

Memo - Substantive Changes to Constitution, Canons and Regulations

In addition to re-writing many portions of the canons and regulations into plainer language, moving regulatory provisions from canon to regulation, and attempting to be more consistent with terms and provisions among the canons and regulations, the canons committee has attempted to propose changes that will better reflect the way we actually do the business of church, while leaving as much flexibility as is appropriate in order for these canons and regulations to continue to be a useful tool by which to guide ourselves.

These proposed changes have been approved by diocesan council on June 13, 2024.

The order (and numbering) of the canons has been adjusted so that they are grouped into three sections: leadership, governance and general. The regulations have been differentiated from the canons by italicizing them and using a different font.

The following are the highlights of the changes that are being proposed.

Adding a **Preface** that is not a part of the constitution, canons or regulations but that indicates our collective understanding of the reasons we have these things.

Constitution- (for tabling before Synod 2024, and if approved, to bring back to next Synod)

1. “Council” deleted, as the term throughout has been changed to diocesan council (proposed in the constitution, and throughout the canons and regulations)
2. “Dean” has been changed to include the point that the Bishop is the most senior cleric.
3. “Minister” is deleted as it is not synonymous with incumbent, and when the term is used, it specifies that it means an ordained person of another denomination.
4. “Order- Rules of” has been deleted, as it is unnecessary.
5. “Session” the “note” has been deleted as it is unnecessary.
6. “Year” has been deleted as the diocesan council may wish in the future to change the year end for tax or other purposes, so it is left to the regulation rather than the constitution.
7. Article II has been amended to reflect the separate competences of General Synod and the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and the Yukon.
8. In Article III, President of Anglican Church Women has been deleted.
9. Articles V, IX, XI- deleted he/she, his/her, replaced with “they”, “their” and paralleled the verb tenses.
10. Article X- added possibility of electronic notice
11. Articles X, XIV, XV- changed “council” to “diocesan council”.

Canon 1- Bishops

1. Added a section detailing where the Bishop gets their authority and responsibility.
2. Amended the electoral nominations committee to include not fewer than three people who are all members of Synod.
3. The electoral procedures committee has been moved to regulation to make the process possible of amendment by diocesan council.
4. Many of the procedural aspects of the election of a Bishop have been moved to regulation.
5. Confirming that the Bishop's salary is to be paid by the diocese.
6. Removing the requirement that a candidate for Bishop needs to swear allegiance to the Monarch.
7. Regional governance and archdeacons have been moved to their own canons.
8. Regions have been altered so that they may be geographically defined, or they may be created using other criteria.

Canon 2- Archdeacons

1. Moved the archdeacons' canons out of the Bishop's canon, and moved it from regulation to canon, to stand alone.
2. Indicated that the executive archdeacon may also be the executive officer.

Canon 3- Clergy

1. Amended provisions for stipend and housing to reflect the new way we are going to be handling these things, reflecting the combination of salary and housing into one figure, and to allow for a new "point system" for determining salary of clergy rather than simply numbers of years of ordination.
2. Removed the need for clergy to swear allegiance to the Crown before being licenced.
3. Clarifying the educational leave provisions and particularly how the three types of educational leave are to work in respect of each other.
4. Updating the clergy housing provisions to reflect current practices.

Canon 4- Synod

1. Added that proceedings of synod may be sent by electronic means to members rather than a copy be sent to members.
2. Included here the make-up of the nominations committee that was originally in the diocesan council canon.
3. The provisions of the role of registrar have been streamlined to reflect the reality of a world where fewer documents are saved in hard copy, and where the synod office creates the majority of the documents and the registrar's role has evolved.
4. The archives advisory committee has been removed from the canon as it has been a simple once-a-year meeting at which the archivist reviews what has been done in the previous year. The archivist may still choose to have a committee, but it is not canonically required.
5. Clarified voting and abstentions.

Canon 5- Diocesan Council

1. The financial reports of diocesan council to synod are changed from being annual to covering the periods between synods.
2. The membership of diocesan council has been amended to remove non-voting members, paralleling national and other dioceses' common practice.
3. The chair of diocesan council has been streamlined.
4. The place of the meetings is now determined by the Bishop rather than the secretaries (to conform with present practice).
5. Clerical and lay members are to be elected (rather than nominated) at regional conferences.
6. All the standing committees have been moved to one place in the canon (Reg R5.1.8) rather than having some in one regulation and others in other regulations.
7. The standing committees have been reduced from eight to four. Other committees may be struck from time to time by diocesan council when appropriate but are not standing committees.
8. The form of committee reports is less prescriptive. Diocesan council may require specifics from a particular committee, as required.
9. The requirement for the finance officer to provide supplies, equipment, etc. for the office has been removed.
10. The explicit requirement for the finance officer to attend every committee meeting in the diocese that touches on finances has been omitted. If it is necessary for the finance officer to attend a meeting, the executive archdeacon or the Bishop can request that to happen.
11. The Executive Officer's responsibilities have been amended from "ensuring" decisions of synod and diocesan council are implemented to "supporting" those decisions and ensuring that they are recorded and tracked.
12. Described in greater detail the power of diocesan council to sell or mortgage or otherwise deal with lands and buildings and provided right of a parish to make representations regarding a proposed decision by diocesan council that deals with lands of buildings of that parish.

Canon 6- Regions

1. Moved regional governance out of Bishop's canon to their own canon.
2. Expanded the ways for the Bishop to create regions to include the possibility that regions may not be defined by geography.
3. Added the possibility for anyone from a region to attend the regional conference, with voice but no vote.
4. Regional conferences elect rather than nominate clerical and lay members to diocesan council.
5. Established that there must be at least 4 regions.
6. Changed the required frequency of regional conferences to "at least once in the year leading to the next synod" rather than every year (to reflect the way we have actually been doing this).

Canon 7- Parish

1. Clarified the process for establishing a parish.
2. Moved the disestablishment of parishes to the end of the canon.
3. Clarified the process and terms of amalgamation or grouping of parishes.
4. Added appointment of parish treasurer to the annual general meeting agenda.

5. Clarified the responsibilities of wardens.
6. Moved a great deal of approval process by the asset management committee to policy.
7. Clarified that a parish may not mortgage, sell or lease parish lands and that these things are to be approved by diocesan council on behalf of synod.
8. Clarified the requirements regarding insurance.
9. Required wardens and treasurers to create a draft budget with input by parish council, for presentation to the annual general meeting, and once approved, wardens have control of the finances of parishes, subject to remaining within the budget.
10. Added provisions for when a parish has no incumbent, either while in transition or because the parish cannot afford (or cannot find) an incumbent.
11. Moved to policy issues about grouping of parishes, disestablishment of parishes and major construction in parish buildings, management of cemeteries, and handling of furnishing and memorials in parishes.

Canon 8- Finance and Trusts

1. Combined Educational Trusts canons with this canon.
2. Separated the operational requirements of the various trusts so that each trust requires only what is needed for that trust.
3. Included a definition section for the various abbreviations that we regularly use.
4. Move the treasurer section to the front of the canon
5. Added clarity around the way finances, investments, budgeting and audits are handled.
6. Changed the term assessment to apportionment
7. Clarified the reporting requirements.
8. Deleted the Transportation Loan Fund regulation.
9. Amended the Church Sites and Parsonages regulation to remove the provisions for loans to clergy for housing issues, and to clarify when and how parishes may seek funding for rectories.

Canon 9- Court of the Diocese

1. The schedule to the canon has been made into a regulation that diocesan council may from time to time amend or enhance.

Canon 10- Regulations

1. Clarified who might bring a proposed regulation to diocesan council for a regulation or an amendment to a regulation.
2. Added that proposed regulations need to be vetted by the Chancellor.
3. Added that if synod denies the ratification of a regulation previously approved by diocesan council, any action taken under a regulation that occurs between diocesan council approval and synod denying ratification remains valid.
4. Added power to make policy, who proposes and who approves.

Canon 11- Order of Diocese of British Columbia

1. Amended canon to indicate that it is not a “constitution”, but rather a canon and regulations.
2. Removed the definition of “registrar” as the registrar is already defined in the canons.
3. Changed “council” to “advisory council” as the word “council” is a defined term in the constitution.

4. Removed repetition of some provisions such as the way a person is nominated, eligibility, when investitures may occur and composition of the Order.
5. Removed the term “bishop’s personal gift” for nominations by the Bishop.
6. Moved to regulation some of the nomination process, eligibility, timing of services and how the medallion is to be worn.
7. Added regulation about using “post nominals”- eg. “John Smith, ODBC”.

Canon 12- Cemeteries

1. Moved these cemetery-related canons and regulations to their own canon, rather than being a part of other canons.
2. Cleaned up some of the terms in the regulations to better reflect the provincial legislation about cemeteries.