

Resolutions from the Committee on Constitution and Canons – Second Reading 2025

The Committee on Constitution and Canons proposes these changes to the Constitution . They were approved at the 2024 Annual Convention. If approved upon second reading at this 2025 Annual Convention, they will come into effect immediately after that second approving vote. The language which is proposed to be removed is in boldface with a strike-through. Where there is replacement language, it is in italic boldface.

1. Article II, Section 3 (2009)

... [Regarding the number of delegates allowed from each parish] ... Such delegates shall remain in office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish; the Parish or Vestry to have the power to fill any vacancies which may occur; a certificate of whose appointment signed by the Wardens or Parish Clerk, shall, before their admission to a seat, be laid before the Convention, provided that no persons shall be competent to serve as Lay Delegates unless they be confirmed adult communicants of the Church in good standing, having recorded an active affiliation with the Parish which they represent. ~~**At least one of the Lay Delegates shall be a member of the Vestry at the time of election as a Delegate.**~~

Rationale: In the current climate when there are growing demands of the time of a shrinking pool of volunteers, the requirement that one of the delegates to Convention be a member of the Vestry has become a challenge. Additionally, this brings our practice into line with our Lutheran partners: in blended congregations, delegates to the Lutheran convention need not be members of the Vestry.

2. Article XI, Section 1 (1993):

All elections for which there is a contest shall be by ballot and shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting, except when a vote by Orders shall be duly called for, in accordance with Article IX, but if a system of preferential balloting is in use, then the quota required by such system shall be sufficient for election; and when the vote is by Orders, ~~**a concurrent quota of the two Orders shall suffice.**~~ ***a quota in each Order separately shall be required, except as otherwise allowed in this Constitution.***

Rationale:

"concurrent quota" is not a clearly defined term. This change will clarify the intent.

3. Article XI, Section 2 (2016):

The election of Members of the Standing Committee and of Deputies and Alternate Deputies to the General Convention shall be by ballot and by Orders, provided that there is no contest for the election of the Standing Committee, the election shall be by Orders, but need not be by ballot. ~~**If, after a second ballot, the required numbers have not been**~~

~~elected, the second ballot shall be recounted, with a majority of the two Orders taken together, on this, or any subsequent ballot, sufficient to elect. If, after a third ballot, the required numbers have not been elected, subsequent ballots shall require only a majority of the two Orders taken together in order to elect.~~

Rationale:

Three, rather than two, ballots before changing the method will allow better discernment of the preferences of each Order. Furthermore, modern polling methods are much quicker, making three vs two ballots less laborious than in the past.

It might be important to voters to know before voting whether the Orders' votes were going to be combined, so the third ballot will **not** be recounted. Rather, a new ballot will be taken.

Further, though this detail is deferred to the Canons rather than spelled out in the Constitution, the fourth ballot might be by ranked choice (to avoid the need for more than four ballots) and thus might have a different form from the earlier ballots. (The earlier ballots could also be ranked choice, but their criterion for election is different because of the need for a majority in each Order counted separately.)

Committee: Donald Allison (Chancellor), The Rev. Timothy Crellin, Alison Gamache, Robert Mercurio, The Rev. Eliot Moss, The Rev. Patrick Perkins, The Rev. Tanya Wallace, Wende Wheeler (Secretary of Convention)