



Part I of Vestry Leadership101: Basic Principles and Practices

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Episcopal Church Foundation

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Welcome to Vestry Leadership 101!

A Few Notes:

- All participants are currently muted to cut out background noise and audio interference.
- To start your web cameras, press "Start my Web Cam", "Allow", and "Start Sharing".
- If you have questions, please type them into the chat box on the right-hand side of the screen.
- PDF's of the slides and resource list are downloadable by highlighting the desired file and clicking "Save to Desktop."
- This webinar is being recorded and will be made public.



**Use the chat box to tell us where you are from
and what you hope to learn from tonight's
webinar!**



Let us pray...

Dear Lord, we elect, but you confer authority.

*We occupy roles, but you form hearts.
We are sensitive to who has power and who wants power,
yet your Son took his place among the weak.*

*Help us to care more about vision than about viewpoint,
more about servanthood than about rules,
more about mercy than about merit.*

*Help us to have the courage to lead by serving and
put aside the world's easier ways.*

*Help us to emulate the Apostles,
not in the early days when they craved power and
preference, but in the latter days after Calvary,
when they prayed only for courage and wisdom.*

*All this we ask in the Name of One who led by serving and
suffering. Amen.*



What is the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF)?

Overview:

- Independent and lay-led foundation
- ECF's mission is to strengthen the **leadership** and **financial** capabilities of Episcopal congregations, dioceses, and other institutions
- ECF carries out this mission through a wide array of programs including...



Leadership Resources

- ECF Vital Practices (www.ecfvp.org)
- Fellowship Partners Program
- Educational Events
- ECF Fresh Start

Financial Resources

- Capital Campaigns
- Planned Giving
- Endowment Management
- Educational Events

Vestry Leadership 101 Presenters



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For those just joining...

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Two quick polls for tonight's participants



Vestry Leadership 101

What is a vestry and what does it do?

- Definition of vestry
- A vestry's canonical responsibilities
- Being part of a wider network (with common challenges)

Key terms

- Vestry and bishop's committee, rector and vicar
- Canons and bylaws
- Difference between a vestry and a board of trustees

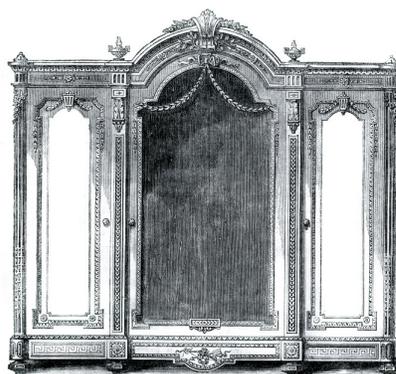
Decision-making

- Public role of the vestry
- Decisions on fiduciary and liability responsibilities
- Toolbox for informed decision making

What is a vestry?

Vestry

- sacristy; a room used for church meetings and classes the business meeting of an English parish; an elective body in an Episcopal parish composed of the rector and a group of elected parishioners administering the temporal affairs of the parish
- Comes from Medieval Latin *vestiarium*, from Latin, cupboard for storing clothes, from *vestis* garment; from its use as a robing room for the clergy



A vestry's canonical responsibilities

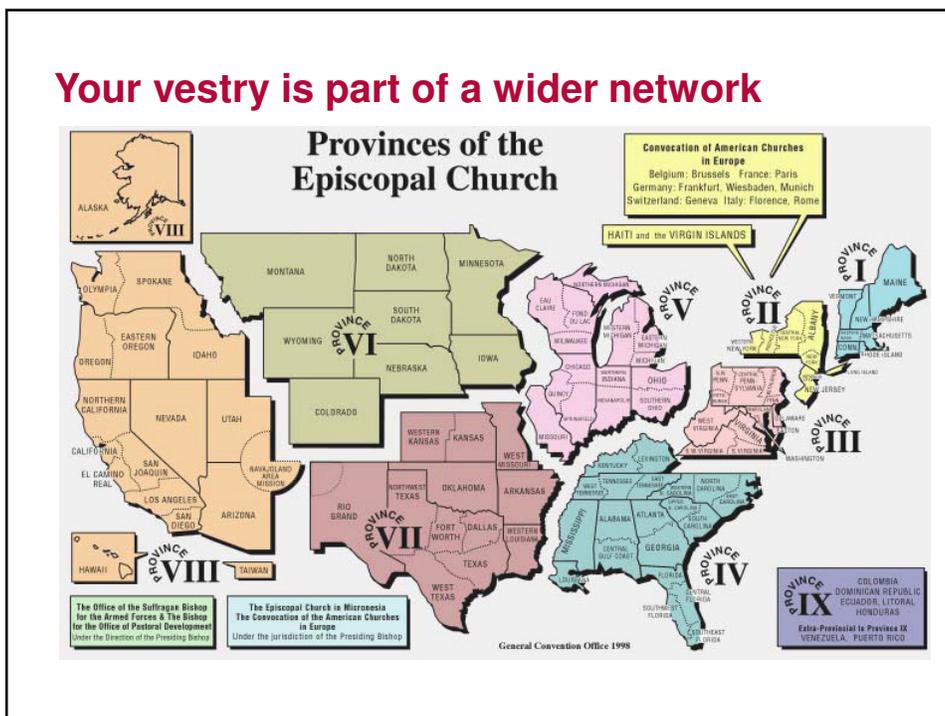


- Shall be agents and legal representatives of the parish in all matters concerning its corporate properties; and the relations of the parish to its clergy.
- Shall ensure that standard business methods will be observed.
- When a Parish is without a Rector, the officers of the vestry are responsible for the continuation of worship, including the calling of a new rector.
- The vestry has responsibility for nominating persons for holy orders.

(*Vestry Resource Guide p.11*)



Your vestry is part of a wider network



Common challenges:

1. Change

- Lack of change and resistance to change
- Managing the change that comes from starting healthier practices

2. Communications

- Leaders' role as communicators
- Capacity issues around new technologies
- Integrating internal and external communications

3. Stewardship

- Needs are many, getting all members to respond to that need is difficult
- The notion of stewardship is countercultural
- "What we're doing now isn't effective"

4. Vestry Leadership

- Roles & process for vestry meetings
- Inspiring and developing a unified & functioning team

5. Vision and Planning

- Difficulty of creating a congregational vision - that is, one shared by all, with input from all
- Difficulty of planning for the future when overwhelmed with immediate needs
- Need for a plan to get congregations through the next few "rough" years



Key terms for serving on the vestry:

Vestry: The governing body of a parish congregation. The congregation elects members to the vestry to serve terms (as defined by canons and parish by-laws).

Bishop's Committee: A bishop's committee is the governing body of a mission congregation. As the mission congregation relies on the Diocese for funding and support, technically the Diocesan bishop is in charge of the committee, but in almost all cases, the Vicar or Priest-in-Charge is given oversight of the committee.



Key terms for serving on the vestry:



Rector: The priest in charge of a parish, a self-supporting church, is its rector. The rector is called and elected by the Vestry. The rector may appoint assisting priests who may be called curates, associates, or assistants.

Vicar: A vicar is the priest in charge of a mission, which is supported financially by a diocese. A vicar is appointed by the bishop.



Bishop: A bishop is the chief sacramental officer of the Episcopal Church and the office that gives the church its name – episcopos, Greek for overseer.



Key terms for serving on the vestry:



Canons:

The written rules governing church polity, structure, and procedure. There are National Canons for the entire Episcopal Church and each Diocese has its own set of Canons.

Bylaws:

Are the local rules governing the local congregation. These must be in adherence to Diocesan and National Church Canons. This is akin to our government – local law (parish bylaws) must still adhere and does not supersede state (diocesan canons) and federal law (national canons).



Key terms for serving on the vestry:

Being on the vestry is different from a board of trustees:

- You are a Christian called by God and your peers to serve the greater good of your community and beyond.
- You are a steward, not owner, of the resources and assets under your care.

As a vestry member...

- You are a fiduciary with responsibilities both in state law and in canon (church) law.
- You are not members of Congress, i.e. you are not here to represent particular interests or constituencies.



Questions?



7:25

Vestry as decision-making body



Vestry as decision-making body

As a Church our mission is:
 "... to restore people to unity with God and each other in Christ." (BCP, p. 855)

Working together

- Being part of the Vestry, you are part of the face of the leadership and represent the congregation.
- All vestry members should have a clear, articulate understanding of all actions taken and can speak about them.



Conflict, whether with canons or others on the vestry, will happen from time to time:

- As the leaders, your attitude will influence the behavior of the entire congregation.
- The vestry remains calm and collected in situations of controversy or conflict.



Two key areas for decision-making:

Fiduciary

- Ensuring proper asset and financial management and oversight
- Salary and benefits for clergy and in some cases lay staff



Liability

- Accidents and other incidents occurring on parish property or during parish events
- Violation of any fiduciary responsibilities, contracts, or any other legal agreements (employment, wrongful termination, etc.)
- Any misconduct, sexual harassment, or discrimination



A vital vestry will go much further...



Informed decision-making

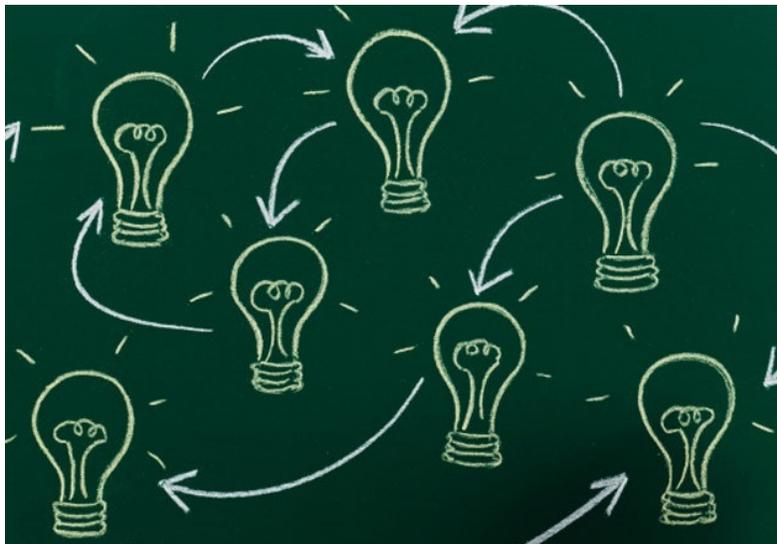


Build your toolbox:

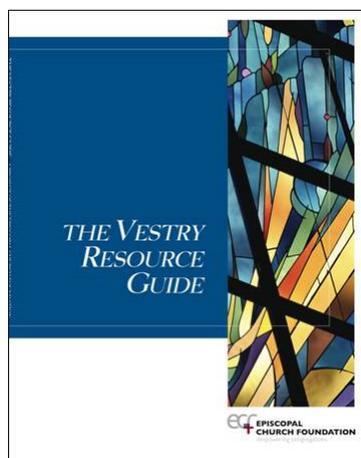
- Canons of The Episcopal Church and your diocese
- Relevant state incorporation laws
- By-laws of the parish
- Mission statements of your diocese and congregation
- History of your congregation
- Your congregation and community demographics/trends
- Book of Common Prayer
- Bible



Sharing questions and best practices



Resources



Chapters include:

- The Ministry of the Vestry
- Being on a Vestry Means...
- Conflict is Natural
- Stewardship
- Navigating Transitions in Clergy Leadership

Plus...

- Bible Studies and Discussion Questions
- Sample Job Descriptions
- Vestry Prayers for the Year
- Commissioning of Wardens and Vestry
- A Vestry Covenant

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Resources

ECF Vital Practices
for leading congregations

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HOME VESTRY PAPERS VITAL POSTS YOUR TURN TOOLS VP TALKS TOPICS ABOUT US

JANUARY 2013
Framework for Vestry Success
Group dynamics will change and growing with each new vestry. In "Framework for Vestry Success", Sandy Kolb guides us through the key steps to give care and attention to. [More](#)

Vital Posts Blog [more](#)

Telling Stories
Posted by Jeremiah Sierra on Jan. 14, 2013

Managing Change
Posted by Rhonda Thompson on Jan. 11, 2013
We received the keys to our new house last night. The kids ran from room to empty room, claiming their space and placing design elements. We brought the champagne to pop open a...

Features

- Vestry Papers
- Vital Posts
- Tools and Resources

Register on ECFVP for

- Bi-monthly emails, including Vestry Papers
- ECF Events and Web Conferences
- Comment and participate in the online community

Tools [more](#)

Sample Vestry Job Description
These examples give you a starting point when describing vestry members' responsibilities.

Creating Strong Teams
View a recording of the web conference for developing a committed and productive team.

A Suggested Order of Meetings
For vestry meetings, this template explains how to focus on mission and leadership.

Around the Web Register Follow Us Register

Get your copy of the award-winning guide for being on a vestry.

Sign up for our free emails on vestry leadership, stewardship, change and more.

We're on Facebook! share your insights, join the conversation.

Register for ECF's webinars offering a wide range of topics for lay and clergy leaders.

Home | Vestry Papers | Vital Posts | Your Turn | Tools | VP Talks | Topics | About Us

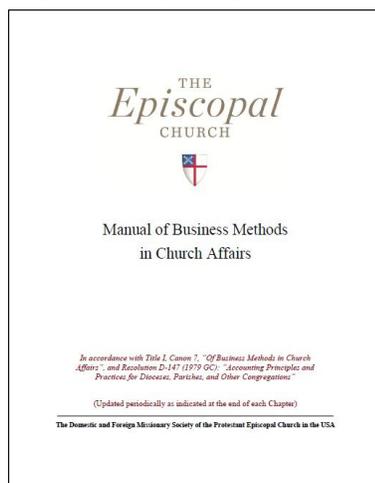
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Resources

Manual for Church Business Methods

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/manual-business-methods>



This guide covers all the essentials for church financial and record keeping in language and format simple enough for anyone to understand.

Chapters Include

- Financial Practices and Oversight
- Insurance
- Parochial Reports and Record Keeping



Contact ECF's Leadership Resources Team



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