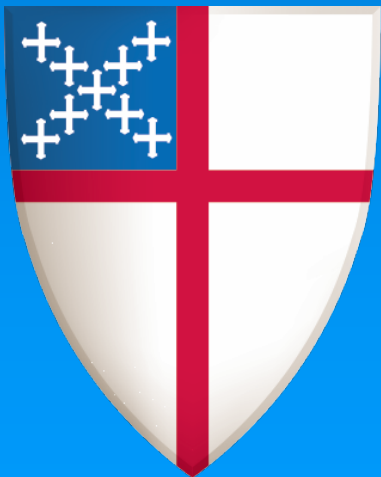
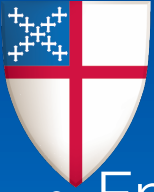


What Makes Us the Episcopal Church?

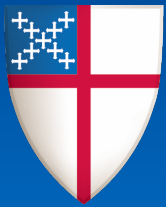


Session #3: Organization and
Governance



Distinguishing Characteristics:

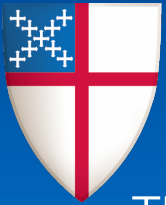
- Episcopal Church = “A church which has bishops”
- However, we believe in a “baptismal ecclesiology.”
Ecclesiology = theology of church
- Our organizational structure:
 - The parish: headed by rector and vestry.
 - The diocese: a collection of parishes headed by a bishop. Since early Christianity, the basic building block of organization.
 - The national church: Dioceses joined together, headed by a Presiding Bishop, or Primate.
 - The Anglican Communion, presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury.



Baptismal Ecclesiology

- The "ministers of the Church" are "*lay persons*, bishops, priests, and deacons." (BCP, p. 855, italics mine)
- Baptism is the primary sacrament for ministry, not ordination.

All of us bear witness to Christ in the world, and have a "place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church." (BCP, 855)



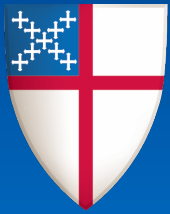
Organization: The Parish

- The Church is...the Body of which Jesus Christ is the head, and of which all baptized persons are members.” (BCP, p. 854.)
- Membership is defined theologically by baptism.
- Administratively, membership in the local church (parish) is defined as someone baptized in TEC, or whose baptism in another church is recorded in TEC.
- Different categories of membership:
 - Baptized members
 - Communicant members: received communion at least 3 times in the previous year.
 - Communicant in good standing: the above plus “faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.”
(Canon I.17.2)



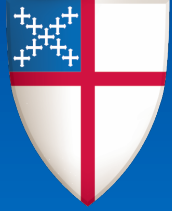
Organization: The Parish, con't

- Parish is headed by the rector and the vestry.
- Rectors are chosen by the vestry, with the advice and approval of the bishop.
- Vestry elected by all members at the Annual Meeting.
- The rector is the liturgical leader, and chief teacher of the faith.
- The vestry manages the finances and the property.
Vestries may have committees to assist the rector in the carrying out of parish programs and outreach ministries.
- Vestries elect a “Senior Warden” and “Junior Warden” corresponding to Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.
- The Annual Meeting elects the vestry, delegates, and votes to approve the annual report, and the budget for the coming year.



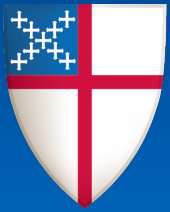
The Diocese

- A region headed by a bishop.
Some are somewhat small in area; while some are the entire state.
- Supervises the mission of the church in that region or state. Is a symbol of the church's unity. Must be "in communion" with other bishops.
- Clergy is ordained by the bishop and derive their ministry from the bishop.
- Diocesan Convention (annual): Voting members are lay delegates and clergy. Number of lay delegates determined by parish size.
 - Vote on resolutions, programs, and budget for the coming year.
 - Also vote on clergy and lay people for the Executive Council (Diocesan Council), and Standing Committee.
- Deaneries are groupings of local parishes.



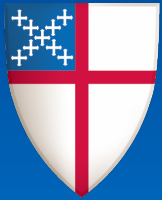
Where Do Bishops Come From?

- By election.
- Nominating committee formed to receive resumes and interview potential candidates when there is a vacancy.
- Slate of candidates presented to the diocese.
- Special diocesan convention is held, delegates are representatives of the parishes and all resident clergy. Convention delegates meet with each candidate beforehand.
- To be elected, a candidate must have a majority of votes of both lay and clergy delegates.
- The elected bishop is then ordained by three bishops, one of whom is the Presiding Bishop.



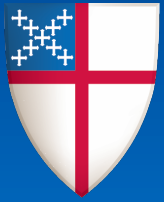
The National Church

- A Presiding Bishop and Executive Council are elected at General Convention every three years.
- Presiding Bishop: Role and Duties
 - Chief pastor and Chief executive of the church.
 - Charged with responsibility to “speak God’s words to the Church and to the world, as the representative of this Church and its episcopate in its corporate capacity.” (Canon I.2.4[a])
 - Called to visit every diocese and consult with the bishop(s) and diocesan representatives.
 - S/he resigns from previous ministry when elected, and serves for 9 years.
- Executive Council: an elected body which oversees the ministry and mission of TEC. “Board of Directors.” Administers the budget and acts between conventions.
- Provinces are groupings of dioceses in a geographic area.



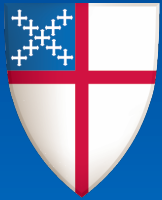
General Convention

- Meets every three years.
- Two houses: House of Bishops and House of Deputies.
 - The House of Bishops: all bishops, including retired.
 - The House of Deputies: laypersons, priests, and deacons. Each diocese has 4 lay and 4 clerical deputies, chosen by diocesan convention.
- Duties:
 - Adopts a budget
 - Chooses the majority of the Executive Council
 - Takes action on resolutions.



Anglican Communion

- A “family” of independent churches created over time by colonization and missionary work bound by a common heritage and a common understanding of the faith.
- “Instruments of Communion”:
 - Archbishop of Canterbury
 - Lambeth Council: all bishops, held every 10 years.
 - Primates Meeting, usually every 2-3 years.
 - Anglican Consultative Council: elected membership of bishops, priests, and lay people. Every 2-3 years.
- There is no governing body as such.



In Conclusion...

- The governance of the Episcopal Church is:
 - “Flatter”: Less authoritarian than some Christian denominations.
 - “Messier”: A certain degree of ambiguity and “gray areas.”
 - Looser structure is a defining characteristic of Anglicanism.