

Vestry School

General Considerations

The Rt. Rev. James R. Mathes,
Bishop



the
episcopal diocese
of san diego

fearless love

Vestry:

--noun

1. a room in or a building attached to a church, in which the vestments, and sometimes liturgical objects, are kept; sacristy.
2. (in some churches) a room in or a building attached to a church, used as a chapel, for prayer meetings, for the Sunday school, etc.
3. Episcopal Church. a committee elected by members of a congregation to serve with the churchwardens in managing the temporal affairs of the church.
4. Church of England. a meeting attended by all the parishioners or by a committee of parishioners during which the official business of the church is discussed.

Warden:

--noun

1. A person who has the charge or care of something, especially a building or someone.
2. Any of various public officials, especially one responsible for the enforcement of certain regulations.
3. A person employed to patrol a park or safari park
4. *Chiefly (US and Canada)* the chief officer of a prison
5. *Britian)* the principal or president of any of various universities or colleges.
See Churchwarden

Churchwarden:

--noun

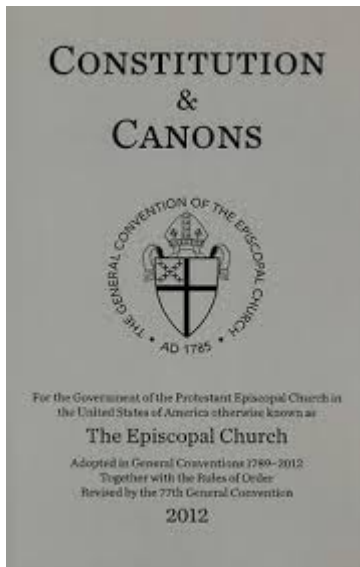
1. *Anglican Church.* A lay officer who looks after the secular affairs of the church and who, in England, is the legal representative of the parish.
2. *Episcopal Church.* A lay church officer who, with other members of the vestry, is in charge of the temporal management of the parish.
3. A long-stemmed clay pipe for smoking.

Multiple Constituencies

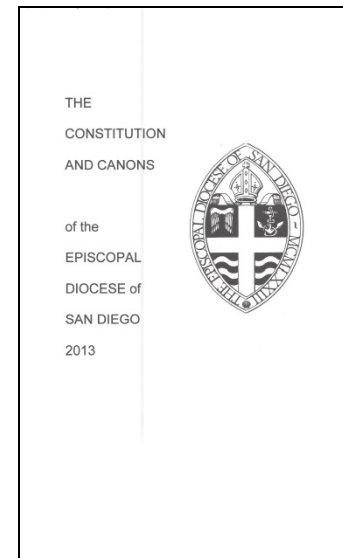
- Parishioners
 - Altar guild
 - Men's group
 - Youth Group
 - Etc., Etc., Etc....
- Rector/vicar/priest-in-charge
- Staff
- Neighbors
- Other parts of diocese
- Bishop
- Bishop's staff

What the Canons Say....

The Episcopal Church



The Episcopal Diocese of San Diego



The Episcopal Church Canons:
http://episcopalarchives.org/CandC_ToC_2012.html

CANON 14: Of Parish Vestries

Sec. 1. In every Parish of this Church the number, mode of selection, and term of office of Wardens and Members of the **Vestry**, with the qualifications of voters, shall be such as the State or Diocesan law may permit or require, and the Wardens and Members of the **Vestry** selected under such law shall hold office until their successors are selected and have qualified.

Sec. 2. Except as provided by the law of the State or of the Diocese, the **Vestry** shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy.

Sec. 3. Unless it conflicts with the law as aforesaid, the Rector, or such other member of the **Vestry** designated by the Rector, shall preside in all the meetings of the Vestry.

The Episcopal Church Canons:

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I.14.1 In every Parish of this Church the number, mode of selection, and term of office of Wardens and Members of the Vestry, with the qualifications of voters, shall be such as the State or Diocesan law may permit or require, and the **Wardens** and Members of the Vestry selected under such law shall hold office until their successors are selected and have qualified.

I.14. 2. Except as provided by the law of the State or of the Diocese, the Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy.

I.14. 3. Unless it conflicts with the law as aforesaid, the Rector, or such other member of the Vestry designated by the Rector, shall preside in all the meetings of the Vestry.

I.17.8. Any person accepting any office in this Church shall well and faithfully perform the duties of that office in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of this Church and of the Diocese in which the office is being exercised.

III.9.5(b)5 On notice being received of the Bishop's intention to visit any congregation, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall announce the fact to the congregation. At every visitation it shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge and the **Wardens**, Vestry or other officers, to exhibit to the Bishop the Parish Register and to give information as to the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal, in such categories as the Bishop shall have previously requested in writing.

III.9.6.(d) If any Member of the Clergy or Priest-in-Charge, as a result of impairment or any other cause, shall neglect to perform regular services in the congregation, and refuse, without good cause, to consent to any other duly qualified Member of the Clergy to perform such services, the **Wardens**, Vestry, or Trustees of the congregation shall, upon providing evidence to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of such neglect or refusal and with the written consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, have the authority to permit any duly qualified Member of the Clergy to officiate.

III.9.3 When a Parish is without a Rector, the **Wardens** or other officers shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority in writing. If the Parish shall for thirty days fail to provide services of public worship, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall make provision for such worship.

The Canons of the Diocese

www.edsd.org/canons

6.00 Duties, Election and Organization. At an Annual Meeting to be called upon reasonable notice as soon after January 1st of each year as is practical, each congregation shall elect to manage its temporalities a **Vestry or Bishop's Committee** (referred to herein as "Vestry") composed of persons who are at least 18 years of age and who are qualified electors of the congregation which elects them, the number to be determined by its Bylaws or Articles of Incorporation. The Rector of a Parish or the Vicar of a Mission shall be elected a member of the **Vestry**. The Senior and Junior Wardens shall always be communicants in good standing. In Parishes, the Senior Warden shall be appointed from the **Vestry** by the Rector. In Missions the Senior **Warden** shall be appointed by the Bishop. In all cases, the Junior **Warden** shall be elected from the Vestry by the Vestry. When a rectorship is vacant, the Parish Vestry shall elect the Senior and Junior Wardens from the **Vestry**. The Wardens may be alternately termed "Rector's Warden" or "Bishop's Warden" and the "People's Warden."

The Canons of the Diocese

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6.01 Rotation in Vestries. Nothing in the foregoing section shall preclude any congregation from electing only a portion of its Vestry each year or from establishing a "rotating" Vestry with a period of ineligibility for re-election after completing a full term of office or according to its Bylaws.

6.02 Vacancies. The Vestry shall have power to fill vacancies in its own body and shall continue in office until their successors are elected. The Vestry may declare that a vacancy exists when a member shall have unexcused absences from three successive regular Vestry meetings. A vacancy in the office of Senior Warden in Missions shall be filled by appointment of the Ecclesiastical Authority and in Parochial Missions by appointment of the Rector.

The Canons of the Diocese

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II.2.05 The organization of a new Mission shall be effected by the appointment by the Bishop of a Senior **Warden** and a Junior **Warden**, who shall be communicants of the Church, a Clerk and a Treasurer, such officers to be known as the Bishop's Committee. Thereafter the Senior **Warden** shall be appointed annually by the Bishop, and such additional number of persons as the Bishop shall authorize, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the Mission to be called on reasonable notice and held as soon after

the first day of January as practical. At the discretion of the Bishop the Mission may elect its Bishop's Committee, with the exception of the Senior **Warden**, on a rotational basis. The Junior **Warden** shall be elected in accordance with Title II, Canon 6.00, and the Clerk and Treasurer in accordance with Title II, Canon 6.05. Any qualified elector shall be eligible for election or appointment to such offices, except that the **Wardens** shall always be communicants.

II.6.00 Duties, Election and Organization. At an Annual Meeting to be called upon reasonable notice as soon after January 1st of each year as is practical, each congregation shall elect to manage its temporalities a Vestry or Bishop's Committee (referred to herein as "Vestry") composed of persons who are at least 18 years of age and who are qualified electors of the congregation which elects them, the number to be determined by its Bylaws or Articles of Incorporation. The Rector of a Parish or the Vicar of a Mission shall be elected a member of the Vestry. The Senior

and Junior Wardens shall always be communicants in good standing. In Parishes, the Senior Warden shall be appointed from the Vestry by the Rector. In Missions the Senior Warden shall be appointed by the Bishop. In all cases, the Junior Warden shall be elected from the Vestry by the Vestry. When a rectorship is vacant, the Parish Vestry shall elect the Senior and Junior Wardens from the Vestry. The Wardens may be alternately termed "Rector's Warden" or "Bishop's Warden" and the "People's Warden."

II.6.03 Wardens to Act. In case a congregation be without a Rector, Vicar or Priest-in- Charge, or such Member of the Clergy be absent or unable to act, the Senior Warden, or in whose absence the Junior Warden, shall preside at all Vestry and Parish Meetings. No Vestry or Parish Meeting shall be valid without the presence of either such Member of the Clergy in charge or the representative of the Bishop or one Warden.

Summary

- Wardens have few distinct duties per canons and customs
- Vestry members act in concern
- Clear fiduciary role
- Some are corporate officers
- Wardens have particular role in transition
- Or conflict

Recommendations

- Borrow from Non-profit culture
- Partners with rector/vicar
- Chief lay leaders
- Organizational structure of Vestry and Congregation
- Senior Warden vs. Junior Warden
- Succession and continuity

Planning

- Vestry can and should take a major role in long range/strategic planning
- Budget planning
- Take the long view

Stewardship

- Fits into long range planning
- Fiduciary role
- Recognize that church competes in a philanthropic environment
- Vestry should make sure excellent stewardship work occurs
- Annual, Capital, Planned Giving and Bequests

Mutual Ministry Review

- Annual
- A review of the ministry of the rector/vicar and the Vestry.
- It is a ministry review of the congregation
- Takes a specific look at the work of the clergy person in charge
- Our office can provide models and consultants

Models of MMR

- Survey
- Small group Discussions
- Combination of both

Always reflecting on clearly articulated goals from the prior year

Benefits of MMR

- Assists with planning
- Learn what folks are thinking
- Become better
- Pressure release valve

Additional Resources

- Vital Practices, Episcopal Church Foundation:
<http://www.ecfvp.org/>
- The Vestry Handbook
– By Christopher L. Webber



Questions?

Diocesan Staff

- Jim Mathes: Any question that you don't know who to ask! (bishopmathes@edsd.org)
- Julie Young: Finance, Property and H.R. (jyoung@edsd.org)
- Rosa Finney: Audits (rfinney@edsd.org)
- Allisyn Thomas: Transitions, Clergy support, Spiritual Formation, Congregation health and vitality (athomas@edsd.org)
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