985-A076  
**Title:** Amend and Renumber Canons I.5, 1 as follows: Canon I.5 [Add Canon 5: Of the Archives of the Episcopal Church] Canon I.1.5 [Repeal Sec. 5: Archives of the Episcopal Church]  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That Title I, Canon 1, Sec. 5 be rescinded, and the ensuing sections of Title I, Canon 1 be renumbered; and be it further  
Resolved, That the following new Canon, to be numbered Title I, Canon 5 be adopted:*

**CANON 5**

*Of the Archives of the Episcopal Church*

*Sec. 1. There shall be an Archives of the Episcopal Church, the purpose of which shall be to preserve by safekeeping, to arrange and to make available the records of the General Convention and of the Executive Council, and other important records and memorabilia of the life and work of the Church, so as to further the historical dimension of the mission of the Church.*

*Sec. 2(a). There shall be a Board of the Archives which shall consist of the Archivist (ex officio with vote) and nine (9) appointed persons, three (3) of whom shall be Bishops and six (6) shall be Clerical or Lay Members. All appointed Members of the Board shall serve terms beginning with the close of the General Convention at which their appointments are confirmed and ending with the close of the second regular Convention thereafter.*

*(b) . Members shall serve rotating terms for the purpose of continuity on the Board. In the first instance following the adoption of these provisions, one of the Bishops and one half of the Clerical and Lay Appointees shall have terms expiring after the next regular meeting of the General Convention as determined by lot.*

*(c) . Bishops shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, and other Clerical and all Lay Members shall be appointed by the President of the House of Deputies, all subject to the confirmation of General Convention. Consideration shall be given to assure that Membership includes persons who possess knowledge either of history or archival administration, or are persons skilled in disciplines pertinent to the resolutions of the concerns of the Archives. Positions of Members of the Board which become vacant prior to the normal expiration of such Members' terms shall be filled by appointment by the Presiding Bishop or by the President of the House of Deputies, as appropriate. Such appointments shall be for the remaining unexpired portion of such Members' terms and if a regular meeting of the General Convention intervenes, appointments for terms extending beyond such meeting shall be subject to confirmation of the General Convention. Because of the special skills and knowledge needed by this Board, a member shall be eligible for appointment for two successive terms, after which the member may not be reappointed prior to the next meeting of the General Convention following the meeting at the close of which his second successive term expired. Members appointed to fill vacancies in unexpired terms shall not thereby be disqualified from appointment to two full terms immediately thereafter.*



(d) . *The Board of the Archives shall have the duty to set policy for the Archives, to elect the Archivist of the Episcopal Church, and to set forth the terms and conditions with regard to the work of the Archivist.*

(e) . *The Board of the Archives shall meet annually, or more often as required.*

(f) . *The Board of the Archives shall elect its own officers and have the power to create committees necessary for the carrying on of its work.*

(g) . *The Board of the Archives shall adopt procedures consistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church for its organization and functioning.*

(h) . *The Board of the Archives shall report to the General Convention, and the Executive Council, through the office of the Executive Officer of the General Convention, and to the Church.*

*Sec. 3. There shall be an Archivist of the Episcopal Church whose duty shall be to manage the archives of the Church at the direction of the Board.*

*Sec. 4. The expenses of the Archives of the Episcopal Church shall be shared by the General Convention and the Executive Council.*

and be it further

*Resolved, That the present numbered sections of Title I, Canons 5 through 18, be re-numbered as Title I, Canons 6 through 19.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 270.