

**Recommendations**  
with respect  
to the  
**Governing Bodies**  
of the  
**Diocese of Pittsburgh**

**Executive Summary:**

The Working Group on Governance of Project CREED *unanimously* recommends the following:

1. We recommend no changes with respect to the composition or manner of election for the Cathedral Chapter, Commission on Ministry, Constitution & Canons, Disciplinary Board, and Growth Fund;
2. We recommend that at no time shall any parish have more than two members (clergy and/or lay) serving at the same time on the Standing Committee;
3. We recommend that the Board of Trustees be reduced from 16 to 12 lay members with 4 members elected at-large by Convention for 3-year terms, four members elected by Districts (one from each) for 3-year terms, and four members appointed by the Bishop for 3-year terms;
4. We recommend that Diocesan Council be reduced from 18 members to 14 members with the membership constituting the 8 members of Standing Committee and 4 additional lay members elected by District (one from each) for 4-year terms, and with the Bishop and the Chancellor as members of Council by virtue of their office; and
5. We further recommend that Diocesan Council "resuscitate" the four Districts of the Diocese and develop ways to encourage and invigorate District gatherings.

## **Explanation of Recommendations:**

After considerable deliberation and prayer, the Governance Working Group of Project CREED has **unanimously** agreed to recommend a modest reorganization of the Diocese's governing structures to reflect the smaller size of the Diocese and the availability of both Clergy and Lay leaders to serve on its boards.

Currently, the three major governing boards of the Diocese are the **Board of Trustees** with 16 members, the **Diocesan Council** with 18 members, and the **Standing Committee** with 8 members. In addition, we have several other elected boards including: **Cathedral Chapter** (6 members), **Commission on Ministry** (11 members currently with 1 elected each year by Convention & rest appointed by the Bishop), **Constitution & Canons** (6 members), **Disciplinary Board** (9 members), and **Growth Fund** (6 members).

National Canons require that each Diocese have a Standing Committee, a Commission on Ministry, a Disciplinary Board, and a Finance Committee (designated members in this Diocese). All other boards are at the discretion of the Diocese.

The Governance Working Group recommends no substantive changes with respect to the creation and manner of election of the Standing Committee, Cathedral Chapter, Commission on Ministry, Constitution & Canons, Disciplinary Board, Finance Committee, and Growth Fund. However, in order to diversify the membership geographically and avoid over-representation by any single parish, **we recommend that with respect to election to Standing Committee no more than two members (whether Clergy, Lay, or both) come from any one parish.**

**We also recommend a change in the size of the Board of Trustees**, reducing its current size from 16 to 12 members. All members would continue to be Lay members. The twelve would include 4 members elected at-large for 3-year terms from Diocesan Convention, 4 members elected for 3-year terms from each of the 4 Districts, and 4 members appointed for 3-year terms by the Bishop, who would continue to appoint the President of the Board of Trustees. Currently, the Convention elects 7 members and the Bishop appoints 5 members.

**We also recommend a major reorganization of Diocesan Council.** Currently, Council is an 18-member body with 12 members (8 Lay and 4 Clergy) elected by District for 3-year terms with 3 members currently from each of the 4 Districts. In addition, Council has 6 other voting members by virtue of their positions: the Bishop, the Chancellor, the chair of the Standing Committee, the chair of the Board of Trustees, the secretary of Diocesan Convention, and the chair of Episcopal Church Women (ECW).

After many discussions on the efficacy of merging Council with either Standing Committee or the Board of Trustees or splitting Council's functions between the two bodies, the Governance Working Group unanimously recommends that we maintain the Diocesan Council and its duties as a separate governing body **but** reconstitute its membership.

**We recommend that the Diocesan Council be a 14-member body to include the 8 at-large Clergy and Lay members of the Standing Committee elected and limited (as they currently are) to a single 4-year term and an additional 4 Lay members elected to similar 4-year terms, one from each of the four Districts.** In addition to these 12 elected members, the Bishop and Chancellor would continue to be full voting members of Council by virtue of their office.

The Council would continue to elect its own officers (president, vice president, and secretary) as it currently does and perform all functions currently mandated in the Constitution and Canons.

This method of composing Diocesan Council by defining its membership to include the members of the Standing Committee, plus additional members elected at the time of Diocesan Convention, is utilized by at least one other Diocese similar in size to the Diocese of Pittsburgh (i.e., the Diocese of Eastern Michigan).

We recommend requiring both Standing Committee and Council to meet at least five times a year, perhaps in alternate months, although each could meet more as necessary, and/or meet on the same day following each other.

This change obviously increases the responsibilities of those elected to Standing Committee as they would now also become members of Diocesan Council. The

members of the current Standing Committee have expressed their support for this reorganization. While Council and Standing Committee have different roles in the Diocese, this over-lapping of membership brings inherent efficiencies that can benefit a smaller diocese. The addition of District representation to the Council, along with our tradition of consensus governing (i.e., votes are rare), will enhance the broad representational, geographic, and Lay majority on Council.

Obviously, reducing the number of meetings of Standing Committee could help with time management. The Diocesan Council has already reduced its meetings to six per year. But both bodies will continue to be free to meet as often as they desire.

In conjunction with these recommendations, **the Governance Working Group strongly recommends the "resuscitation" of the four Districts of the Diocese.** In recent years, with some exceptions, the Districts (which include the Clergy & Lay Deputies from the parishes assigned to each district and the Wardens, Vestries, and parish leaders of those churches) have not met outside of Convention, as outlined in the governing documents of the Diocese.

Obviously, Lay Deputies and Clergy to Diocesan Convention will continue to meet at Convention to elect their District chairs and vice-chairs and representatives to the Board of Trustees (1 member every three years) and the reconstituted Diocesan Council (1 member every four years). But **we also urge Diocesan Council to develop ways to encourage and invigorate District gatherings,** including granting the Clergy & Lay Deputies from each District a sum of money for District leaders to disperse among the parishes or for the benefit of the whole as they see fit.

In order to make the changes we recommend, we understand that the Constitution of the Diocese of Pittsburgh must be amended with Diocesan Convention approving identical language in November 2019 and November 2020 for these changes to be implemented in January 2021. We also understand that Canonical changes would have to be adopted at Diocesan Convention in November 2020.

Accordingly, **we request that the Constitution & Canons Committee meet to draft language** that would make the needed Constitutional changes at this year's

Convention and, if approved, subsequent Canonical changes for approval in November of next year.

This has been an incredible exercise requiring the time and talent of a number of extraordinary leaders in the Diocese. We met at least seven times over the last six months and our meetings were thoughtful, informative, at times contentious but always respectful. I want to personally salute the following for sharing their considerable skills, expertise, and patience in this process: Russ Ayres, Joe Baird, Frances Dannenberg, Mike Donadee, Betty Duckstein, Joan Gundersen, Tom Moore, Jim Neral, Kris Opat, Bruce Robison, Andy Roman, Bernie Rottschaefter, Jerry Stephenson, Kathi Workman, and Ben Wright.

It has been a pleasure to work with each of these individuals, along with Bishop McConnell, Judy Stark, Judi Rogers, and Andy Muhl throughout this intense process. God willing, we hope these changes will go a long way towards streamlining our governing bodies so that we might better fulfill God's mission for us as a Diocese in the 21st Century.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Delano  
*Chair, Governance Working Group*