

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CANON 1.4**  
**Election of Delegates to General and Provincial Synods**

1. The prescribed number of clerical and lay delegates to General Synod shall be elected at the session of the Diocesan Synod held in the year preceding the year in which the General Synod is to be convened. (as amended, 1989)
2. The prescribed number of clerical and lay delegates to Provincial Synod shall, so far as it possible to do so, be elected at the session of the Diocesan Synod immediately preceding each meeting of the Provincial Synod. (as amended, 1989)
3. The clerical delegates shall be elected by the order of clergy at the Diocesan Synod and the lay delegates shall be elected by the order of laity, at the Diocesan Synod, provided that no person shall be eligible for election by an order unless that person is a member of such order and a member of the session of Diocesan Synod when the voting is held. (as amended, 1989)
4. Those of each order thus elected having the highest number of votes shall be the delegates to such Synods; and a similar number of those of each order whose names shall be next on the ballot, having the next highest number of votes, shall be substitute delegates to attend the said Synods whenever from sickness or other cause, any of the first elected delegates shall be unable to attend.
5. (1) A Nominations Committee for Provincial and General Synod delegates will be appointed by the Synod Council to solicit nominations from regional councils and to prepare the ballot for the Diocesan Synod. Regulations concerning the securing of names for the ballot will be determined by the Nominations Committee and approved by the Synod Council. (amended, 1995)  
(2) ~~Ballots presented to the Diocesan Synod for the elections of delegates to Provincial and General Synods for each order shall include an equal number of female and male nominees.~~  
(23) Nothing in subsection (1) of this section shall be deemed to prohibit nominations from the floor of the Diocesan Synod, provided that any such nomination is moved and seconded and the nominee assents to being nominated.  
(34) Members of the Diocesan Synod shall indicate a preference for the prescribed number of delegates to each of the General and Provincial Synods from those nominated pursuant to subsection (1) and (2) of this section, provided that no ballot shall be counted that does not contain at least one preference from each of the male and female genders. (new, 1989)
6. In publishing or printing the lists of the delegates to the General and Provincial Synods, the names of the clerical and lay shall be printed in the order of their election. (new, 1989)
7. No person shall be eligible for election to a General or Provincial Synod if that election would result in that person serving a fourth consecutive term as delegate at such Synod, ~~provided that this section shall not be interpreted to have retroactive application to any delegate elected to any session of Provincial Synod prior to 1991 or to any delegate elected to any session of General Synod prior to 1992, and further provided that this section shall not apply to any person who holds office as Prolocutor or Deputy Prolocutor of either General Synod or Provincial Synod or Vice-Chancellor of General Synod.~~ (new, 1989)

### **Rationale**

Our diocese has long strived to draw the circle wider still and to be on the leading edge of inclusivity in the Canadian Church. The last changes to this canon, made over 20 years ago, sought to achieve this aspiration with regards to the inclusion of women in governance roles. Yet since that time much has changed with regards to our understanding of gender. Our societal understanding of gender identity has grown beyond a binary approach whereby a person would be considered either male or female. A person's gender identity may be as a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. Diocesan programs now reflect this understanding by asking participants their preferred gender identity, where necessary, rather than asking them to check a male/female box. This amendment updates Canon 1.4 by providing an anti-oppressive approach to gender with regards to our provincial and general synod elections.

At the same time, gender diversity is but one of the many forms of diversity we may wish to be represented in our General and Provincial Synod delegations. In fact, the most recent provincial and general synod elections have demonstrated that more people identifying as female have been nominated, and that people identifying as male have then had to be recruited to run in order to comply with the gender balance provision of the canon. This is problematic, not the least of which is because the pool of candidates is diluted by those less than keen to serve, but being persuaded to do so for the sake of canonical compliance.

The need for diversity in our governance structures remains an important value for our diocese. It is incumbent upon the nominations committee, as mandated by Synod Council, to ensure that diverse representation is sought out as an essential part of diocesan nomination processes.

Housekeeping amendments also clean up language in sections 5(1) and 7.

The Secretary of Synod and diocesan Chancellor have been consulted on these proposed amendments.