

# GUIDELINES

## Operation of Local Preserved Historic Church Committees Under the Jurisdiction of the Historic Properties Commission Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina

### ***Purpose***

These guidelines are intended to assist the members of local Preserved Historic Church committees in their work by clarifying the responsibilities and authority given to them under diocesan Canon 45, "Historic Properties." The committees shall be governed in their operation by the language of Canon 45, as amended from time to time, and by these guidelines, which interpret the intent of the canon as well as provide guidance in matters not specifically addressed therein. The Historic Properties Commission was given authority, by amendment of Canon 45 at the 2012 Diocesan Convention, to establish guidelines for operation of the local committees. These guidelines are subject to amendment by the Commission, as needed.

### **1. Role of the Local Committee** (as defined in Canon 45):

- a. The local historic church committee is charged with maintaining and, if necessary, restoring the preserved historic church for which it has oversight.
- b. In co-operation with a designated member of the clergy, the local historic church committee is required to conduct Episcopal worship services at least once annually at the preserved historic church.

### **2. Committee Membership**

- a. Members should be either associated with the church, its community, or neighboring parishes, or able to provide assistance with historic preservation and restoration, finance, communications, etc.
- b. Committees should have a minimum of 5 members plus an appointed member of the Episcopal clergy.
- c. One member will serve as chair.
- d. Members are appointed annually by the Bishop at the recommendation of the Historic Properties Commission chair. They serve one-year terms.
- e. The local committee chair will notify the chair of the Historic Properties Commission when there are vacancies in the local committee membership and make recommendations for appointments.
- f. A majority of the committee members must be Episcopalians.
- g. There is no limit on the number of times a person may be re-appointed.
- h. Local committees may include more than one member of the clergy, but only one of them will be designated as having clerical oversight.

### **3. Meetings**

- a. The chair will call at least one business meeting per year.
- b. Due notice will be given of the meeting date, time, and location, so that all committee members are given a reasonable opportunity to attend.
- c. The chair will maintain up-to-date contact information for members.
- d. Minutes shall be kept for all meetings and shall be provided to the members in a timely manner.

#### 4. Election of officers

- a. Local committees will choose their own officers, with the exception that if a local committee is inactive for two years or longer the chair of the Historic Properties Commission is empowered to appoint new officers and, if needed, reorganize or reconstitute the local committee.
- b. Officers should include at minimum a chair and a treasurer; these two offices could be held by the same person on small committees.
- c. Committees may elect other categories of officers, as needed or desired on a local basis.
- d. The chair or treasurer may be re-appointed to additional terms.

#### 5. Representative to serve on Historic Properties Commission

- a. The chair or other member selected by the Committee will serve as the local committee's representative on the Commission.
- b. The representative is expected to attend the twice-annual meetings of the Historic Properties Commission, serving as liaison and advocate for the local committee.
- c. In the absence of the representative, another member designated by the Committee may attend Commission meetings and may vote.

#### 6. Duties of the designated member of clergy

- a. Canon 45 states that the Bishop will assign *a member of the clergy* (who, hence, may be either a priest or a deacon) to have "clerical oversight" of every preserved historic church.
- b. No religious services may be held at the church without the *prior* permission and knowledge of the assigned cleric.
- c. Any person acting as officiant or celebrant at a religious service at the preserved historic church must be approved *prior* to that service by the assigned member of clergy.
- d. The assigned clergy member of the Committee assists the committee in planning the annual service, in making decisions about other uses of the church, and as needed in communicating with the Diocese or the Commission.
- e. Canon 45 states that the assigned member of the clergy must reside "in a place convenient to the site." This should be interpreted simply to mean that the member of clergy should live close enough by to be accessible to the local committee and available for meetings and services.

#### 7. Religious services

- a. At least one Episcopal service open to the public must be held each year.
- b. Other services including weddings, funerals, and baptisms may be held as approved by the Committee and clergy.
- c. With the exception of funerals, at least two weeks' public notice should be given before services.
- d. All services must be conducted by a **currently licensed worship leader of the Episcopal Church or member of the clergy of the Episcopal Church, in good standing**, with the following exceptions, as specified in Title III, Canon 9, Section 6, of the Canons of the Episcopal Church:
  1. Clergy of another Church *not in full communion with the Episcopal Church* may be invited to assist in Book of Common Prayer Offices of Holy Matrimony or Burial of the Dead.
  2. Clergy of such Churches may read Morning or Evening Prayer, but they are prohibited from pronouncing the absolution after the General Confession, or from delivering priestly blessings.
  3. Clergy of such Churches may be invited to preach.
  4. In an ecumenical setting, Clergy of another Church *not in full communion with the Episcopal Church* may assist in administration of the sacraments during the Holy Eucharist.
  5. "Godly persons who are not Clergy of the Church may be invited to *address* the Church on special occasions." [The intent here is that a lay person may be invited to give a talk

during the sermon time, but it is not to be considered a sermon, unless that person is actually licensed to preach by the Episcopal Church.]

6. Clergy of Churches in union with the Episcopal Church may be invited to officiate on an occasional basis, but they are encouraged to preside in a manner consistent with the Episcopal form of worship. NOTE: The Churches in full communion with the Episcopal Church are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Moravian Church in America, and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht.
- e. Preserved historic churches are ordinarily not to be used for worship services of any religious group other than the Churches in full communion with the Episcopal Church, except in the case of ecumenical worship of which the Episcopal Church is a participant.
- f. The member of clergy assigned to each local committee is authorized to make exceptions, at his or her discretion, for pastoral reasons, to the canonical rules regarding religious services and who may preside at those services, provided that the service not be closed.

#### 8. **Accessibility requirements**

- a. A key must be supplied to assigned member of the clergy and the Historic Properties Commission chair.
- b. The Local Committee will be informed of visits by members of the Historic Properties Commission or other representatives of the Diocese.
- c. Access to others will be available through the Committee chair or designated member(s).
- d. All services must be free and open to the public or to a limited number of invited guests.

#### 9. **Financial matters**

- a. The Committee will maintain financial records, which are subject to audit.
- b. A financial report will be presented at the annual service and made available to the Historic Properties Commission if requested.
- c. Every preserved historic church is strongly encouraged to establish a trust fund, endowment, or other form of revenue-producing investment.
- d. The qualities of transparency and accountability should be foremost in management of all preserved historic church funds.

#### 10. **Maintenance and upkeep of buildings**

- a. The Committee is responsible for routine maintenance of the building, cemetery (if any), and grounds.
- b. Major repairs and renovations should be discussed with the Commission prior to implementation. Results should be reported after completion.
- c. Repairs and renovations should be in harmony with and appropriate to the architectural design and age of the church.
- d. The Commission will attempt to assist the local committees in obtaining funding to make needed repairs and renovations that are beyond the scope of their resources.

#### 11. **Use of building**

- a. The Committee should develop guidelines for use of the church or grounds for services or other events not sponsored by the Committee, in accordance with Diocesan policy. (See Section 7 above)
- b. Any use of the building or grounds must be approved by a majority of the Committee.
- c. Guidelines may include reasonable charges for new use of the buildings or grounds.
- d. The building may not be offered in a long-term rental contract except with permission of the Historic Properties Commission, with the consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocese.

#### 12. **Cemeteries, if applicable; regulations regarding new burials**

- a. The Committee should develop guidelines for burials in the cemetery.
- b. Burials should comply with local and state regulations and in general should be limited to

- members or descendants of members of the church when it was active.
- c. Guidelines may include reasonable charges for new burials to be used for upkeep of the cemetery.
  - d. It is not intended that preserved historic church cemeteries become active, public burial grounds.
13. **Annual report to Historic Properties Commission**
- a. The Committee will make a written annual report to the Commission by December 1 of each year to include:
    - 1. A financial report (income and expenditures including capital expenses, market value of all investments)
    - 2. Condition of building and any repairs made during the year
    - 3. Religious services, with dates, types, attendance figures and names of officiating lay or clergy persons
    - 4. Committee meetings (to be held at least once a year)
    - 5. Other information of interest to the Commission

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