

Explanation of Bylaw Changes (2018)

At our annual meeting on Sunday, January 27th at 10 am, parishioners will vote on the following revisions to the bylaws. Copies of the proposed changes to the current bylaws are available online at <https://washingtonparish.org/about-us/document-library/> and in the literature rack in the parish hallway. If you have concerns or questions, please ask the Rector or Senior Warden about them in advance. At the annual meeting, we will vote on the changes together unless a request from the floor is made to consider them Article by Article. All changes are intended to improve the functioning of the parish; if there is significant concern about a proposed change, it is fine if it is recommended for further study. Upon adoption, the new provisions are immediately effective.

1. **I.1 Add February as an option for the annual meeting.** Requiring the annual meeting to be in January forces a tight timeline for the formation and review of end of year financial reports. Given the time it takes to get these reports and the Martin Luther King holiday weekend, there is typically only one Sunday to have the meeting. Adding February as an option allows greater flexibility. This change would not affect consideration of the budget as the Vestry approves the annual budget and then presents it at the annual meeting.
2. **IV.6 Change to appointment process of Vestry nominating committee.** The amendment would allow the Executive Committee to serve as the Nominating Committee if the Vestry decides not to appoint a nominating committee or fails to appoint one by December 15th.
3. **IV.7 Provide the option of voting by acclamation for new Vestry members.** This change would allow for voting by acclamation after the floor has closed to nominations if the number of candidates matches the number of vacancies on the Vestry. Written ballots will continue to be prepared for every annual meeting including all candidates and providing space in case additional nominations are made from the floor.
4. **V.1 Broadening the ability to cancel Vestry meetings.** Occasionally there are not enough agenda items to warrant a Vestry meeting; no one appreciates coming to a meeting without substantive content. Under this amendment, the Executive Committee would make the decision to cancel a meeting but would not be able to cancel two months in a row or more than three months of a calendar year. The current provision remains that two Vestry members can request a Vestry meeting be held, thus providing a way for Vestry members to respond if they feel meetings are cancelled inappropriately.
5. **V.7 Added Section: Electronic Meetings.** Our bylaws do not provide any instructions on electronic meetings (phone conference calls or video conference calls). This addition to the bylaw reflects the pertinent language of Canon 47 of Title 9 of the Episcopal Church which requires that electronic meetings must provide access for everyone to speak to everyone else. Any electronic meeting would be governed by those provisions of our bylaws regarding Vestry meetings (three days notice, minutes must be taken, quorum

present for votes). While we do not expect to use these methods to conduct church business and discernment often, it is prudent to have them available.

6. **VII.2 Placement of List of Duties of Officers of the Vestry.** The list of duties of Vestry officers is not generally relevant to the business conducted at annual parish meetings. Removing this requirement would shorten the length of the annual report.
7. **VII.4 Responsibility for the placement and preservation of Vestry minutes.** This addition makes explicit the responsibility of the Clerk to ensure that a paper copy of the current Vestry minutes is kept in the church office and in the parish archives.
8. **Grammatical Edits.** Various spelling and typing mistakes have been corrected throughout the document. These have been highlighted in red in the proposed bylaws for ease of review.