Working Group to Review Canons and Implement Changes
Related to Revised Article X of the Constitution

Hilton St. Louis Airport, St. Louis, Missouri
May 5-7, 2025

Minutes
(Approved August 12, 2025)

Monday, May 5, 2025

Members Present: Cynthia Black, Joan Geiszler-Ludlum, Christopher Hayes, Thomas Little, Ruth Meyers, Neil Raman, Jennifer Reddall, Wayne Smith, J. Neil Alexander

Members Not Present: Jeffrey Lee, Scott Madison

Others Present: Airié Stuart, liaison of Church Publishing Incorporated

Christopher Hayes convened the Working Group at 9:15 a.m. He thanked the members for attending. The members then made short introductions. After discussing the work ahead of them, the members elected as officers Christopher Hayes, Chair; Neil Raman, Vice Chair; and Tom Little, Secretary.

The Chair then walked through the published Agenda, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes. He then read a passage from Rowan Williams's introduction to the Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer, which tells us that the role of the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) is to foster unity. He then noted that while the Bible is canonical, the BCP is not.

Ruth Meyer then reviewed the history of the General Convention's review of and actions concerning Article X of the Constitution and related canons, from 2015 through 2024, including the central role and critical contributions of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) and the report of the Task Force on Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision (TFLPBR) established by Resolution 2018-A068. This review spurred considerable comment and questions.

Ruth's concise background history of these Article X changes will be posted as an addendum to these Minutes and will be a key resource for the Group's work and final report.

The members then reviewed and discussed the Working Group's mandate from Resolution 2024-A233:

to
a. Review the Canons and any questions relevant to the implementation of the revised Article X; and
b. Propose as needed legislation for consideration at the 82nd General Convention.

The Chair stated his view that this mandate refers to Article X as amended on the second reading by resolution 2024-A072. That said, the work of this Committee will be reported in the context of the first reading of further amendments in resolution 2024-A224.

The members walked through the 2024-B008 changes. A significant amendment to Canon II.3.6(b) enacted by passage of Resolution 2024-B008 to implement the Article X changes in Resolution 2024-A072 now requires that a trial use period precede the first reading of any Article X change to the BCP. This was discussed. The discussion covered the amendment process used in the adoption of the 1892, 1928 and 1979 BCP changes. The stirrings of the 1979 changes began in the 1940's.

It was suggested that a definition of the term "trial use" would be useful, or a narrative of when it is required and when it is not required. Some commented that when trial use is involved means the proposed changes are broad in scope.

Another suggestion was to try to work in clear references in revised canons to the role of SCLM in liturgical changes where needed and appropriate.

For ease of reference when reviewing these Minutes, copies of Resolutions 2024-A072, -A223 and -B008 are attached to these Minutes.

A consensus emerged that the group's work should involve new changes to Article X, implementing canons for those changes, and clean-up canons to address dated, unclear and confusing canons. Resolution 2024-A072 lacked implementing canons and Resolution 2024-B008 was filed just prior to the 2024 General Convention to supply those canons. This approach would involve recommending that the A224 changes be voted down at the 2027 General Convention and replaced with a first reading of different changes to Article X.

The meeting turned to a review of the changes to Article X proposed by 2024-A224 and read the first time at the 2024 General Convention.

After a break the members discussed the level of detail desired in their meeting Minutes, and also how and when to do more proactive messaging with stakeholders and the whole Church.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously voted to include in the Working Group's Blue Book report to the 2027 General Convention a substantive history of recent General Convention actions on Article X and Canon II.3 and .4.

Canon II.3. The members then turned to discussing Canon II.3 with the sense that a thorough review and clean-up seems to be in order.

The Working Group then welcomed *ex officio* member, Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe, Vanessa Butler, Executive Coordinator to the Presiding Bishop, and Rebecca Wilson, Chief of Strategy to the Presiding Bishop. Christopher Hayes shared the topics the Working Group has been exploring and discussing, including:

- The history of Article X changes
- A walk-through of Article X as amended through the 2024 General Convention's adoption of Resolution 2024-A072
- A walk-through of the Article X amendments proposed in Resolutions 2024-A224 and 2024-B008
- Discussion of the use of "memorialize" in Article X and in Canon II.4.3.a
- Examining possible clean-up amendments throughout Article X and related canons
- Identifying categories ("buckets") of liturgy changes based on the authority required to make the changes, e.g., "supplemental," "alternative," "trial use."
- The lost opportunity of not having a comparable working group following the 2022 General Convention

The group and the Presiding Bishop discussed these topics at length. Tom Little mentioned that the Working Group has members who are also members of the SCLM and the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons (SCSGCC), presenting opportunities for collaboration on this work which has overlaps in some respects with the work of those bodies. There was consensus that outreach to the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies will be desirable – in addition to posting the Working Group's Minutes publicly. The members thanked the Presiding Bishop for his guidance and in turn he expressed support for the group's direction and confidence in its ability to deliver a good report and recommendations.

After the Presiding Bishop and his team departed, the meeting returned to a discussion of Canon II.3.

The meeting adjourned for the day at 5:50 p.m.

Tuesday, May 6, 2025

The meeting resumed at 9:03 a.m. with the same attendees present with a review of the Agenda, including a visit later in the day from House of Deputies President Julia Ayala Harris. Wayne gave thanks that the first female Deputy in the House of Deputies, Elizabeth Dyer, was from Missouri.

The meeting returned to Canon II.3. Someone asked if all typographical inaccuracies (e.g., "Bishop" vs. "bishop") really needed to be corrected by the General Convention – or whether some, or all, could be corrected by the Custodian, perhaps with the concurrence of SCLM? See. Canon I.1.2.n.2.x.What should SCLM's role and authority be in this context?

II.3.6. Subdivision e.2. was discussed; should the copyright on additions to the BCP be relinquished once the additions are given final approval by the General Convention? Also, should this canon specify SCLM's role in this phase of BCP revision? There was consensus that a subcommittee should research the history of the copyright policy.

Canon II.4.

The members reviewed and discussed Canon II.4.

There was consensus that the group should study the SCLM canon, but after other priorities are completed. Likewise, the group will try to review mentions of Article X language in all other canons; the Custodian of the Constitution and Canons, Sally Johnson, may be able to help with this review. The "bucket list" was discussed briefly.

After the lunch break, HOD President Julia Ayala Harris joined the Working Group. The Chair welcomed the President and shared the gist of the work so far, including:

- The history of Article X changes
- A walk-through of Article X as amended through the 2024 General Convention's adoption of Resolution 2024-A072
- A walk-through of the Article X amendments proposed in Resolutions 2024-A224 and 2024-B008
- Discussion of the use of "memorialize" in Article X and in Canon II.4.3.a
- The copyright discussion
- The translation discussion
- Examining possible clean-up amendments throughout Article X and related canons
- Identifying categories ("buckets") of liturgy changes based on the authority required to make the changes, e.g., "supplemental," "alternative," "trial use."
- The lost opportunity of not having a comparable working group following the 2022 General Convention
- The need for outreach to stakeholders and the wider Church

The President thanked the group for agreeing to serve and expressed hope that the Church has moved away from some persistent areas of conflict – and that this will enable the Working Group's recommendations to be supported at the 2027 General Convention. She recommended that for its outreach efforts the group develop a detailed presentation and one that is more accessible, considering the turnover of Deputies between General Conventions. Julia mentioned there will be updated legislative process software in place by the next General Convention, to improve management of Resolutions as they wind through the legislative process. The group discussed the pros and cons of using a special legislative committee to handle the Working Group's proposals.

After the President departed, the group came to agreement on the subcommittees needed to complete its work:

Communications: Cynthia Black and Jennifer Reddall
Copyrights: Airié Stuart and Christopher Hayes
Article X and Canon 2.4: Neil Alexander, Neil Raman, Ruth Meyers, Joan Geiszler-Ludlum, Jeffrey Lee
Canon II.3 and SCLM: Jennifer Reddall, Wayne Smith, Tom Little, Scott Madison

Ruth Meyers will draft a piece on the history of recent Title X changes, while Wayne Smith will serve as Chief Coherence Officer.

It was agreed that members should pencil into their calendars an in-person meeting on October 1-3, 2025, at the Maritime Conference Center in Maryland. The group will have remote meetings at 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time on June 10, July 8, August 12 and September 9. The subcommittees will meet as and when needed.

The full group meeting recessed for the day at 2:15 p.m. for the subcommittees to meet for the rest of the afternoon.

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

The Chair convened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.; Bishop Smith had departed while the other attendees were present. Ruth Meyers led Morning Prayer.

The subcommittees then reported out.

Copyright Subcommittee. Christopher reported that he has drafted a memorandum on the copyright background and the issues raised in the discussions of the last two days. The 1967 text of Canon II.3 as discussed in White & Dykman speaks only of revisions, with the copyright in place only until the General Convention gives final approval. It is implicit but not stated that this applies only to the English language edition; the copyright remains in place for the other languages. The Journal does not explain why this is so. Resolutions 2024-D020 and 2024-D045 established the Task Force on Artificial Intelligence and Intellectual Property, and we can ask it for assistance with these issues.

The question the group discussed was, 'Should the Church change its policy and copyright the BCP? See Canons II.3.6.e and II.4.2.f. Ruth Meyers said that the Church Archives office has lots of materials on the origin of the office of the Custodian. Joan Geiszler-Ludlum said that in the past she researched the Annotated Constitution and Canons ("White & Dykman") on this history and will summarize her findings and post them to the Teams site. Ruth also will post a summary of her White & Dykman research in this area.

Canon II.3 Subcommittee. Jennifer Reddall reported that this subcommittee prepared a revised draft of this canon which she has posted. She walked through the draft with these highlights

II.3.2. The draft would strike the pagination language. It would use the phrase "official Episcopal Church liturgical website."

II.3.3. The draft proposes to add "consent of SCLM." This consent would be documented in the Minutes of the SCLM meeting where the consent was approved.

II.3.4. The members discuss to whom the document should be sent. The inclination is to delete the 'send to all Bishops' language. In II.3.3 the recipients are the Secretaries of both Houses,

while in II.3.4 the recipient is the Secretary of the General Convention. The consensus was to use the Secretary of the General Convention in both places.

Tom Little asked about the origins and history of the "in trust for the use thereof" language. It appears that the phrase entered the text at the 1892 General Convention.

Jennifer suggested adding the phrase "to The Episcopal Church's official publisher," which received favorable reaction if the language from Canon I.1.1.2.x is used.

II.3.5. There are no changes proposed here, yet. Ruth said that the purpose of this canon is important.

II.3.6. This change would mean that a trial use could run concurrently with the triennium following a first reading, i.e., should not have to precede the first reading. Christopher suggested that the General Convention should be specific when acting on a first reading. Neil Raman stressed the importance of this section being very clear and unambiguous. Jennifer then explained some clean-up changes in the draft. Ruth recommended adding "Commemorations" after "Calendar" She also mentioned retaining the "*provided, however*" caveat (see Canon II.3.6.f., line 3), and Canon II.3.6.g (although that piece seems to be covered now in Canon V.2.1.

II.3.7. The draft proposes to make it clear that a Custodian is eligible for a reappointment to a subsequent term or terms.

II.3.8. This text dates to the late 19th Century 'high church, low church' tussle. We may leave this alone.

More copyright discussion ensued. Airié will seek advice from CPC's copyright counsel. Neil Alexander mentioned that much in our Hymnal is not copyrighted.

Tom Little departed at 10:35 a.m.

After the break, Cynthia Black reported for the Strategy subcommittee. They will prepare post-meeting communications to stakeholders and the wider General Convention.

Jennifer Reddell reviewed a draft revision of Canon II.4. The revision will define the categories or "buckets" of liturgies; proposed changing "retired" to "resigned" bishops, consistent with Article I of the Constitution; limit the requirement of pre-General Convention translation to English and Spanish only - as required for the Blue Book reports; delete references to the public domain, which was added effective 1/1/2025; and change "shall" to "must".

The proposal further recommended removing "memorialized" in Canon II.3. Some members commented that some in the Church wish to make amending the BCP more difficult, reflecting caution about SCLM and the established process. This is reflected in the passage of the 2018 resolution that established TFLPBR to bypass SCLM.

Discussion of the fate of resolution 2024-A224 amendments to Art. X. Consideration was given to amending A224 and represent for first reading or recommend rejecting A224 and presenting a new version of Art. X. The vague terms of A224 were pointed out as problematic. The members preferred the second approach.

Discussion of the fate of resolution 2024-A224 amendments to Art. X. Consideration was given to amending A072 and represent for first reading or recommend rejecting A072 and presenting a new version of Art. X. The vague terms of A072 were pointed out as problematic. The members preferred the second approach.

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas A. Little, Secretary

Working Group to Review Canons and Implement Changes Related to Revised Article X of the Constitution

May 4–7, 2025
Hilton St. Louis Airport, St. Louis, Missouri

Proposed Agenda

The convener asks the Working Group to approve this agenda. Times for worship, lunch, and dinner are firm. Other agenda items may be adjusted as necessary. Scheduled business may be laid aside if either of the Presiding Officers wishes to meet with the Working Group. All times are local Central Daylight Time.

Sunday, May 4

3:00pm Hotel check-in begins
6:00–7:00pm Dinner Gateway Ballroom

Monday, May 5—Meeting Day 1

6:00–8:30am Breakfast World's Away (hotel lobby restaurant)
8:30–9:00am Welcome and Holy Eucharist Blanchette I & II
9:00–12:00pm First session (*to include at least one short break*) St. Charles
- Introductions
- Overview of the Working Group's mandate (*reprinted below*)
- Review Article X as amended by resolution 2024A072
- Review first reading of further amendments in resolution 2024A224
- Review Canon II.3.6.a and II.4 as amended by resolution 2024B008)

12:00–1:00 pm Lunch Gateway Ballroom
1:15–6:00pm Second session (to at least two short breaks) St. Charles
- Nomination and election of officers: Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary
- Identify the major questions implicated by Article X as amended
- Identify canons relevant to implementing Article X as amended

6:00–7:00pm Group dinner Gateway Ballroom
7:00pm *Optional committee time after dinner, if needed* St. Charles

Tuesday, May 6—Meeting Day 2

6:00–8:30am Breakfast World's Away (hotel lobby restaurant)
8:30–9:00am Morning Prayer and Plenary Discussion Blanchette I & II
9:00–12:00pm Third session (*to include at least one short break*) St. Charles
- Brainstorming about legislation
- Potential: Appoint drafting groups for potential legislation

12:00–1:00 pm Lunch Gateway Ballroom
1:00–6:00pm Fourth session (*to include at least two short breaks*) St. Charles
- Continued work on potential legislation

6:00–7:00pm Group dinner Gateway Ballroom
7:00pm *Optional committee time after dinner, if needed* St. Charles

Wednesday, May 7—Meeting Day 3

6:00–9:00am Breakfast World's Away (hotel lobby restaurant)
9:00–12:00pm Fifth session St. Charles
Morning Prayer (*in our committee room, St. Charles*)
Assignments for further work
12:00pm **Adjourn**
12:00pm Check out
12:00–1:00 pm Lunch Gateway Ballroom
1:00pm Departures

Working Group Mandate

Resolution 2024A223

"*Resolved*, That the General Convention direct the President of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop to set aside the composition and charge of the working group defined in the resolution adopted by the 81st General Convention numbered A072 and instead appoint a working group of nine (9) members to include the Custodian of The Book of Common Prayer, three (3) members designated by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (one bishop, one priest or deacon, and one lay) and two (2) bishops, two (2) priests or deacons, and two (2) lay members, including at least one member of the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons, designated by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, plus an ex-officio representative from Church Publishing Corporation, to:

a. Review the Canons and any questions relevant to the implementation of the revised Article X; and

b. Propose as needed legislation for consideration at the 82nd General Convention.

and be it further

"*Resolved*, That an allocation of $30,000 be made to support the work of the working group."

Addendum I to Minutes of May 3-5, 2025, Meetings

Background:
Revisions to Article X, "Of the Book of Common Prayer," and Canons Title II, "Worship"

General Convention Resolutions on Prayer Book Revision

Over the past three decades, General Convention has taken up the question of revision of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer several times:

- Resolution 1994-A052, proposed by the Executive Council Committee on the Status of Women, directed the Standing Liturgical Commission "to prepare a rationale and a pastorally sensitive plan" for the next revision of the BCP;
- Resolution 1997-C021, proposed by the Diocese of Newark, directed the Standing Liturgical Commission "to prepare a plan for liturgical revision and enrichment of the common worship of this Church";
- Resolution 2000-A066, proposed by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, received the commission's report in response to 1997-C021 and directed the commission to "implement a plan for liturgical renewal and enrichment," beginning with the collection of data;
- Resolution 2006-D061 (which was rejected), proposed by Deputy Ernesto Medina from the Diocese of Los Angeles, would have directed the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to develop a pastoral plan for the next revision of the BCP.

While comprehensive revision of the BCP has not moved forward, General Convention has revised the 1979 BCP numerous times with the addition of commemorations to the Calendar (BCP pp. 19-30), as well as the adoption of the Revised Common Lectionary (Resolution 2006-A077) and subsequent resolutions that incorporated the Revised Common Lectionary readings in the Proper Liturgies for Special Days (BCP pp. 263-295; Resolutions 2012-A059 and 2015-A067).

Yet, the General Convention has rejected other proposals to revise specific texts in the 1979 BCP. For example:

- Regarding the *filioque* clause ("and the Son" in the third paragraph of the Nicene Creed), in response to a recommendation of the joint meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Consultative Council (Capetown, 1993), Resolution 1994-A028 called for removal of the clause at the next revision of the BCP;
- Resolution 2003-D003, proposing a revision of the Catechism to quote Micah 6:8 correctly ("do justice and love mercy," correcting "love justice and do mercy," BCP p. 847), was referred to the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, which did not take action to implement the proposal;
- Resolution 2015-C015, proposing an additional question for the Baptismal Covenant concerning responsibility to care for creation, was referred to the Standing

Commission on Liturgy and Music, which took no action on it on the grounds that comprehensive revision of the BCP should take precedence over piecemeal revision.

At the 2015 General Convention, in response to requests for Prayer Book revision within the General Convention legislative committees on Prayer Book, Liturgy, and Music, as well as testimony before those committees and debate on the floor, the legislative committees proposed Resolution 2015-A169, directing the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) to prepare a "plan for the comprehensive revision" of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. This resolution called for the plan to "take into consideration the use of current technologies which provide access to a broad range of liturgical resources."

During the 2015-2018 triennium, the SCLM extensively discussed and researched aspects of Prayer Book revision, leading to two options presented in their report to the 2018 General Convention:

1. A comprehensive revision process leading to final adoption of a new Book of Common Prayer in 2030;
2. Fuller, intentional engagement with the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

Authorizing Additional Liturgical Texts

Since 1979, General Convention has authorized several additional liturgical texts, including *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, *The Book of Occasional Services*, and several volumes in the *Enriching Our Worship* series. Yet the Constitution and Canons were largely silent about authorization of liturgies other than the BCP.

Prompted by the development and authorization of supplemental inclusive/ expansive-language liturgies, several attempts were made to amend Article X of the Constitution to enable General Convention to authorize texts other than the BCP: 1991-A121, rejected on second reading in 1994-A016; 2000-A132, rejected on second reading in 2003-A108; 2015-A066, rejected on first reading.

In the 2015-2018 triennium, the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music collaborated with the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution, and Canons to develop a process for General Convention to authorize liturgies apart from the BCP. The SCLM then proposed an amendment to Article X allowing General Convention to authorize "alternative and additional liturgies to supplement those provided in the Book of Common Prayer." This amendment was approved on first reading in Resolution 2018-A063, then adopted on second reading in Resolution 2022-A145.

Task Force on Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision

Taking up the SCLM proposals developed during 2015-2018, and after testimony and extensive debate in committee and in both the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops, in 2018 the General Convention adopted a substitute resolution (2018-A068) that created a Task Force on Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision. The resolution addressed both the desire for deeper engagement with the 1979 BCP and the call for BCP revision.

With regard to the 1979 BCP, the resolution "memorialized" the book and called the church to continue to engage the baptismal and eucharistic theology of the book.

With regard to Prayer Book revision, Resolution 2018-A068 directed the task force to propose to the next General Convention revisions to the Constitution and Canons that would "enable The Episcopal Church to be adaptive in its engagement of future generations of Episcopalians, multiplying, connecting, and disseminating new liturgies for mission." The resolution also set several parameters for liturgical revision, including consideration of "emerging technologies" that provide access to liturgical resources.

The task force proposed an amendment to Article X of the Constitution that defined the BCP as "those liturgical forms authorized by the General Convention as provided for in Section 2 of this Article," that is, approved on first reading at one convention and adopted without alteration at the next convention, the process that has been in place since the early 19th century. After substantial discussion in the House of Bishops, the bishops adopted an amended resolution, and the House of Deputies concurred. That amended text, adopted on second reading in 2024 (A072), is now Article X of the Constitution.

This revision of Article X reimagines the BCP as a collection of "liturgical forms and other texts," rather than a book that is printed. To make authorized liturgies available, the Task Force on Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision created a website, episcopalcommonprayer.org, which provides links to digital versions of every authorized liturgy, along with links to the Acts of Convention authorizing those liturgies. An amendment to the canons in 2022 makes the SCLM responsible for overseeing and maintaining this website (Canon I.1.2.n.2.x).

Recognizing that amending Article X would also require canonical changes, the Task Force recommended revisions to the Canons, to be taken up by General Convention should Article X be adopted on second reading. However, those suggested amendments were not included in the online report of the Task Force, and a working group that would have developed these amendments in the 2022-2024 triennium (Resolution 2022-A059) was not formed during that triennium.

The Rev. Dr. Ruth Meyers

Addendum II to Minutes of May 3-5, 2025, Meetings

Resolution 2024-A072, As Adopted (Second Reading)

Addendum III to Minutes of May 3-5, 2025, Meetings

Resolution 2024-A224, As Adopted (First Reading)

Addendum IV to Minutes of May 3-5, 2025, Meetings

Resolution 2024-B008, As Adopted