

**Report from the Committee on Constitution and Canons to the
141st Annual Convention of the Diocese of East Carolina**

³⁷And no one puts new wine into old wineskins;
otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be
spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. ³⁸But new wine
must be put into fresh wineskins.

Luke 5:37-38 (NRSV)

This committee's work began shortly after the conclusion of the 140th Annual Convention of the Diocese of East Carolina as we contemplated and discussed the existing framework of rules and guidance known as our Constitution and Canons. We consciously sought to carry forward Bishop Skirving's metaphor of new wineskins for new wine as enunciated in his Address to the Convention on Saturday, February 11, 2023.

As we began the process of revision and review, we adopted a guiding principle, seeking to place mechanical and fact-driven determinations (# of delegates, definitions of congregation/parish size, etc.) in the Canons. The Constitution would then be the document which highlighted solely the establishing principles and foundations of belief for the Diocese. This work continues.

The Committee, over the span of 5 months, drafted and debated a proposed internet-based survey of diocesan and parish leadership. This proposed survey would help the committee ascertain which portions of the Constitution and Canons the respondents are both aware of and their input on whether rules and guidance such as those encountered are helpful or less than helpful for the respondents' needs in completing tasks associated with their leadership roles. This survey is ready to be sent to respondents shortly after the close of this 141st annual convention.

During the course of our meetings this past year, we asked Bishop Skirving to share his insights and thoughts on review and revisions of the Constitution and Canons. Bishop Skirving attended one of our early meetings this past year during which he provided insight and guidance peppered with dry Ontario wit.

Our goal as a committee is to help fashion the new wineskins called for by our diocese as needed for our common life together; to help provide guidance and order when needed, utility and clarity always; and to guide compassion and judgment in the use and interpretation of our Constitution and Canons.

Submitted by,

Stephen J. Batten, Chair

Members of this committee:

Stephen Batten

Andrew Canaan

Mollie Roberts (resigned)

Mary Duane Hall

Fred Klinck

Keith Calder

ex officio:

Joan Geisler-Ludlum, Chancellor to the Convention

Shurley Ray Weddle, Secretary of the Convention