

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of California is a body of four lay and four clerical members, elected by Diocesan Convention to assist in the governance of the church. Our primary roles are to act as the Bishop's council of advice and to serve as the consenting body in several areas including ordination, elections to the episcopate, congregational status change, institutional boards, and issues of property.

We began our work with an evaluation and critique of our meeting process with the goal of streamlining our agenda to reduce the number of meeting hours. As a result, we have been able to cut our meeting times in half to an average of 2 hours each month.

Our relationship with Bishop Marc Andrus remains strong. With the varied challenges experienced by Diocesan staff, the Standing Committee has been able to support and offer advice when needed.

Because a significant portion of our work is the consent of those seeking Holy Orders, members of the Standing Committee met with members of the Commission on Ministry and the Vocations Officer to improve communication, processes and procedures. We feel confident that our joint work will strengthen the bridge between our two bodies and will result in a more cohesive and gratifying experience for the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee, and the person seeking Holy Orders. For the 2015/16 year, the Standing Committee consented to the ordination of ten candidates.

Our responsibility also includes consenting to the election of bishops throughout the Episcopal Church; every elected bishop must receive consent from a majority of bishops and standing committees. After extensive research of each candidate, we vote on whether or not to consent. Since our previous convention, we have consented to the election of bishops for the dioceses of Northern Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Eastern Oregon and to a Coadjutor election process for the Diocese of Los Angeles and a Suffragan election process for the Diocese of West Texas.

Following the change to diocesan canon XVII approved by the Special Convention on June 11, we were charged with the responsibility for approving new board members for diocesan institutions. Over the summer, we approved new board members for Episcopal Charities and Bishop's Ranch.

In partnership with the Bishop's office, we worked with Episcopal Senior Communities on their ongoing proposal to affiliate with NCPHS, requiring

Standing Committee representation at two mediation hearings and several consultation hours with the Diocesan Chancellor.

In our role of overseeing church property transactions, we heard a presentation from Trinity+St Peter on their continuing plans to raise capital for the restoration of their historic building and we approved the request of Our Savior, Mill Valley to obtain a loan to purchase a rectory. We also hosted a conversation with St. Columba's, Inverness as they moved through leadership transition and kept abreast on some of our more fragile congregations.

It has been a privilege to work with such a dedicated and skilled group of people: Jim DeMersman, Ron Hermanson, Andrew Lee, Brenda Paulin, The Rev. Annette Rankin, The Rev. Mark Spaulding, and The Rev. Sylvia Vasquez.

The Reverend Lori A. Walton  
2015/2016 Standing Committee President