

Vestry/Bishop's Committee Basics

What you need to know to serve your congregation in an
elected leadership capacity

Some norms for our time together:

- We will begin and end on time
- We are a large group, please stay muted and use the chat for additional discussion and questions
- We work from the assumption that our clergy *and* our congregations are all trying our best
- Please keep clergy, congregations, Bishop, and Diocesan leadership in your prayers

Big Idea: The Episcopal Church is a representational democracy, with our elected lay leadership (at all levels) holding the responsibility to know their role and make particular decisions on behalf of the body. This presentation will equip you to know what the basic canonical roles of Rector/Vicar and Vestry/Bishop's Committee are.

Q: What is a Canon?

- A weapon
- A person who works directly for the Bishop
- The laws of our church

What is the canonical role of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee?

- “agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all manners concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its clergy”
- Produce and approve a budget, make financial decisions on behalf of congregation, approve expenditures that are not included within the budget.
- Approve candidates for holy Orders
- Manage congregational relationships with Clergy (specifically Rector/Vicar/Dean/PIC)

What is the canonical role of the Rector/Vicar?

- Worship, to include music
- “spiritual jurisdiction of the parish”
- Use of property and space
- Option to preside over Vestry meetings
- The hiring and firing of staff, including other clergy

Some other basic expectations for Vestry/BC

- Members should be confirmed Episcopalians
- Invested in the life of the congregation – attend worship regularly, contribute financially, are connected to folks in the congregation
- Willing to bring forward concerns, issues, and appreciations from congregation, as elected representatives
- Prepared to be in supportive and mutual relationship with clergy person
- Ready to attend meetings, ask questions, lead and learn!