

Three questions for participants...

What is your experience with being on the vestry?

Just elected!, 0-1 years, 1-2 years, 3-4 years, 5+ years, 10+ years

What is your role on the vestry?

Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Clergy, Vestry Member, Treasurer, Secretary/Clerk

How would you rate your experience/expertise with vestry leadership?

Completely new to this, Still relatively new, Some knowledge and experience, Strong knowledge and experience, Very strong knowledge and experience



Vestry Orientation

Miguel Escobar and Brendon Hunter

ECF Leadership Resources

January 13, 2014



Opening Prayer

Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. All things pass. God does not change. Patience achieves everything. Whoever has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world. Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people.

Prayer of St. Teresa of Avila



What is the Episcopal Church Foundation (ECF)?

Overview:

- Independent and lay-led organization
- 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 (ecfvp.org)
- Fellowship Partners Program
- Vestry Resource Guide
- Educational Events

Financial Resources

- Capital Campaigns
- Planned Giving
- Endowment Management
- Funding Future Ministry
- Educational Events

Technical notes

- All participants are currently muted to cut out background noise and audio interference
- To start your web cameras, press “Start by Web Cam” button 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
- This webinar is being recorded and will be made public



Overview of this presentation



The role of the vestry



Key vestry responsibilities



Tools and resources for new vestry leaders

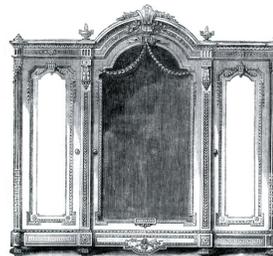


Potential next steps

The role of the vestry

A bit of history

- 'Vestry' as the parish robing room
- With congregational growth came 12 representatives with life-long terms
- Today vestries reflect diversity of congregation (including youth!)



The average vestry today

- New members are elected at annual parish gathering
- Size of vestries range between six to twelve representatives
- Clergy generally serve as presiding officers (rector, priest in charge, vicar)
- There are usually two wardens



But what do vestries do?



The role of the vestry

Listens Deeply

- Discerns where God is calling the congregation in your location, at this particular point in time

Mission and Vision

- Helps articulate the mission and vision of the congregation

New Leaders

- Identifies new leaders for the congregation and wider Church

Stewards resources

- Manages resources and finances of congregation



The role of the vestry

What the Canons say...

- 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)



The role of today's vestry

Discerning God's direction amidst many changes, including

- Fluidity in choices of faith - more than one-quarter of Americans changed religions or opted for none
- Rise of "Nones," where 1-in-4 young Americans not affiliated with a religion
- Decreasing size of mainline Protestantism - becoming a minority Protestant country
- Decline in Episcopal Church membership and aging population (Average Sunday Attendance is 65 people)
- Increased reliance on and necessity for effective lay leaders at the congregational and diocesan levels, more small congregations with part-time clergy
- Diminished financial resources, inability to afford existing buildings
- Increase in Latino and other ethnic or multi-cultural congregations and members
- Significant generational differences in giving patterns and commitment to stewardship, but some overall increase in pledge/plate giving
- Emerging church initiatives, non-traditional models and new, more pro-active bishops



The role of today's vestry

Common areas of challenge for Episcopal congregations:

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

[Summary of data from ECF surveys from 2011-2013]



Key vestry responsibilities

Discerning God's mission and vision for the congregation

- The question of 'why'
- Getting prayer and Bible study on the regular meeting agenda, creating opportunities for deeper reflection
- Restructuring vestry to prioritize discernment of mission and vision

Defining 'mission' and 'vision'

- One shared mission but each congregation is carrying this out in different ways
- ECF defines 'mission' as that which God is calling us to do
- 'Vision' is what the church and world looks like once our mission has been fully realized



First-time vestry member suddenly realized tonight's meeting was going to be about more than just the budget.



Key vestry responsibilities

Being good stewards of property and resources, creating a financially vital congregation

Fiduciary

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



Frequently carried out through

- Diversification of income sources
- Annual stewardship campaigns (annual budget)
- Periodic capital campaigns (building maintenance/expansion, alleviation of debt)
- Setting sound endowment policies and developing a planned giving campaign



Liability

- Violation or neglect of fiduciary responsibilities, contracts, or any other legal agreements (employment, wrongful termination, etc.)



Key vestry responsibilities

Identifying new leadership

- Canonical role in identifying new rector and naming postulants for holy orders
- Broadly speaking, vestries have a role in identifying, recruiting new leadership – both lay and clergy

Vestry nomination and election processes

- Wide variance in how individuals are nominated and elected to vestries
- Recently, greater focus on nomination process as period of extensive discernment



What the church can learn from community organizing

- Being proactive about identifying new leaders
- Conducting one-on-ones to explore areas of common interest
- Want something done? Ask a busy person!



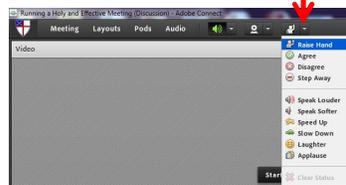
Key vestry responsibilities

Meeting effectively

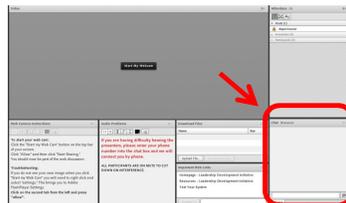
- Vestries meet regularly and retreat regularly
- Effective vestry meetings are guided by covenants which lay out norms and expectations for vestry members
- While rector is considered the presiding officer, he/she doesn't necessarily need to preside at meetings
- Effective meetings begin with significant time spent in spiritual practice
- Place discernment of God's mission and vision at center of ongoing work
- Will spend bulk of time discussing strategic, big-picture concerns regarding the life of the congregation
- Will place reporting from committees at the very end of the agenda, frequently for consent



Questions? Comments?



Raise your hand and we'll unmute your microphone for you to talk.



Or use the chat box in the lower right side of your screen.



Tools and resources for vestries

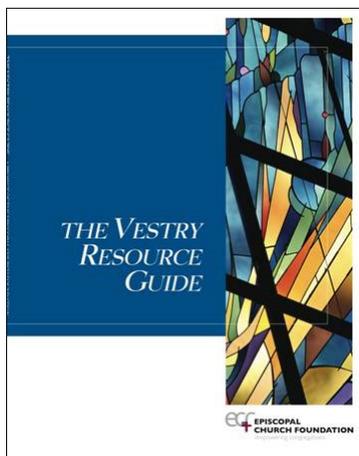


Toolbox:

- 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



Tools and resources for vestries



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

Distributed by Forward Movement

www.forwardmovement.org

800-543-1813



Tools and resources for vestries

ECF Vital Practices
for leading congregations

Sign In | Register | Donate | Contact

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 gluing design elements. We brought the champagne to pop open a...

Around the Web | Register | Follow Us | Register

Big Vestry Ready to Go!
Action: Get your copy of the award-winning guide for being on a vestry.

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

Social Media
We're on Facebook! Share your insights, join the conversation.

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

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.

Donate | Privacy Policy | Terms of Use | Copyright Policy | FAQ | Contact

ECF

ECF Vital Practices
www.ecfvp.org

Features

- Vestry Papers
- Vital Posts
- Tools and Resources

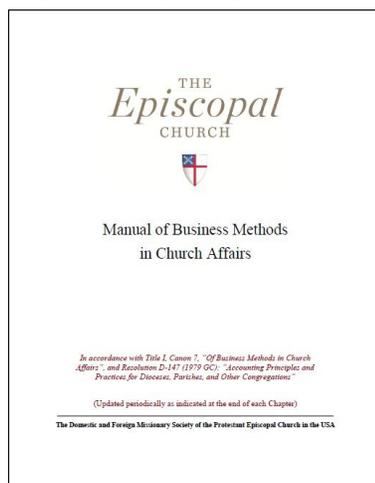
Register on ECFVP for

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

Tools and resources for vestries

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



Tools and resources for vestries

The Episcopal Church Office of Research

<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/studying-your-congregation-and-community>

The NEW ExecutiveInsite Report

Prepared for: Trinity Cathedral - Cleveland
Study area: 3 mile radius - 2230 Euclid Ave Cleveland OH 44115-2405
Base State: OHIO
Current Year Estimate: 2012
5 Year Projection: 2017
Date: 9/1/2012
Semi-Annual Projection: Spring

This ExecutiveInsite Report has been prepared for Trinity Cathedral - Cleveland. Its purpose is to "tell the demographic story" of the defined geographic study area. ExecutiveInsite integrates narrative analysis, with data tables and graphs. Pivoting on the report name, it includes 12 "insites" into the study area's story. It includes both demographic and beliefs and practices data.

ExecutiveInsite is intended to give an overview analysis of the defined geographic study area. A defined study area can be a region, a zip code, a county or some custom defined geographic area such as a radius or a user defined polygon. The area of study is displayed in the map below.

THE 12 INSITES	
INSITE	PAGE
Insite #1: Population, Household Trends	2
Insite #2: Racial/Ethnic Trends	3
Insite #3: Age Trends	4
Insite #4: School Aged Children Trends	5
Insite #5: Household Income Trends	6
Insite #6: Household and Children Trends	7
Insite #7: Marital Status Trends	10
Insite #8: Adult Educational Attainment	11
Insite #9: Employment and Occupations	12
Insite #10: Monthly Household Types	13
Insite #11: Churchwide Giving Practices	14
Insite #12: Religious Practices	15



More Information

Please refer to the last page of the report for additional notes and interpretation aides in reading the report. Not all of the demographic variables available in the MI System are found in this report. The Fullsite Report will give a more comprehensive view of an area's demographics and ViewPoint a fuller view of its beliefs and practices.

The Office of Research provides free parish reports and community profiles for every congregation in The Episcopal Church.

Information Available

- Parish Report (Average Sunday Attendance and Pledge & Plate) for the past 10 years
- Community Profile (3 mile radius of your congregation) with 12 demographic insights including population, age, and household statistics and trends.



Potential next steps

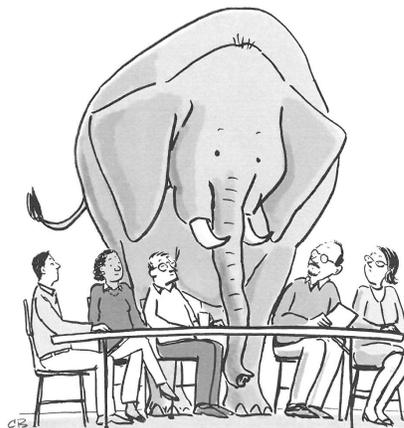
- Research diocesan canons to see if youth can be elected to serve on your vestry
- Consider the size of your vestry. Would increasing/decreasing number of elected members be helpful?
- If you are clergy, consider whether you need to preside at vestry meetings
- Review canonical requirements and liabilities associated with being a vestry member. Does your vestry carry these out?
- Over time, move the focus of vestry meetings toward discernment of God's mission and vision for the congregation. Consider structural changes to do this
- Begin regular vestry meetings with an extended period of prayer, Bible study, or other practice to begin discerning God's mission & vision



Newest vestry member Heather's suggestion to remove the pews was an excellent conversation starter.

Potential next steps

- Review sources of income that comprise the annual operating budget. Is there a diversity of income streams?
- Watch the ECF's webinar "The Basics of Parish Finances"
- Discuss effectiveness of annual stewardship campaigns, whether the congregation needs a capital campaign, and explore current endowment spending policies
- Learn more about setting up a planned giving program in your congregation (Funding Future Ministry)
- Strengthen the nomination and election process for new vestry members
- Create or revise the vestry covenant at next vestry retreat
- Move toward a 'consent agenda' style meeting for approval of reports
- Build your toolbox



Someone in the vestry finally addressed the elephant in the room.



Contact Us

Episcopal Church Foundation

ECF website: www.episcopalfoundation.org

ECF Vital Practices: www.ecfvp.org

Email: ecf@episcopalfoundation.org

Phone: (800) 697-2858



Contact ECF's Leadership Resources Team



Miguel Angel Escobar

Program Director, Leadership Resources

mescobar@episcopalfoundation.org



Nancy Davidge

Associate Program Director, Leadership Resources

ndavidge@episcopalfoundation.org



Brendon Hunter

Assistant Program Director, Leadership Resources

bhunter@episcopalfoundation.org

