

What's the Standing Committee?

The Standing Committee is one of the governing bodies of the Diocese of North Carolina. A permanent (or 'standing') committee, it provides ongoing leadership and governance to support the work of the Diocese.

The Episcopal Church requires that the convention of every diocese elect a Standing Committee, which is given specific authority under the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of North Carolina elaborate on this authority. Although limited in scope, the authority of the Standing Committee is significant within the areas assigned to it.

As part of its responsibilities, the Standing Committee:

- Consents to the election and ordination of every bishop in the Episcopal Church. Normally a Standing Committee grants consent, but there are occasions when consent is not granted.
- Consents to the election of a presiding bishop if a vacancy occurs between General Conventions.
- Acts as a council of advice to the Bishop Diocesan.
- Acts as the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese when there is no bishop, or assigning such a role to a bishop suffragan.
- Oversees the search for and election of a bishop in the Diocese.
- Authorizes any encumbrance, sale or removal of real property by any congregation or other entity of the Diocese. No congregation may sell or mortgage its property or take down a dedicated and currently consecrated worship building without prior approval of the Standing Committee.
- Approves the ordination of any person in the Diocese to the diaconate or the priesthood, as well as the acceptance of an ordained minister from another Christian church.
- Participates in the release and removal of deacons and priests from ordained ministry or their return to ordained ministry.
- Participates in decisions to create a new congregation, to change the status of a congregation between mission and parish, or to close a congregation.

In addition, the Standing Committee may in some circumstances:

- Participate in the disciplinary process for clergy.
- Participate in final disposition of disputes between a parish and its rector.

This is not an exhaustive list! The Constitution and Canons make over 100 references to the Standing Committee, outlining and defining its work. The Standing Committee elects its own president and secretary and sets its own bylaws, subject to the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of North Carolina. In this respect the Standing Committee is unique; for every other entity of the Diocese, the Bishop Diocesan either acts as chairperson or appoints/delegates the appointment of the chairperson.

In the Diocese of North Carolina, the Standing Committee usually meets eleven times per year, normally on the third Monday of each month. However, there are times when the workload of the Standing Committee increases substantially, such as during a vacancy in the episcopate. The Standing Committee is comprised of five clergy of the Diocese and four members of the laity who are enrolled confirmed adult communicants in good standing, all elected by the Convention of the Diocese. The term of office is three years and members are not eligible to serve consecutive terms.

For more information, please contact the president of the standing committee, listed separately.