CANON SIX -- PARISH GOVERNANCE

Composition of the Parish Corporation

1(1) As provided in the *Anglican Church Act, 2003*, a Parish Corporation comprises the Incumbent together with two Church Wardens and members of the Vestry chosen as provided in section 2.

1(2) The Incumbent is the person appointed to that position or shared position in a parish or mission and includes a member of the clergy appointed as Rector.

1(3) A person appointed to have charge of a parish but who is not an Incumbent is not a member of the Parish Corporation but is entitled to attend the annual meeting of parishioners and meetings of the Parish Corporation with voice but no vote and, if the meeting so decides, may preside.

1(4) Notwithstanding any other provision in this Canon, the Bishop may require an Incumbent, a non-incumbent appointed to have charge of a parish or the Church Wardens, as the case may be, to call a meeting of the Parish Corporation or of the voting members of the parish.

1(5) Notwithstanding any other provision in this Canon, when the Bishop is present at a meeting of the Parish Corporation or of the voting members of the parish, the Bishop may preside as chair but has no vote.

Parish Meetings

2(1) There shall be, not later than the third Sunday in March in each year, an annual meeting of voting members in each parish which shall

- (a) determine, before nominations are made, the number, being not fewer than six nor more than twelve, of members of the Vestry to be elected, but with the permission of the Diocesan Council the number of Vestry to be elected may be fewer than six,
- (b) elect, by a plurality of votes, two Church Wardens and members of the Vestry in the number determined pursuant to paragraph (a),
- (c) elect, by a plurality of votes, lay delegates to the Synod and their substitutes,
- (d) receive a full and detailed statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of the Parish Corporation for the past financial year, duly prepared by a chartered professional accountant, or prepared by the Parish Treasurer and reviewed by two competent persons, and any other information required by the Treasurer of the Synod or by regulation in such form as may be prescribed by regulation,
- (e) receive and approve or amend the budget proposed by the Parish Corporation for the current year, and
- (f) discuss other matters and make recommendations to the Incumbent and to the Parish Corporation.

2(2) Provided they continue to be qualified as voting members of the parish, Church Wardens and members of the Vestry hold office until their successors are elected.

2(3) When a vacancy occurs in the membership of a Parish Corporation by the death, resignation, removal from the parish or otherwise of a Church Warden or member of the Vestry, the remaining members of the Parish Corporation may elect a person to fill the

vacancy and that person shall hold office for the balance of the term of the person whose place was vacated.

2(3.1) The persons chosen as Church Wardens under subsections (1) and (3) shall not be members of the same household as any other parish financial signing authority.

2(4) No person may be nominated or elected as a Church Warden who has served as a Church Warden for five consecutive years immediately preceding the time of such election.

2(5) If both Church Wardens have served for five years, the annual meeting may elect one of them as a Church Warden for the ensuing year only.

2(6) Notwithstanding sub-sections (4) and (5), the Diocesan Council may grant for a stated time a Parish Corporation's application for continuation of a Church Warden's tenure in office. Such application is subject to prior or subsequent ratification by the parish's annual meeting or by a special meeting of parish voting members. A parish receiving such permission is free nonetheless to replace either of its wardens at an annual meeting.

2(6.1) The Incumbent may call a special meeting of the voting members in the parish at any time and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of the Church Wardens or of any three members of the Parish Corporation.

2(7) If the Incumbent fails to call an annual meeting or to call a special meeting when requested, the Church Wardens shall do so.

2(8) The Rector or incumbent shall fix the time and place for all parish meetings following consultation with the Church Wardens, unless the Parish Corporation prescribes otherwise.

2(9) The Incumbent or the Church Wardens

(a) shall post a notice of the annual or any special meeting of the voting members in the parish in a conspicuous place in each church in the parish,

(b) shall cause the notice to be read at each worship service in the parish for at least three weeks,

(c) in parishes that publish bulletins, shall cause the notice to be published in the bulletins for at least three weeks, and

(d) may post the notice on a parish web site and circulate the notice electronically to voting members in the parish.

2(10) Baptized Christians who

(a) are at least sixteen years old,

(b) worship and have been regular communicants in the parish, and

(c) are regular contributors, financial and otherwise, to the mission of the parish during the previous year

are entitled to vote at meetings of the voting members in a parish and those who are members of the laity are eligible to be elected as Church Wardens, members of the Vestry or delegates to the Synod.

2(11) No person is entitled to vote or is eligible for election to office in more than one parish.

2(12) The Incumbent shall preside at meetings of voting members in the parish or, in the absence of or at the request of the Incumbent, a Church Warden shall preside.

2(13) Where a Parish Corporation has ceased to function, any three voting members in the parish may, after consultation with the Bishop, summon a meeting, to be held at a time

and place appointed by them, for the election of Church Wardens and members of the Vestry, and immediately upon such election being made, the Incumbent, if any, the Church Wardens and members of the Vestry shall be the Parish Corporation.

Chapel Wardens

3 Where there is more than one church in a parish, the voting members who regularly worship at any church may, at the annual meeting of the voting members in the parish, choose from among their number one or two Chapel Wardens who, subject to the direction of the Incumbent and the Parish Corporation, shall have charge of the church.

The Parish Corporation

4(1) Subject to the authority of the Bishop and the Synod, a Parish Corporation shall

(a) organize and manage activities and programs in furtherance of Christian life in the parish,

(b) manage the investment of endowment and other funds of the parish and, in so doing, may engage professional assistance and pay reasonable fees therefor,

(c) purchase or dispose of real property only with the approval of the Bishop and the Finance Committee of the Diocesan Council,

(d) manage the properties, revenues and expenditures of the parish, utilizing appropriate financial controls and procedures,

(e) employ the lay employees of the parish,

(f) initiate recommendations for the appointment of assistant clergy of the parish,

(g) maintain a book of minutes of its proceedings,

(g.1) preserve all policies and certificates of liability insurance for not less than sixty years,

(h) appoint a Vestry Clerk and a Parish Treasurer, which offices may be held by one person,

(i) appoint annually, in accordance with Canon Seven, a Parish Advisory Committee, to assist the Bishop in the appointment of an Incumbent,

(j) approve or reject a decision by the Parish Advisory Committee to vest the appointment of an Incumbent solely in the Bishop,

(k) prepare and submit to the annual meeting of voting members in the parish an annual report that includes a listing of all special trusts (monies and other property received with conditions) of which the Parish Corporation is trustee and states the terms of those trusts,

(k.1) submit to the annual meeting of voting members in the parish a full and detailed statement and account of the receipts and expenditures for the past financial year, duly prepared by a chartered professional accountant, or prepared by the Parish Treasurer and reviewed by two competent persons, and

(l) prepare and submit for approval at the annual meeting of voting members in the parish a proposed detailed budget for the current year.

4(1.1) Notwithstanding any other provision in this Canon, when an incumbency is open or an Incumbent is on leave, the territorial archdeacon may call and chair meetings of the

Parish Corporation, its committees and annual or other meetings of voting members and may inspect any Parish Corporation record.

4(1.2) An archdeacon acting under subsection (1.1) does not thereby become a member of the Parish Corporation.

4(2) Regular meetings of the Parish Corporation shall be held at least six times a year at such times and places as the Corporation directs.

4(2.1) No member of the Parish Corporation, Vestry Clerk or Parish Treasurer shall be present during the Corporation's discussion of any matter or motion concerning which that person, or an immediate family member, or a member of the same household has a direct financial or material interest.

4(3) The Incumbent or the Church Wardens shall give notice of all regular and special meetings of the Parish Corporation to each member of the Corporation.

4(4) No capital expenditure involving change of design or structural changes in a parish-owned building shall be made until the plans respecting the change have been submitted to, and approved by, the Bishop.

4(5) A parish corporation shall, upon request of the Bishop or the Diocesan Council, provide full and complete information about any parochial endowments or trusts held by it or by any other person for the benefit of the parish.

The Incumbent

5 The Incumbent

(a) [repealed]

(b) has the right of possession of keys to the church or churches in the parish, together with the right to open the church for the celebration of worship services, rites or ceremonies authorized by the Church, and is bound to keep the church closed against intrusion of unauthorized ministers or ceremonies,

(c) has the right to possession and control of the vault, steel safe or strong box for the custody of vessels and registers and other valuables,

(d) is responsible for the spiritual concerns of the parish in subordination to ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese and to the Constitution and Canons of the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada, the Synod of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada, and the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton,

(e) subject to the direction of the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services and other authorized liturgies, has exclusive control over the conduct of worship services and occasional offices,

(f) has the direction of the music ministry,

(g) has the control and direction of all church schools connected with the Church in the parish,

(h) is head and chair of the Parish Corporation,

(i) has, when chairing meetings of the Parish Corporation, the same right to vote as other members of the Parish Corporation and in addition, in case of a tie, has a casting vote,

(j) is the chair of meetings of the voting members in the parish,

(k) may, in consultation with the Church Wardens, call all meetings of the Parish Corporation, and
(l) shall meet with the Church Wardens at least once each quarter to review the state of the parish.

The Church Wardens

6(1) The Church Wardens shall
(a) make the congregation and visitors welcome to the parish,
(b) ensure that parish property and buildings are properly protected and cared for and adequately insured,
(c) collect or appoint others to collect the offerings of the people and reverently bring them to the officiating minister,
(d) count or cause to be counted all offerings received during worship services and record the same in the Register of Services before the offerings are removed from the church,
(e) keep an inventory of the parish property, and hand the same to their successors in office, who shall forthwith compare the property with the inventory and report any discrepancies to the Parish Corporation,
(f) forthwith report to the Bishop any matter of grave importance, such as heresy, immorality, disorderly conduct, gross neglect of duty, or improper conduct of worship services,
(g) during a vacancy in the parish, provide for the conduct of worship services and other ministry,
(h) in parishes receiving a grant from the Diocese, sign an agreement respecting the grant with the Synod, and undertake its performance,
(i) keep order during worship services,
(j) ensure that churches in the parish are furnished with all things necessary for the proper conduct of worship services at the expense of the Parish Corporation,
(k) certify any notices that require certification and, when a notice is required in the parish that a parishioner is a candidate for Holy Orders at an ensuing ordination, sign the certificate that the notice has been read and as to objections raised,
(l) jointly with the Incumbent remit or cause to be remitted monthly to the Treasurer of the Synod all amounts for diocesan apportionments and assessments, and
(m) meet with the Incumbent at least once each quarter to review the state of the parish.

The Incumbent and Church Wardens

7 The Incumbent and Church Wardens shall
(a) act on behalf of the Parish Corporation in the event of an emergency,
(b) ensure that decisions made by the Parish Corporation are implemented,
(c) play a leadership role in all aspects of the life of the parish,
(d) facilitate the effective operation of the parish and its committees,
(e) prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Parish Corporation and of the annual meeting of voting members in the parish, and

(f) exercise such powers and perform such functions as are delegated to them by the Parish Corporation.

The Vestry Clerk

8(1) The Parish Corporation shall annually appoint a Vestry Clerk who may, but need not be, a member of the Parish Corporation.

8(2) The Vestry Clerk shall

(a) attend all meetings of the Parish Corporation and record minutes of the proceedings,

(b) attest the public acts of the Parish Corporation and affix the seal of the Corporation to formal documents executed by the Parish Corporation,

(c) preserve all books, papers and records belonging to the Parish Corporation other than the registers required under Canon Five and ensure their orderly transfer to the Diocesan Archivist, and

(d) perform such other duties as the Parish Corporation prescribes.

The Parish Treasurer

9(1) The Parish Corporation shall annually appoint as Parish Treasurer a qualified person, who may but need not be a member of the Parish Corporation.

9(1.1) The person appointed as Parish Treasurer shall not be a Church Warden or a member of the same household as any other parish financial signing authority.

9(2) The Parish Treasurer shall

(a) receive all money belonging to or collected by authority of the Parish Corporation and disburse the same as the Parish Corporation directs,

(b) keep accurate accounts of money belonging to or disbursed by the Parish Corporation and present such accounts to the Parish Corporation at each regular meeting,

(c) deliver to a successor, or to such other person as the Parish Corporation directs, all property, books and papers relating to the affairs of the Parish Corporation,

(d) assist in the preparation and presentation of the budget, and

(e) give such security for the faithful performance of duties as is required by the Parish Corporation or by regulation.

Signing Authority

10(1) The Incumbent and the Vestry Clerk, or, if the office of Incumbent is vacant or the Incumbent is on leave, the Church Wardens and the Vestry Clerk, shall sign all documents that are required to be executed under the seal of the Parish Corporation.

10(2) Cheques and other money instruments issued by the Parish Corporation shall be signed by any two of the Parish Treasurer, the Incumbent and a Church Warden. Where this requirement is impractical, such instruments may be signed by any two of four voting members of the Parish chosen for that purpose at the Annual Meeting.

10(3) The Parish Treasurer, with the approval of the Parish Corporation, may establish electronic banking protocols with the Parish's banking institution to facilitate the automated payment of recurring bills.

Establishing, Dissolving and Adjusting Parishes

11(1) When it is proposed to establish a new parish, amalgamate two or more parishes, divide a parish, dissolve a parish or adjust the definition of the community of one or more parishes, the Bishop shall give written notice of the proposal to the Parish Corporation of each parish which would be affected by the proposal.

11(2) The Incumbent or Church Wardens of a Parish Corporation shall, forthwith upon receipt of such a proposal,

(a) post a copy thereof in a conspicuous place in each church in the parish,

(b) cause the notice to be read at each worship service in the parish for at least four weeks,

(c) in parishes that publish bulletins, cause the notice to be published in the bulletins for at least four weeks, and

(d) may post the notice on a parish web site and circulate the notice electronically to voting members in the parish.

11(3) The Parish Corporation of a parish which would be affected by a proposal or any ten voting members who worship in the parish and who are eligible to vote at meetings of the parish community may, within three months after the date of the notice given by the Bishop, notify the Bishop in writing that they object to the proposal, setting out the grounds of their objection.

11(4) When an objection is made the Bishop shall, upon expiry of three months from the date of the notice of the proposal, fix a time and place for the Diocesan Council to consider the proposal and any objections to it.

11(5) The Secretary of the Synod shall send to each Parish Corporation which would be affected by the proposal, and to each voting member who has signed an objection, notice of the time and place at which the Diocesan Council will consider the proposal and objections.

11(6) The Incumbent or Church Wardens of a Parish Corporation forthwith upon receipt of such notice,

(a) shall post the notice in a conspicuous place in each church in the parish,

(b) shall cause the notice to be read at each worship service in the parish for at least three weeks,

(c) in parishes that publish bulletins, shall cause the notice to be published in the bulletins for at least three weeks, and

(d) may post the notice on a parish web site and circulate the notice electronically to voting members in the parish.

11(7) The Diocesan Council shall, at the appointed time and place, hear such representations as any interested party wishes to make and shall, at the same meeting or at a subsequent meeting, decide whether the proposal should be effected.

11(8) The Bishop may

(a) if no objection is made to a proposal within three months after notice of the proposal is given, or

(b) if the Diocesan Council decides that the proposal should be effected,

issue an appropriate Memorial and cause it to be registered as provided in section 9 of the Act.

11(9) The authority of the Synod under the Act to apportion and allot the funds, liabilities, securities and investments held by any affected parish is delegated to the Diocesan Council.

11(10) The Diocesan Council may adopt regulations prescribing the forms of notices and Memorials to be used under this section.

11(11) The Secretary of the Synod shall establish and maintain a register of

(a) all Memorials issued by the Bishop under this Canon or under section 7 of the Act,

(b) the names of all parish corporations, and

(c) the definitions of the boundaries or communities of all parishes.