

Annual Meeting Checklist for Congregations

According to the Canons of the Diocese of Fond du Lac and the Episcopal Church

This document is provided to give clergy and members of congregations a simple summary of the standards of the Church related to each congregation's Annual Meeting. Specific canons should be consulted as needed.

-Reference: National Canons Title I, Canon 14 and Title I, Canon 17; Diocesan Canons 5.4, 5.6, 6.4

Baptized Member

= persons who have **received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism** with water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, whether in this Church or in another Christian Church,
+ and whose **Baptisms have been duly recorded** in this Church, are members thereof.

Communicant

= Baptized Member
+ **received Holy Communion** in this Church at least three times during the preceding year.

Adult Member / Communicant

= Baptized Member / Communicant
+ at least **sixteen years of age**

Communicant in Good Standing

= Communicant
+ for the previous year have been faithful in **corporate worship**, unless for good cause prevented,
+ and have been faithful in **working, praying, and giving** for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

Before the annual meeting

- A list of voters (adult communicants in good standing) kept under the direction of the Rector, or Wardens. It is closed against further entries two weeks before. A voter can only hold office or vote in one congregation.
- The meeting is to be announced two weeks and one week prior at the Sunday service.

At the annual meeting

- Rector/Vicar presides, unless unable, then one of the Wardens presides.
- Conduct usual business of the congregation.

For PARISH congregations:

- Elect, by ballot, officers for the ensuing year
 - ___ a **Senior Warden:**
 - + Adult communicant in good standing in the congregation for not less than two calendar years prior to election.
 - + Hold office until successor chosen.
 - + Can't be elected for more than three consecutive one-year terms. If a Junior Warden is elected Senior Warden then prior service as Junior Warden is not be considered. Wardens appointed to interim office are eligible for election to the same office without regard to the interim period served.
 - ___ a **Junior Warden:**
 - + Adult communicant in good standing in the congregation for not less than two calendar years prior to election.
 - + Hold office until successor chosen.
 - + Can't be elected for more than three consecutive one-year terms. If a Junior Warden is elected Senior Warden then prior service as Junior Warden is not be considered. Wardens appointed to interim office are eligible for election to the same office without regard to the interim period served.
 - ___ **Vestry members:**
 - + 3-12 positions, adult communicants in good standing.
 - + Hold office until successor chosen.
 - + Three-year term, then wait at least one year before running again. Prior service as a Vestry Member shall not preclude election as a Warden immediately after vestry term. Vestry Members appointed to interim office are eligible for election to the same office without regard to the interim period served.
 - ___ **Lay Delegates** to the Diocesan Convention and same number Alternates,
 - + Communicants in good standing.
 - + Hold office until successor chosen.
 - + By resolution of the annual meeting can be selected by Vestry or Rector
- Absentee ballots not allowed.¹
- Any questions about an election are referred to the Bishop, whose decision shall be final.

¹ While not specifically in the Canons, this was the ruling in a Chancellor's Opinion in 2001. It is a fundamental principle of parliamentary law that the right to vote is limited to the members of an organization who are actually present at the time the vote is taken in a legal meeting. The reasons are 1) the votes of those present could be affected by discussion (absentees wouldn't hear such); 2) There may be repeated balloting (those absent would be unable to adjust their votes); 3) The question considered may change by amendment or additional nominees added to a ballot. Citations: National Canon Title I, Canon 13 Sec. 1.; Wis. Stats. Sec. 187.04; Diocesan Constitution Article XV and Article XI; Diocesan Canon 5.4(3), 5.4(5), and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised p. 408, 1. 31-p. 409 1. 15.

For MISSION congregations

- Nominate for appointment to the Bishop (who may, but is not required, to appoint such nominees) by ballot, the following officers for the ensuing year;
 - ___ **Senior Warden**
 - + At least 18 years old
 - + Communicant in good standing in an Episcopal congregation at least two calendar years prior to election;²
 - ___ **Junior Warden**
 - + at least 18 years old
 - + communicant in good standing in an Episcopal congregation for at least two calendar years prior to election;
 - ___ **Vestry members**
 - + 3-12 positions,
 - + adult communicants in good standing
- Elect Lay Delegates to the Diocesan Convention and same number of duly qualified Alternates.
 - + Communicants in good standing.
 - + Hold office until successor chosen.
 - + By resolution of the annual meeting can be selected by Vestry or Rector

After the Meeting

- If there is a vacancy before the next election, the Wardens and Vestry appoint a person to fill the vacancy.
- The Vestry elects a Clerk: takes minutes of meetings, attests to all documents, keeps list of voters.
- The Vestry elects a Treasurer responsible for the collection, reception, and disbursement of funds, accounting of the same to the Annual Meeting, and as the Vestry may require.

What Wardens Do

- care for and protect the church buildings, kept in good and reverent repair and sufficiently insured;
- working with the Rector or Vicar, see that all things needed for the orderly worship of God and for the proper administration of the Sacraments are provided;
- provide a proper book in which shall be recorded names of all persons baptized, married, and buried, together with a list of the persons confirmed and those who are communicants of the Church, with the date of every event recorded and under the signature of the person recording;
- presented full and accurate statement all moneys received and expended during the preceding fiscal year
- When there is no priest they
 - procure suitable supply clergy for the continuance of services;
 - preside at the meetings of Vestry;
 - take care that the Church building be kept from all secular and other uses not authorized by the Canons;
 - make and certify all entries in the Parish Register required by the Canons;
 - complete the annual Parochial Report

Expectations of Delegates to Convention

- Prepare by reading all materials provided to them;
- Share information, both before and after, with the congregation through announcements, conversations and newsletter articles;
- Seek input on resolutions;
- Attend a Pre-Convention meeting;
- Attend the entire Convention from Friday afternoon through Saturday afternoon.

The specific Agenda of the Annual Meeting is according to local custom, but often includes:

- Review and acceptance of the record or minutes of the previous annual meeting;
- Reports from clergy and lay leaders on the mission and ministry activities of the congregation over the past year;
- Presentation of a budget for the congregation. The budget may be accepted or adopted by the annual meeting, although most often the Vestry as the “board” of the congregation formally adopts a budget.
- Presentations or special recognition for members.

² Wardens and Vestry members may be from other congregations specifically at the formation of an Unorganized Mission. The standard that has been followed for Organized Missions is that the Wardens and Vestry be from that congregation.