

PEP Argument Briefing Paper

Title: Change Strikes Balance
Applicable to: Canonical Change 5 (Canon XI)
Author: PEP Board of Directors
Date: 10/7/2009

Background

This canon deals with the archivist and historiographer of the diocese. It had been a model canon that created a professional board to provide advice and support for both the archives and the historiographer. Canon XI was much too detailed, however, particularly in its including archival policy into the canon itself. The 2007 change to the canon went too far in the other direction, eliminating even essential elements. The proposed canon attempts to strike a balance, particularly in light of the diminished size of the diocese.

Argument

- In the 2007 rewrite of Canon XI, the advisory board was eliminated and all policy statements were stripped from the text. The effect was to leave the archivist alone to defend good policies and advocate for proper and professional handling of the archives. The changes virtually eliminated any role for the historiographer.
- The current proposal attempts to find a middle path between pre- and post-2007 versions of this canon. It establishes a smaller oversight board of experts than formerly, and it creates a process for setting policy, rather than defining a fixed policy.
- The old board had term limits. These are not included in the current proposal because we are now a smaller diocese and have a smaller pool of experts to draw on.
- The proposal gives the board an advisory voice in the personnel review of the archivist, which seems only appropriate.
- Note that the roles of the archivist and historiographer are complementary but different. The roles could both be filled by the same person, or the archivist and historiographer could be different people.

Supporting Information

Resolution (from *Preconvention Journal 2009*, pp. C-11–C12,
<http://www.episcopalpgh.org/wp-content/uploads/file/Documents/2009%20DioConv/2009DioConventionPacketV3.pdf>):

5. **Canon XI**, Of the History and Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh Registrar/Historiographer, shall be restated in its entirety as follows:

Canon XI
Of the History and Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh

Section 1. There shall be a Commission on Archives and History composed of six members drawn from the Laity and Clergy of the Diocese. The members shall serve three-year terms, so arranged that two terms shall end each year. The Commission shall elect its own Chairperson. Members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Bishop and shall have special expertise as archivists, librarians, historians, or genealogists. The Commission shall provide general oversight and advice on matters related to the history and archives of the diocese, and, in consultation with the Archivist, recommend to Diocesan Council for adoption a records management plan and archival policies, including matters related to the accession and deaccession of materials, development of special collections, access to the collection, and proper care and housing of materials. The Commission shall make an annual report to the Convention and shall be consulted on any personnel review of the Archivist.

Section 2. Upon recommendation of the Commission on Archives and History, the Bishop may appoint an Archivist, who shall administer the Diocesan Archives and perform other such duties as directed by the Bishop. It shall be the duty of the Archivist to issue, on request, proper certification of records in the archives, including, but not limited to, Consecration, Ordination, Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Burial Records.

Section 3. The Bishop may appoint a Historiographer, who shall encourage the development of materials such as exhibits, articles, books, and pamphlets related to the history of the Diocese, its parishes, and other Episcopal organizations and ministries.

Section 4. The Archivist and Historiographer shall be, ex officio, members of the Commission on Archives and History with voice.

Rationale: In 2007, the diocese replaced a long, detailed canon defining the duties of Archivist, Historiographer, and Commission on Archives and History with a short canon that eliminated the Commission and all policy statements, and changed the duties of the Archivist and Historiographer. This canon restores a small Commission to form a board with appropriate expertise to provide oversight of the Archives. The canon also provides a method for setting archival policy that ensures appropriate professional guidance on archival policies while giving representatives of the whole diocese a voice in setting that policy. The current wording of Canon XI to be replaced is the following:

Canon XI
Of the History and Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh
Registrar/Historiographer

Section 1. The Bishop may appoint an Archivist who shall administer the Diocesan archives, including the historical documentation of the Diocese and Parishes, and perform other duties as directed by the Bishop or Standing Committee. It shall be the duty of the Archivist to issue, on request, proper certification of records in the archives including, but not limited to, Consecration, Ordination, Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and Burial Records.

Section 2. The Bishop may appoint a Historiographer who shall provide for the safekeeping and preservation of all Diocesan records not otherwise under the custody of the Archivist, and perform such other duties as directed by the Bishop or Standing Committee.

Canon XI (from 2004 Constitution & Canons, Rules of Order, and Financial Regulations, pp. 14–16, <http://www.episcopalpgh.org/wp-content/uploads/file/Documents/edopregs2004.pdf>):

Canon XI

Of the History and Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh

Registrar/Historiographer

Section 1. Election. At each annual session of Convention, a Registrar/Historiographer shall be elected to serve for one year.

Section 2. General Duties. It shall be the duty of the Registrar/ Historiographer to provide for the safekeeping and preservation of the Diocesan records and other materials that relate to the history of the Episcopal Church in this Diocese and any parish therein, and to transmit such materials into the custody of the Diocese to be kept in the Diocesan Archives.

Section 3. Duties at Trials and Inquiries. The Registrar/Historiographer shall act as clerk at all ecclesiastical trials and inquiries held in the Diocese.

Section 4. Convention Responsibilities. The Registrar/ Historiographer shall serve as custodian of records for the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese; shall see that all changes or additions to the Constitution or Canons authorized at any convention are entered in the official copy of the Constitution and Canons which the Registrar shall place in the Diocesan Archives, and that a current copy of the Constitution and Canons as revised be supplied to the President of the Convention, the Chancellor of the Diocese, the Secretary of the Convention, and the Committee on Canons.

Section 5. Preservation Ordination Records. It shall be the duty of the Registrar/Historiographer to preserve in a proper registry book a record of the ordination/consecration of the successive bishops of the Diocese, designating accurately the time and place of the same with the names of the ordaining/ consecrating bishops and the others present and assisting, and to record such additional facts as may be worthy of preservation.

Section 6. Historical Responsibilities. It shall be the responsibility of the Registrar/Historiographer to note any facts which illustrate important aspects of diocesan and parish history. Such historical information may be reported to convention each year.

Section 7. Appointment. There shall be a Diocesan Archives and Historical Commission appointed by the Bishop with the approval of the Diocesan Council. The members shall be persons concerned with and knowledgeable about the keeping of diocesan records. The chairman shall be designated by the Bishop. The Registrar/ Historiographer shall be ex officio voting members of the Commission.

Section 8. General Duties. The Commission shall set policy for the Diocesan Archives. It shall nominate the Diocesan Archivist and set forth the terms and conditions with regard to the work of the Diocesan Archivist. It shall also serve as a committee of advice and support for the Registrar/Historiographer and for individual parishes. The Commission shall adopt such procedures consistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese for its organization and functioning and shall establish such plans and mission objectives that will advance an appreciation of the recorded history of the Episcopal Church in this Diocese. The Diocesan Archives and Historical Commission shall report to the Diocesan Convention.

Section 9. Appropriation for the Diocesan Archives. The diocesan convention may each year make an annual appropriation toward the expense of the Diocesan Archives as recommended by the Diocesan Archives and Historical Commission.

Archivist

Section 10. Selection. The Chairman of the Diocesan Archives and Historical Commission, with the consent of the Commission, may nominate to the Bishop a person trained in archival management. The Bishop may appoint the person nominated as the Diocesan Archivist.

Section 11. General Duties. The appointed Archivist shall be responsible for the direct day-to-day supervision of the Archives and management of all aspects of that work, and shall propose policies and make other recommendations as appropriate.

Section 12. Archival and Records Management Duties. The Archivist shall organize and preserve the journals, files, papers, reports and other documents that have been deposited in and are under the custodianship of the Diocesan Archives. The Archivist shall also undertake responsibility for managing the non-current records of the Diocese by carrying out records retention and disposition practices in consultation with the creating officers and agencies.

Section 13. Certification of Records. It shall be the duty of the Archivist to issue, on request, proper certification of records in the Archives including, but not limited to the following: Consecration, Ordination, Baptism, Confirmation, Marriages and Burial Records.

Records

Section 14. Diocesan and Parish Records. The Archivist shall document and preserve the history of the Diocese and Parishes which provides for historical continuity and promotes an understanding of our common life.

Section 15. Closed or Dissolved Churches. Records, including vestry minutes and parochial registers, of officially closed or dissolved missions and parishes shall revert to the custody of and be preserved in the Diocesan Archives.

Section 16. Disposition of Records. The Archivist, with the consent of the Diocesan Historical Commission, may dispose of duplications and other materials which do not fall within the scope of the established Collection Agreement.

Section 17. Confidentiality of Diocesan Records. The Bishop may direct that documents, which for pastoral or other reasons should be kept in confidence, shall be placed under seal. The Bishop shall specify for what period each security shall continue, who shall have access, and for what purpose.

Section 18. Accessibility. All books, papers, and documents in the Archivist's charge, not previously sealed under Section 16, shall be subject to the call of the Convention and shall be open to the inspection of the Bishop, the Standing Committee, and any committee or officer of the Convention or Diocese.