

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

The Committee on Constitution and Canons (Michael Braxton, chair; the Rev. Charlie Hamill, secretary; the Rev. Bruce Robison, the Rev. Michelle Boomgaard, Kenneth Stiles, Ansley Westbrook and chancellor Andy Roman, *ex officio*) met throughout the year to discuss proposals from its members and from others within the diocese regarding changes to the constitution or canons that will better serve our diocese.

The committee examined the use of language in describing the privileges of having seat, voice, and vote, and the combinations thereof, at Diocesan Convention and found inconsistencies in how these terms were used in the canons and by-laws. At a later Diocesan Convention, the committee will propose changes that make the use of these terms consistent in order to clarify their intended meaning. The committee is currently drafting the proposed amendments to be presented in 2017.

The committee is studying provisions in our diocesan constitution (Article X, Section 1) and canons (Canon IV, Sections 1 and 2) which exclude ordained persons from election to and from service on the Board of Trustees. We have been consulting with the Board of Trustees and reviewing practices in the wider church. A wider conversation is envisioned in the next year, to include other canonical bodies of the diocese and other interested parties.

No specific proposal has been drafted at this time, but a projected calendar suggests that the committee could present an amendment to the constitution for a first reading at the 2017 Diocesan Convention, and, if the amendment is approved, with a second reading and amendment to the Canon to be presented at the 2018 Diocesan Convention. Should our constitution and canons be amended in some form to allow the election and service of clergy on the Board of Trustees, it may then also be necessary to amend the Board's Charter of Incorporation.

The committee is also studying a change that makes our canons consistent with the notion that resident clergy, unlike convention deputies, serve at Diocesan Convention by virtue of their status as clergy. As a result, clergy could not be denied vote at Diocesan Convention because of their parish's failure to submit a parochial report (although lay deputies would continue to be subject to such sanction.)

At the 2016 Diocesan Convention, the committee will recommend a change to the Rules of Order to make them consistent with the canons, so as not to require at least two nominees for each office of Trustee-at-Large.

The committee will recommend that Canon XV be revised to be consistent with the Canons of the Episcopal Church regarding consent for the alienation of property.

After consideration, the committee decided not to act on recommendations at this time regarding amendments that more clearly define the distinctions among parish, mission and transitional parish.