

ARCHIVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Members

Prof. Lawrence R. Hitt II, Chair	Colorado, VI	2024
Mr. Kent Anker, Chief Legal Officer	New York, II	2024
The Rev. Canon Dr. Michael Barlowe	California, VIII	2024
The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows	Indianapolis, V	2024
Dr. Heather Calloway	Indianapolis, V	2024
Canon Jane Cislucis, Acting Chief Operating Officer	Indianapolis, V	2024
Dr. Victor A. Feliberty-Ruberté	Michigan, V	2027
Ms. Whitney Hughes, Interim Director	Puerto Rico, II	2024
The Rev. W. Keith McCoy	New Jersey, II	2024
Ms. Margaret Porter, Vice-Chair	New Hampshire, I	2024
Mr. Russell Randle, Secretary	Virginia, III	2027
The Rt. Rev. Samuel Rodman	North Carolina, IV	2027
The Rt. Rev. Martha E. Stebbins	Montana, VI	2027
The Rev. Canon Dr. Gregory Straub	Easton, III	2027
The Rev. Rachel Taber-Hamilton	Olympia, VIII	2027

Changes in Membership

There were no changes in membership during the past triennium except for the appointment to the Committee of Canon Jane Cislucis, Acting Chief Operating Officer, by the Chair of the Executive Council.

Representation at General Convention

Multiple members of the 2019-2022 Board of Archives were present at the 2022 General Convention in Baltimore, Maryland, and current Committee members will attend the 2024 General Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, as either deputies, alternate deputies, or members of the House of Bishops .

Acknowledgements

The Rev. Canon Michael Barlowe; Chief Legal Officer Kent Anker; Acting Chief Operating Officer Canon. Jane Cislucis

Mandate

2022 - A154 Revised Canon I.5 Regarding The Archives of The Episcopal Church

Canon 5: Of the Archives of The Episcopal Church

Sec. 1. There shall be an Archives of The Episcopal Church, the purpose of which shall be to preserve by safekeeping, to arrange and to make available the records of the General Convention, Executive Council, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, and other important records and memorabilia of the life and work of the Church, and to carry out a program of records management, so as to further the historical dimension of the mission of the Church.

Sec. 2. For purposes of this Canon, records are defined as all fixed evidential information regardless of method, media, format or characteristics of the recording process, which have been created, received or gathered by the Church, its officers, agents or employees in pursuance of the legal, business and administrative function and the programmatic mission of the Church. Records include all original materials used to capture information, notwithstanding the place or conditions of creation, or the formality or informality of the characteristics of the record. The records and archives of the Church are not limited by the medium in which they are kept and include such formats as paper records, electronic records, printed records and publications, photo-reproduced images, and machine-readable tapes, film and disks.

Sec. 3. The Archives of The Episcopal Church shall be managed by the Archivist.

Sec. 4. After consultation with the Archives Advisory Committee, the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies in their respective roles as the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Council, shall jointly nominate and the Executive Council shall appoint the Archivist who shall serve at the pleasure of, and report and be accountable to the Chair of the Executive Council. If a vacancy should occur in that office, a successor shall be appointed in like manner.

Sec. 5.

a. There shall be an Archives Advisory Committee which shall consist of the Archivist, the Registrar, the Chief Legal Officer, the Historiographer, and between eight and twelve appointed persons, two or three of whom shall be Bishops, two or three of whom shall be Clergy, and four, five or six of whom shall be Lay Persons. All appointed Members of the Advisory Committee shall serve terms beginning upon the adjournment of the General Convention at which their appointments are confirmed and ending with the close of the second regular Convention thereafter.

b. Bishops shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, and other Clerical and all Lay Members shall be appointed by the President of the House of Deputies; after the initial appointments, all subsequent appointments shall be subject to the confirmation of General Convention. Consideration

shall be given to assure that membership includes persons who possess knowledge either of history or archival administration, or are persons skilled in disciplines pertinent to the resolutions of the concerns of the Archives. Positions of Members of the Committee which become vacant prior to the normal expiration of such Members' terms shall be filled by appointment by the Presiding Bishop or by the President of the House of Deputies, as appropriate. Such appointments shall be for the remaining unexpired portion of such Members' terms, and if a regular meeting of the General Convention intervenes, appointments for terms extending beyond such meeting shall be subject to confirmation of the General Convention. Because of the special skills and knowledge needed by this Committee, a Member shall be eligible for appointment for two successive terms, after which the Member may not be reappointed prior to the next meeting of the General Convention following the meeting at the close of which the second successive term of the Member expired. Members appointed to fill vacancies in unexpired terms shall not thereby be disqualified from appointment to two full terms immediately thereafter.

c. The Archives Advisory Committee shall provide advice regarding identification, collection, preservation, management, use, and accessibility of records, and establishment of best practices regarding the same to the Archivist, the Archives, and the Executive Council.

d. The Archives Advisory Committee shall meet at least annually, or as requested by the Archivist or the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Council.

Summary of Work

Introduction / History / Organization of AAC

The 80th General Convention revised Canon I.5 to replace the Board of the Archives of The Episcopal Church with the Archives Advisory Committee (“AAC”). The AAC members were appointed in early 2023 by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council, who also appointed Lawrence R. Hitt II, longtime Chancellor of the Diocese of Colorado, as Chair; he and four other members previously served on the Board of Archives. His level of service to the Archives and the Church provides outstanding gifts and skills which will be immensely valuable to the upcoming work of the AAC and the Archives. The *ex officio* members include the Archivist, the Registrar, the Chief Legal Officer, and the Historiographer.

The first year of this new committee began with organizational zoom meetings and the creation of an initial Organizing Subcommittee (which evolved into a Steering Committee), that quickly focused on significant matters within the purview of the AAC as established by the Canons. The members are to be commended not only for quickly organizing and identifying their work as a new interim body of the Church, but for articulating new Vision, Purpose, and Mission Statements.

The Steering Committee was especially helpful with respect to setting priorities for the AAC’s attention. Special thanks to Russell Randle, Keith McCoy, Margaret Porter, Kent Anker, and Larry Hitt for serving on this group.

The Steering Committee also took the first steps in evaluating the current needs of the Archives and its staff, and in addressing and clarifying the role of the AAC with respect to two top priorities: 1) identifying a permanent home for the Archives, and 2) hiring the next Canonical Archivist. The Steering Committee initiated a conversation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council regarding how the AAC could play a meaningful role in both priorities, as we understood the intent and responsibilities of the AAC as set forth in the revised Canon.

The AAC met in May and August via Zoom and in person over two days in Baltimore in October. The committee is very grateful not only for the preparation and leadership of the Steering Committee, but also for the willingness of Margaret Porter to serve as Vice Chair and Russell Randle to serve as Secretary.

In addition to the organizational and visioning work, the AAC has asked Whitney Hughes, the Interim Director, and the Archives staff to identify the more significant parts of their work for an intentional review by the AAC-- as called for in the Canon – and we anticipate that a small group of committee members will be meeting with the staff in Austin to further this important piece of our canonical duty.

The Archives of the Episcopal Church and its Contributions to the Church

Established by General Convention in 1835, the Archives of the Episcopal Church houses and maintains the records of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, the General Convention and its interim bodies, Episcopal Organizations, and the papers of lay and clerical leaders of the Church. In addition to its historic holdings and operations in Austin, the Archives' New York repository acts as The Episcopal Church's contemporary records center.

The Archives' Research Office provides their services to Church leadership, governing bodies, and scholars. The Archives staff consults with dioceses and parishes around records and archives management issues including the retention, preservation, and access of paper and electronic records.

Within the DFMS, the Archives staff work with leadership and staff to establish and support information governance and records retention best practices. They work with Church attorneys on matters of Title IV, property litigation, and interpretation and application of the canons.

At General Convention, the staff provide onsite support to the Secretariat and act as the corporate memory of the Church. Each proposed resolution is researched to determine if the topic has been addressed previously by the Church and what, if any, action was taken. This is done through supplying research reports to legislative committees prior to and during their deliberative gatherings. They further support the Presiding Officers, Parliamentarians, and legislative committees with historic research onsite.

As a keeper of the institutional memory of The Episcopal Church, the Archives provides for the continuity of business in a revolving and evolving cycle of Church leadership, thus providing a reliable conduit to the past that lifts up the current mission and ministry and informs the future vision of the Church.

Development and Articulation of Mission Statements

The AAC, at its Baltimore meeting, spent a half day identifying and articulating its purpose and vision, and considering the duties and responsibilities set forth in the *revised* Canon. Keith McCoy and Dr. Victor A. Feliberty-Ruberté facilitated the discussion, which resulted in the following Purpose, Mission, and Vision Statements.

Purpose: The Archives Advisory Committee advises the Archivist, the Archives, and the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church in preserving the rich tapestry of our faith's history, safeguarding the memory and legacy of our saints, and ensuring that the truth of the Gospel and our traditions are faithfully recorded for future generations .

Mission: Our mission is to advocate for the Archives and to share best practices as it acquires, curates, protects, and makes accessible records that honor our sacred past, enabling the

Archives to provide resources which educate, advise, and equip Episcopal communities for their profound journey of faith.

Vision: Our vision is to enable the Archives to achieve the highest standards of integrity, professional record-keeping, and responsiveness, ensuring the accuracy of the institutional memory of The Episcopal Church, and that the history of our faith remains alive, accessible, and central to our identity and mission .

The Role of the AAC in Hiring a Canonical Archivist

Under the revised canon adopted in 2022, the Archives Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the Executive Council, the Chief Legal Officer, the Historiographer, the Registrar, and the Archives staff, expects to take the lead in preparing the job description for the Canonical Archivist and Director of the Archives. The Advisory Committee is prepared to assist in publicizing the position among professional archivists, to assist in screening candidate resumes, to prepare questions for use in interviews with qualified candidates, and to assist in interviews with final candidates and to offer feedback about the strength of their qualifications. The Advisory Committee will make special effort to welcome and assist the new Archivist in making a successful start in that position and will provide background and history to assist in that person's success.

The Work of the Interim Archivist and the staff of The Archives of the Episcopal Church

The Archives Advisory Committee wholeheartedly and gratefully commends the entire staff of The Archives of the Episcopal Church for their ability to carry out their responsibilities in a persistent climate of disruption and uncertainty. In 2021, while much of The Episcopal Church was still working remotely due to the Pandemic, the Archives relocated the historic collection and operations from the campus of the Seminary of the Southwest to an interim location in Austin, without noticeable interruption of service to the Church .

In March 2022, Canonical Archivist Mark Duffy retired after thirty years of service .

Routine essential tasks that continue to be admirably performed include: responding to research requests, assisting visiting researchers, maintaining the Archives' website and Digital Archives, supporting Title IV, litigation, and other in-house legal requests, supporting the work of Interim Bodies around General Convention resolutions, and acquiring and preserving records in a variety of formats. The staff steadfastly engage in this monumental work at a time when the Church continues to discern the future location of a permanent Archives.

At the 80th General Convention the Archives staff provided support remotely with the usual preparation and intensive research services necessitated by that event. The Archives staff will return to onsite support at the 81st General Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

The leadership of Whitney Hughes, Interim Director, and David Hales, Deputy for Administration, ensures that our Archives staff maintain this exemplary service. The Episcopal Church, as well as the Archives Advisory Committee, are the beneficiaries of their achievements.

Critical Need for a Permanent Home for the Archives

The Archives Advisory Committee cannot emphasize enough the compelling and critical need for The Episcopal Church to establish a permanent home for the Archives as soon as possible.

As noted in the attached report from the Archives Interim Director the current location in an industrial warehouse building in Austin “does not meet the Archives’ needs” and is not capable of holding the entire collection, which is currently housed among 4 locations. The acquisition of materials is always conducted with an eye towards available space and resources; as once a donation is accepted, the Archivist has a professional duty to uphold the trust placed in us to provide for the permanent housing, preservation, safekeeping, and access to the materials. For the first time, the Archives was unsuccessful in a significant acquisition opportunity due to its uncertain future and physical space. It continues to be of the utmost importance that The Episcopal Church find a permanent home for the Archives that will allow it to fulfill its mission and continue to connect the Church’s history with its ongoing ministries.”

Not only is a permanent home essential for the Archives to continue its extensive work for the General Convention and the Church’s ministries, the cost of the temporary facility in Austin will soon be prohibitively expensive. The Archives Advisory Committee strongly urges, as a matter of the highest priority, the Church to commit to building an appropriate permanent home for the Archives .