

# A059 HB Committee #12 Report #60

House of Bishops Committee 12 - Prayer Book, Liturgy & Music presents its Report #60 on Resolution A059 (Amend Article X of the Constitution of The Episcopal Church (First Reading)) and moves:

## Adopt Substitution

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring that Article X of the Constitution is amended to read as follows:

1 **Sec. 1.** The Book of Common Prayer is understood to be those liturgical forms and  
2 other texts authorized by the General Convention in accordance with this article  
3 and the Canons of this Church.<sup>1</sup>

4 The Book of Common Prayer in this Church is intended to be communal and  
5 devotional prayer enriched by our church's cultural, geographical, and linguistic  
6 contexts.<sup>2</sup> The Book of Common Prayer shall contain both public worship and  
7 private devotion.

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9 The Book of Common Prayer, as now established or hereafter amended by the  
10 General Convention, shall be in use in all the Dioceses of this Church.

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12 **Sec. 2.** No alteration thereof or addition thereto shall be made unless the General  
13 Convention approve the same on first reading in one regular meeting of the  
14 General Convention and, by resolve so directing, be sent by the Secretary of the  
15 General Convention to the Secretary of the Convention of every Diocese, to be  
16 made known to the Diocesan Convention at its next regular meeting, and be

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<sup>1</sup> This does not present a problem for previously approved Book of Common Prayer changes as they would have already had to meet this article's demands as most of the requirements predate this proposed this amendment.

<sup>2</sup> "When independence from the mother country brought about the organization of a self-governing Church in the American states, it also dictated alterations to the English Prayer Book to fit the local conditions and circumstances. The revision was made first, as the Preface to the Prayer Book of 1789 put it, in respect 'to those alterations in the Liturgy which became necessary in the prayers for our Civil Rulers,' and then 'to take a further review of the Public Service, and to establish such other alterations and amendments therein as might be deemed expedient.'" Edwin Augustine White and Jackson A. Dykman, *Annotated Constitution and Canons for the Government of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America Otherwise Known as the Episcopal Church: Adopted in General Conventions, 1789-1991*, (Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, 1981) vol. 1, Article X, 132 Furthermore this has been important since 1907 and the global mission movement of the church.

17 adopted on second reading without alteration by the General Convention at its next  
18 succeeding regular meeting by a majority of all Bishops, excluding retired Bishops  
19 not present, of the whole number of Bishops entitled to vote in the House of  
20 Bishops, and by an affirmative vote by orders in the House of Deputies in  
21 accordance with Art. I, Sec. 5 of this Constitution, except that concurrence in the  
22 affirmative by the orders shall require the affirmative vote in each order by a  
23 majority of the Dioceses entitled to representation in the House of Deputies.<sup>3</sup>

24 **Sec. 3.** No alteration thereof ~~or amendment~~ or addition thereto ~~to the Book of~~  
25 ~~Common Prayer~~ shall be made unless it has previously been authorized for Trial  
26 Use in accordance with this Article and the Canons of this Church.

27 **Sec. 4.** The General Convention may at any one meeting, by a majority of the  
28 whole number of the Bishops entitled to vote in the House of Bishops, and by a  
29 majority of the Clerical and Lay Deputies of all the Dioceses entitled to  
30 representation in the House of Deputies, voting by orders as previously set forth in  
31 this Article:

32 a. Amend the Table of Lessons and all Tables and Rubrics relating to  
33 the Psalms.

34 b. Authorize for Trial Use such alterations or additions in whole or in  
35 part to the established Book of Common Prayer as may  
36 be proposed in accord with the Canons of this Church and duly  
37 undertaken by and implemented according to the directives of the  
38 General Convention.<sup>4</sup>

39 **Sec. 5.** Nothing in this Article shall be construed as restricting the authority of the  
40 Bishops of this Church to take such order as may be permitted by the Rubrics of

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<sup>3</sup> This provision was inserted early on to guard against hasty change. "Article 8 made no provision for amending the Prayer Book. In the Convention of 1811, therefore, to make provision for how it might be amended, and to do so with a safeguard against hasty alterations, the following words were added to the Article: No alteration or addition shall be made in the Book of Common Prayer, or other offices of the Church, unless the same shall be proposed in one General Convention, and by a resolve thereof made known to the Convention of every Diocese or State, and adopted at the subsequent General Convention." Ibid, 133.

<sup>4</sup> It is important to recognized that at the height of liturgical reformation leading to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer the church included this particular amendment to help provide for the preparation of a new book. "In order to make it possible to accompany a revision of the Prayer Book with the experience gained from "trial use" throughout the Church of some of the proposed changes, the Convention of 1961 proposed, and that of 1964 adopted, the following amendment to the latter portion of Article X." Ibid, 137.

41 the Book of Common Prayer or by the Canons of the General Convention for the  
42 use of special forms of worship.<sup>5</sup>

43 And be it further

44

45 Resolved, That the General Convention direct the President of the House of  
46 Deputies and the Presiding Bishop to appoint a working group to include the  
47 Custodian of The Book of Common Prayer, some members of Committee 12 of the  
48 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention, some members of a Standing Commission on Liturgy  
49 and Music, and others as needed to review the Canons relevant to the  
50 implementation of this Article and propose revisions to the 81<sup>st</sup> General  
51 Convention. An initial framework is provided as a starting point for this work.

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<sup>5</sup> The importance of this last paragraph is to acknowledge that there is a need for local adaption in language and a recognition of cultural and linguistic differences. "In the Convention of 1907, the attention of the House of Bishops was brought to the fact that there was difficulty in making a satisfactory translation into the language of certain countries of the words "Protestant Episcopal Church" on the title page of the Prayer Book. After considerable discussion in both houses, the Convention proposed an amendment to Article X permitting, in foreign language editions of the Book of Common Prayer, 'such verbal alterations as may be necessary to adapt the same to local conditions.' Alterations were to be authorized by the bishop of the diocese or district, subject to the approval of the Presiding Bishop." Ibid, 8. See also, Journal, 1907, p. 185, see also pp. 350, 367.

## Notes

The purpose of the constitution of The Episcopal Church organization is to lay out the boundaries of canonical action. This proposed amendment seeks, based upon history of The Book of Common Prayer, the creation and amendment of this article, and the present understanding of who we are a twenty first century body that engages mission across 18 countries with a variety of languages.

Regarding language, we suggest that we may need to allow the local Episcopate from time to time to assist in acquiring prayer book translation; while, also making room for official translations.

The constitution is a particular document which is a vessel in which other work is done. The difficulty at this stage in our development is that we must decide how to undertake such development. The paragraphs in section are the result of our history and the understanding that these are the most basic needs for our maintaining and creating prayer books that are connected to our cultural, linguistic, and geographical contexts.

Based upon our discussion, we recognize the need for two things in our proposal. The first is the commitment to bring the marriage rites forward for consideration for Book of Common Prayer Status. The 2018 General Convention authorized these rites for trial use. We would commit as a house to bring them forward for a first reading in 2024. Perfection of the rites should take place in the 2023-2024 biennium.

We also recognize that part of the frustration is there remains no distinctive path for Book of Common Prayer revision. There is concern that even with the above outlines in the constitution, and the canons there is very little to keep the church in our and future generations from making hasty decisions.

We do not believe that we are prepared at this time to create a new prayer book for the church.

We have memorialized the 1979 Book of Common Prayer for usage and have continued to allow 1928 Prayer Book Usage. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer is at present the prayer book authorized for this church.

The following might be considered by the SCLM and the Cognate Committee for changes as we prepare for the 2024 General Convention.

We also commit to each other to bring before the next General Convention for discussion a canonical revision of Title I, Canon 1.1.2(2). We believe that something like the following would assist us in moving with clarity into prayer book acceptable liturgies.

Canon I.1.2.n(2) A Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music. The Custodian of the Book of Common Prayer shall be a member ex officio with voice, but without vote. It shall be the duty of the Commission to:

- (i) Discharge such duties as shall be assigned to it by the General Convention as to policies and strategies concerning the common worship of this Church.
- (ii) Regarding Liturgical Resources
  - a. Prepare for General Convention texts to be Authorized for Experimental Use throughout this Church, as provided by Canon and subject to diocesan Ecclesiastical Authority, alternative and additional liturgies to supplement those provided in the Book of Common Prayer or the Authorized Liturgical Formularies.
  - b. Authorize for Supplemental Use throughout this Church, as provided by Canon and subject to diocesan Ecclesiastical Authority, additional liturgies to supplement those provided in the Book of Common Prayer.
  - c. As needed, recommend to the General Convention authorized translations of the Holy Scripture from which the Lessons prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer are to be read.
  - d. As needed, cause to be prepared and to present to the General Convention recommendations concerning the Lectionary, Psalter, and offices for special occasions as authorized or directed by the General Convention or House of Bishops.
  - e. As needed, receive, and evaluate requests for consideration of individuals or groups to be included in the Calendar of the Church year and make recommendations thereon to the General Convention for acceptance or rejection.
  - f. Collect, collate, and catalogue liturgies approved by General Convention under the various headings and uses: approved Experimental Rites, approved Supplemental Rites, and Trial Rites for prayer book revision.
  - g. Collaborate with the Secretary of General Convention to make final edits to the text of resolutions adopted by General Convention that establish new or revised liturgical materials, and to arrange for their publication. For the sole purpose of this collaboration, members of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music are exempt from the terms of office set forth in I.1.2(b) and shall remain in office until their successors are appointed and take office.
- (iii) Regarding Prayer Book Revision – a nine-year process.
  - a. Book of Common Prayer revision shall begin with a vote by the two houses to commence the work with provision of funds to undertake the cost of writing, collecting, translating, and printing a New Book of Common Prayer.
  - b. The first Triennium will be used to write, gather, collect and translate material for: the daily office, baptism, eucharist, pastoral offices, and ordinal – following the 1979 model.

- c. The Second Triennium will be used for Trial Use across the church (assuming bishop diocesan approval). The SCLM may offer, at any convention, trial use of liturgical material, this material would specifically be on a pathway to meet the two convention requirement for Book of Common Prayer status.
  - d. The Third Triennium would:
    - i. Include the first vote for new material.
    - ii. Include continued use of the narrowed field of trial rites.
    - iii. And give notice to the church of the upcoming second vote on a new prayer book.
  - e. The Fourth Triennium would be the second approval of The Book of Common Prayer, and then include its printing and disbursement.
- (iv) Regarding Hymnal Revision.
- a. Collect, collate, and catalogue material bearing upon possible future revisions of The Hymnal 1982 and other musical publications regularly in use in this Church, and encourage the composition of new musical materials.
  - b. Cause to be prepared and present to the General Convention recommendations concerning the musical settings of liturgical texts and rubrics, and norms as to liturgical music and the manner of its rendition.
  - c. At the direction of the General Convention, to serve the Church in matters pertaining to policies and strategies concerning Church music.