

Chancellor's Memo - Proposed Amendments

At the 101st Synod held via zoom on May 13th, 2023 the canons committee was directed to undertake a complete review and redrafting of the canons and regulations. The direction of synod was that the canons committee present to Synod 2024 a revised set of canons and regulations that:

- “1. Is in plain language;*
- 2. Is internally consistent in terms, process and formatting;*
- 3. Reflects the current experience of the diocese;*
- 4. Reflects the appropriate division among issues that belong in the canons, those that belong in the regulations and those that belong in a policy manual;*
- 5. Is forward looking and allows for future flexibility where flexibility is appropriate.”*

In order to bring to Synod 2024 in November the drafts that we believe meet those criteria, as chair of the canons committee I am sharing a series of motions that diocesan council has approved in their meeting on June 13, 2024, and in a subsequent e-vote on July 17, 2024.

The canons committee is comprised of five members, including a retired judge and four additional lawyers, one of whom is still active and three of whom are retired. A subset of this committee has met weekly for the past year to review the work done by members between these meetings, and in addition the whole committee has met every other week. Then, as the proposed constitution, canons and regulations have been drafted, various iterations have been brought before diocesan council for consideration and approval.

In addition, throughout the year the canons committee has sought and received input from clergy, wardens, synod representatives, a focus group, and the archdeacons. All these groups have offered suggestions, asked questions for clarification, and indicated a general approval of the drafts they have reviewed. Many of the suggestions offered have led to amendments to the drafts which ultimately have been approved by diocesan council.

In the end, the canons committee believes the proposed constitution, canons and regulations reflect the mandate given the canons committee at Synod 2023. While the canons committee has made every effort to create drafts that will serve the diocese effectively going forward, it is also understood that the canons and regulations may well require further amendments in the future as the needs of the diocese change. While changes to the constitution require two synods to be affected, and changes to the canons require one synod, the regulations may be changed by diocesan council as and when required. Therefore, it is hoped that if Synod approves these amendments, clergy and laity will continue to offer to the canons committee suggestions for improvements that may in the future be useful.

For Synod members' information, I am attaching the following documents in preparation for Synod 2024:

1. The complete draft of the constitution, canons and regulations being proposed by diocesan council;
2. A memo setting out the motions that diocesan council will be making at Synod 2024;
3. A memo that sets out what the canons committee believes are the most substantive changes being proposed.

It is my hope that clergy and synod reps will take the time to carefully and prayerfully review these documents prior to their regional conferences in preparation for Synod.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

Isabel Weeks
Chancellor
On behalf of the Canons Committee