

Canons – Memo

Isabel Weeks, Chancellor

October 1, 2026

Memo to the 2026 Synod

From: Isabel Weeks, Chancellor, on behalf of the Canons Committee

Proposed Changes to Constitution, Existing Canons and Regulations

The 2024 Synod approved a comprehensive re-write of the canons and regulations of the diocese, along with related changes to the constitution. The idea was to “try on” the new canons and regulations to see whether they would better reflect the way we actually do the business of church, while leaving as much flexibility as is appropriate.

The current canons and regulations have been in force since January 1, 2025. Since then our work continues to evolve. Diocesan Council have made changes to some of the regulations to keep pace with our work together. The canons committee felt it was time to look at the canons and regulations and propose some changes which reflect current realities and priorities. The following are the highlights of the changes which have been approved at the meeting of Diocesan Council held on September 24th, 2026, with the recommendation that they be approved at this Synod.

Constitution- (approved at Synod 2024, now back for approval or “second reading”)

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. “Session”- changed “annual” to “regular”

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7. Article II: deleted in entirety, replaced with:

"The Diocesan Synod may deliberate on all matters affecting the interests of the church in the Diocese; but, except as delegated by General Synod, shall have no competence to

(a) change doctrine or worship as set forth in the official formularies of the Anglican Church of Canada, or

(b) decide other matters assigned to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada or the Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon."

8. "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.

9. Article II has been amended to reflect the separate competences of General Synod and the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and the Yukon.

10. In Article III, President of Anglican Church Women has been deleted.

11. Articles V, IX, XI- deleted he/she, his/her, replaced with "they", "their" and paralleled the verb tenses.

12. Article X- added possibility of electronic notice.

13. Articles X, XIV, XV- changed "council" to "diocesan council".

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Canon 1 - The Bishop

One minor change to clarify that jurisdiction of the bishop of our Anglican diocese is limited to Anglican parishes and congregations. Removing "or within" makes it clear that the geographic diocese includes other denominations and worship communities.

Canon 2 - Archdeacons

No changes.

Canon 3 - Clergy

1. Canon 3.1 is amended to clarify that only the bishop has the power to appoint clergy.

2. Canon 3.2 moves the word "summarily" for clarity.

3. Canon 3.4: The title of the canon has the addition of "...of incumbents" for clarity.

Canon 4 - Synod

1. Canon 4.2 A and C: The word "preferably" has been added to the required credentials for the chancellor and vice-chancellor. This provides potential flexibility in appointing either of these officers.

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2. Canon 4.3 B: Deleted as unnecessary. The Registrar is identified as an officer of synod (Canon 4.6 A 11) and their responsibilities include more than those described in Regulation R1.8.
3. Canon 4.4 D: The deleted text is unnecessary. Any new or amended official collections policy would go through the approval process described in Canon 10.2.

Canon 5 - Diocesan Council

There are two substantive changes.

1. Canon 5 A 1 h and i: According to Article XIV, the clerical and lay secretaries are elected by Synod, and their duties are determined by Diocesan Council. In recent times, these two officers have been required to attend several committee meetings, with voice but no vote, essentially taking notes as scribes. Most of these committee meetings are held in the middle of the day, which can make attendance difficult. The proposal is to make these two elected officers voting members of Diocesan Council, to allow for meaningful participation in the life and work of our diocese. If either wish to be appointed to serve on other committees, that would be an available option. The notetaking duties in the committees can be assigned either to staff or a committee member.
2. Canon 5 A 2: This Canon has been re-written to expand the pool of lay representatives eligible for election to Diocesan Council. Candidates for election now include a person who is eligible to be a member of the synod and who is nominated by their parish council.

Canon 6 - Regions

No changes

Canon 7 - Parish

1. Canon 7.4: New language which provides for the parishes to confirm the accuracy of property values stated in the insurance documents. The synod office will advise the parishes of the property values and their share of the insurance premium.
2. Canon 7.8 C: Suggested language which states more clearly how to deal with adding members of parish council.

Canon 8 - Finance and Trusts

1. Canon 8.5: Trust Funds. The changes to this Canon are mostly rearrangements and clarifications. Some details regarding individual trust funds have been moved to Regulation.

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2. Canon 8.6: Consolidated Trust Fund (CTF): Most of the changes to this Canon reflect work underway under the direction of the Finance Officer and the Treasurer. A transition to a new accounting software is underway which will improve tracking and reporting functions. During this transition, we are requesting that these changes be approved, but that they come into force on January 1, 2027 to align with the completion of the transition process.
3. Canon 8.6 E: This canon clarifies the eligibility requirements for entities (unitholders) who are permitted to invest in the CTF.

Canon 9 - Court of the Diocese

No changes.

Canon 10 - Regulations and Policy

1. Canon 10.2: The list of people who are entitled to propose a new or amended policy includes the Executive Officer.
2. 10.2 C: New or amended policies must be approved by the bishop, and ratified at the next meeting of diocesan council.

Canon 11 - Order of Diocese of British Columbia

No changes.

12 - Cemeteries

1. Canon 12.1: This Canon has undergone some refinement following the appointment of a diocesan cemeteries manager. A diocesan cemeteries policy has been produced which provides guidance on the legal and episcopal requirements.
2. Canon 12.1 B: This clarifies the requirement of a cemetery committee for any cemetery under the management of a parish.
3. Canon 12.1 C: This clarifies the requirement of a set of bylaws for the management of the cemeteries in the care of a parish.

Regulations (highlights only)

Archdeacons

- Regulation R2.1.1 Duties of Archdeacons: The deletion of four duties from the list of duties of archdeacons as outdated and unnecessary detail. The addition addresses the reintroduction of the office of regional dean, described in Regulation R2.2 below.
- Regulation R2.2: Regional Dean: This regulation reintroduces the role of regional dean, with new parameters.

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Clergy

- Regulation R3.5.1 E Clergy Benefits: Payment of BC Medical Services Plan premiums has been deleted as there are no such premiums anymore.
- Regulation R3.5.1 F 4: Annual Vacation: Clarification of calculation of annual vacation for clergy serving in a position for less than a calendar year.
- Regulation R3.1.5.1 H: Synod Pension Plan: Clarification that the pension plan is governed by the provisions of the General Synod Canons and its regulations.
- Regulation R3.5.1 J: Educational Leave: Clarification related to unpaid sabbatical leave.

Diocesan Council

- Regulation R5.1.8 A 3: Finance Committee: Remove the clerical secretary and lay secretary (See discussion above re Canon 5 A 1 h and I).
- Regulation R5.1.12: Lay and Clerical Secretary: Remove as the proposal is that both officers be members of diocesan council.

The Parish

- Regulation R7.6.2: Annual Parish Budget: For parishes with no incumbent, clarify that there is no specific timeframe for the bishop to appoint someone to consult on the parish budget.
- Regulation R7.6.3: Parish Stewardship: Remove detail of the stewardship plan.
- Regulation 7.7.1 C 12: Churchwardens: Since standard form contracts are in use and the synod office finance department controls the hiring process for both employees and service providers, new language is introduced to reflect current practice.
- Regulation 7.7.1 C 13 and 14: Approval of the chancellor has been deleted as standard forms approved by the chancellor are in use.
- Regulation 7.8.1 Parish Lay Employees and Service Providers: The proposed language reflects that standard forms approved by the chancellor are issued by the synod office.

Finance and Trusts

- Regulation R8.4.2 C: Parish Monthly Remittances: Edits to clarify that churchwardens are required to notify the synod office if their parish is not able to pay any of their financial obligations, not just apportionment.
- Regulation R8.4.3: Parish Grants: Edits clarifying criteria for parish grants.
- Regulation R8.4.4: Parish Capital Expenditures: Increase in the amount of capital expenditure allowed if parish is in arrears.
- Regulation 8.5.1 A: Educational Trusts Committee: Removed descriptions of the funds under the governance of this committee.

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- Regulation 8.5.1 B: Educational Trusts Committee: Remove The lay secretary and clerical secretary from membership as the proposal is that both officers be members of diocesan council.
- Regulation 8.5.2: Supplemental Pensions Committee: Remove the lay secretary and clerical secretary from membership as the proposal is that both officers be members of diocesan council.
- Regulation R8.5.4: John Albert Hall Committee: Remove The lay secretary and clerical secretary from membership as the proposal is that both officers be members of diocesan council.
- Regulation R8.5.5: Synod Administered Funds: This new regulation provides that the Finance Officer is responsible for oversight of trusts and funds not overseen by named committees.
- Regulation R8.6.2: Deposits into the CTF: This new regulation refers to the CTF Operating Policy, and will govern the process for deposits into the CTF, and is requested to come into force on January 1, 2027.
- Regulation R8.6.3: Withdrawals from the CTF: This new regulation refers to the CTF Operating Policy, and will govern the process for withdrawals from the CTF, and is requested to come into force on January 1, 2027.
- Regulation R8.6.4: Annual Report of CTF Activity: Clarifies the report to unitholders of the CTF.

Cemeteries

- Regulation R12.1.1: Regulation of Cemeteries: This regulation has been edited to more accurately describe the requirements of British Columbia law.

Appendix III - Proposed Changes to Canons

NOTE: These changes to Canons are proposed by Diocesan Council to the Synod. The Synod is asked to approve these changes by passing the relevant motions.

CANON 1.1 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BISHOP

- B. The Bishop holds primary pastoral jurisdiction for the diocese, including jurisdiction over any parish, congregation or other body of, **or within**, the diocese.

CANON 3.1 APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

C. Any incumbent may request that the Bishop appoint one or more assistant clerics.

- C. **D.** If an incumbent wishes to resign **a post** **an appointment** they shall give at least three months' notice, in writing to the Bishop.

D. Any incumbent may, with the consent of the Bishop and of the churchwardens, appoint one or more assistant clerics, who shall be under the control and direction of the incumbent.

- E. Notwithstanding any other provisions, the employment of an **assistant** cleric may be terminated at any time by notice in writing **by the incumbent** in accordance with the terms of the employment contract and applicable provincial legislation, **or, if the incumbency be vacant, by the churchwardens, in consultation with the Bishop.**

CANON 3.2 LICENSING OF CLERGY

- E. The Bishop may **summarily** revoke a permission to officiate **summarily**.

CANON 3.4 POWERS AND DUTIES **OF INCUMBENTS**

CANON 4.2 DIOCESAN CHANCELLOR

- A. There shall be a chancellor of the diocese who shall be appointed by the Bishop and who shall hold office during the pleasure of the Bishop. The Chancellor shall be a member of the bar of the Province of British Columbia of **preferably** at least 10 years' standing and shall be a communicant of the church. The Chancellor shall advise and assist, and act with the Bishop, or in the Bishop's absence, with the commissary, in all matters of discipline or cases of difficulty or doubt when requested by the Bishop or the commissary. All real property contracts, leases and

deeds and other documents as set out in regulation shall first be submitted to the Chancellor for approval.

- C. The Bishop may appoint a vice-chancellor, to hold office during the Bishop's pleasure. The Vice-Chancellor shall be a member of the bar of the Province of British Columbia of preferably at least 10 years' standing and shall be a communicant of the church. The Vice-Chancellor shall assist the Chancellor and shall act for, and on the Chancellor's behalf, during the absence or inability of the Chancellor to attend to the Chancellor's duties.

CANON 4.3 DIOCESAN REGISTRAR

- B. The Registrar is an officer of Synod whose role and responsibilities are described in regulations R1.8.

CANON 4.4 DIOCESAN ARCHIVES AND ARCHIVIST

- D. In accordance with a collections policy to be established by regulation, all records of permanent value created by the synod office, parishes and organizations shall be transferred regularly to the archives.

CANON 5 - DIOCESAN COUNCIL

- A. Diocesan council shall consist of:

1. Ex-officio:

- a. the Bishop (chair)
- b. the bishop coadjutor, the bishop suffragan and the bishop assistant
- c. the Dean
- d. the Chancellor
- e. the Vice Chancellor
- f. the Executive Archdeacon
- g. the Treasurer
- h. the clerical secretary
- i. the lay secretary

2. Elected: One clerical and one lay, being members of the synod, elected from each region, who shall hold office commencing at the next meeting of synod and shall hold office for a term ending at the next following meeting of synod.

2. Elected: One clerical member and one lay member from each region, elected at the regional meeting.

a. Clergy serving in the region, who are members of the synod, are eligible for election.

b. Candidates for election as lay member must be either:

i. elected as a delegate to synod, or

ii. eligible to be a member of the synod and nominated by their parish council.

c. Elected regional representatives shall hold office commencing at the next meeting of synod and shall hold office for a term ending at the next following meeting of synod.

CANON 7.4 INSURANCE

(7.4B2)

3. On an annual basis, confirm the accuracy of property values stated in the insurance program documents report to the synod office the values of parish property ensure that property values are maintained at current replacement cost; and

CANON 7.8 THE PARISH COUNCIL

C. At a meeting subsequent to the parishioners' annual meeting, the parish council may add to its membership a number not more than one-third of those elected at the parishioner's annual meeting up to half the difference between the number of elected members (other than ex-officio) and a total of 12, with the unanimous consent of its members to each appointment. The incumbent shall be entitled to appoint a number equal to those appointed by the parish council.

The parish council may add to its membership a number comprising not more than one-third of those elected at the parishioners' annual meeting, with the unanimous consent of its members to each appointment, provided that the incumbent shall be entitled to appoint a number up to or equal to those appointed

by the parish council, and further provided that such appointments by the parish council and the incumbent may not increase the overall size of the parish council above the twelve provided for in paragraph B above.

- D. The incumbent shall be entitled to appoint a number equal to those added under paragraph C above.

CANON 8.1 INTERPRETATION

A. In this canon:

1. CTF means the consolidated trust fund;
2. PAR means the parish annual return;
3. PFR means the parish financial return;
4. PWRDF means the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund

CANON 8.2 TREASURER

A. The Treasurer shall be elected at Synod. If a vacancy occurs between meetings of Synod, then diocesan council shall ~~elect~~ appoint a replacement. The Treasurer shall be a volunteer unless diocesan council decides otherwise.

B. Qualifications include:

2. at least five years of experience with church finances as treasurer, finance or investment committee member, or similar relevant responsibility.

C. Duties include:

1. chairing meetings of the finance committee; investment committee and supplemental pensions committee;
2. presenting supporting the Finance Officer in the presentation of the annual budget to diocesan council;

CANON 8.3 FINANCE COMMITTEE

(8.3B6)

6. review of all trusts, trusts and funds, whether held directly by the diocese or in the parishes; and

CANON 8.5 TRUST FUNDS

- A. Trust funds received and accepted by the diocese shall be held and managed according to the terms of **the document establishing** the trust.
- B. To comply with the fiduciary obligations of trust documents, diocesan council will establish committees to oversee and manage specific trusts, either individually or as a group. These **committees currently** include but are not limited to the:
1. **Educational Trusts Committee**
 2. **Supplemental Pensions Committee**
 3. **Christ Church Cathedral Buildings Committee**
 4. John Albert Hall **Trust Committee**,
 5. Stanley Flitcroft Trust,
 6. C.H.G. Mann Fellowship,
 7. Ellenor Swallow Trust,
 8. Dewdney-Schofield Fund,
 9. Ordination Candidates Fund, and
 10. Edith Turner Trust.
- C. **Subc**Committees shall be fully empowered to distribute and/or accumulate income received from the CTF in compliance with the terms of each trust. All decisions to disburse funds greater than the accumulated interest and dividend income, shall require prior approval from finance committee and diocesan council.
- D. **Subc**Committees overseeing specific trusts shall make periodic reports of their activities **in accordance with regulation R8.5.7 to the Finance Committee**.
- E. Parishes within the diocese that have received and accepted trust funds shall hold and manage them according to the terms of **the document establishing** the trust. Parishes that hold such trusts shall provide periodic reports to the finance committee as defined by regulations **R8.4 A (7) and R8.5.7**.

CANON 8.6 CONSOLIDATED TRUST FUND

- B. Unless otherwise exempted by diocesan council, all **property financial assets referred to in subsection A** received in trust by a congregation or parish, by way of a gift, bequest or in any other way, shall be remitted to the diocese for administration and investment in the CTF.
- E. **Unitholders in the CTF are restricted to the following: the diocese, parishes of the diocese, and charitable organizations that are controlled by the diocese or of one of its parishes.**
- F. The financial assets of the CTF shall be managed by an investment advisory firm and held by a custodian **pursuant to Canon 8.5.**
- H. **Units in the CTF shall be allotted to each specific fund or trust based on the fair market value deposited and the value of units as of the previous month end. Deposits into the CTF shall be assigned units based on the fair market unit value as determined by Regulation 8.6.2.**
- J. To comply with the terms of specific funds and trusts, all applications for withdrawals of income or capital from funds held in the CTF shall be made according to Regulation R8. **186.23.**
- K. The synod office shall maintain accounts for all unitholders in the CTF, including **principal deposited** amounts (book value), units held, **transactions deposits, withdrawals** and distributions, and fair market value of holdings. The synod office shall provide reports to the unitholders quarterly.

CANON 10.2 MAKING OF POLICY

Prior, this Canon (10.2) was to be deleted, now proposed to keep it, with the changes below:

- A. Policy may be proposed from time to time by the Bishop, the Executive Archdeacon, **Executive Officer**, a diocesan committee, a trustee of a diocesan trust, a member of diocesan council, an officer of Synod, or a parish council of a parish, to facilitate the implementation of canons and regulations or to make it possible for incumbents, other clergy, wardens, treasurers, and parish councils to do their work in the life of the diocese as efficiently and smoothly as possible.
- C. Proposed **new or amended** policies shall be submitted to the Executive Archdeacon and **shall** become effective **if upon** approval **ed** by the Bishop. **Any**

such policies must be submitted for ratification ratified at the next sitting of and diocesan council.

- E. Polices may be amended or deleted from time to time with the Bishop's approval.

CANON 12.1 MANAGEMENT OF CEMETERIES

- A. The incumbent and churchwardens shall have the joint responsibility for the management and control of the parish cemetery, subject to provincial legislation, and shall appoint a cemetery committee from the members of the parish for the purpose of administering the cemeteries within the parish.
- B. In the case of a dispute between the incumbent and the churchwardens, an appeal may be made by either of them to the Bishop, whose decision shall be final. The committee shall be comprised of the incumbent, the churchwardens and up to four additional members for the purpose of administrating the cemetery in their care.
- C. The cemetery committee may add up to an additional four members. In the case of a dispute between the Incumbent and the Churchwardens, an appeal may be made by either of them to the Bishop, whose decision is final.
- D. C. Each Cemetery Committees shall establish Cemetery Bylaws for the control and management and control of the cemeteries in their care, using the Diocesan Cemetery Policy for guidance.
- E. D. Every Each cemetery shall be accurately surveyed and appropriately mapped into burial spaces.
- G. F. Interment spaces may be sold in perpetuity for a sum to be fixed by the cemetery committee. Funds raised from the sale of right-to-inter spaces must be managed in accordance with regulation British Columbia Law.
- H. G. Exhumation of interments of full body or ashes may only be carried out by legal warrant in accordance with provincial legislation British Columbia Law.