

The Church of England  
Guild of Vergers

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# National Constitution

August 2022



*Leading the way since 1932*  
*Presidents: The Archbishops of Canterbury and York*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Joining: \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE VERGER'S PRAYER**

Almighty Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and earth is named,  
who has called us into the fellowship of your Church,  
grant, we pray, that in all our churches  
we may fulfil the duties  
and enjoy the privileges of our spiritual home.  
And on those who offer themselves for service  
as vergers in the house of God  
bestow the fullness of your grace,  
that, united in love to you and to one another,  
we may show forth your glory  
and hasten the coming of your kingdom.  
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

# THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUILD OF VERGERS

*Founded 1932*

## CONSTITUTION

### I. THE GUILD

I.1 The Church of England Guild of Vergers ("the Guild") is a **Fellowship** in Christ within the Anglican Communion to which all who serve in the office of Verger may belong, whether salaried or not, full or part-time, honorary, voluntary or retired. The Guild also welcomes applications from all those who perform similar duties with another (or no) title, who give their services and talents in the ordering of worship and the care of church buildings.

I.2 The Guild seeks to make effective the ministry of Vergers through the following key **objectives**, by:

- I.2.1 Promoting the spiritual nature of the **Vergers' Vocation** through Christian Fellowship and spiritual guidance for all its Members;
- I.2.2 Encouraging the advancement of knowledge by **education**, through maintaining standards of good practice, and by equipping Members for Ministry as vergers in all its aspects, through the provision of advice, training, resources and by organising and promoting training courses and conferences;
- I.2.3 Providing the means and opportunity for **communication** and discussion of ideas and proposals of common interest to Members;
- I.2.4 Providing **support** and encouragement to the Membership in all aspects of their duties whatever they may be and wherever performed;
- I.2.5 **Advising**, upon request, and making recommendations as to terms of employment and welfare of any Member;
- I.2.6 **Recording** the gamut of work undertaken by Vergers; in addition noting each Member's training, experience and qualifications.

I.3 In order to achieve these objectives the Guild will:

- I.3.1 Raise by **subscription** from its Members the funds required to administer the Guild.
- I.3.2 Promote Funds of **Benevolence** for Guild Members, the funds to be financed from the contributions of its members;
- I.3.3 Engage such persons as required by the Guild, upon such terms and conditions as the Executive Committee may require, to **advise** on and further the work of the Guild.

1.4 The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, by virtue of office, are invited to be **Joint Presidents** of the Guild.

1.5 The Guild is not a Trade Union as defined by section 1 of the *Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992*, (or any subsequent amendment or re-enactment thereof).

## 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GUILD

2.1.1 **Membership** of the Guild is open to all persons employed or occupied regularly, whether full or part-time, or as a voluntary verger, in:

- a) Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury and the Church of England
- b) Churches designated by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York under the Church of England's Ecumenical Canon B43

Definitions of these groups are available from the General Secretary.

2.1.2 Any person who is at least 18 years of age, engaged in similar duties but with a different (or no) title, who regularly gives their time and talents in the ordering of worship and/or the care of church buildings in the above churches, may apply for membership.

### 2.2 Full Membership

2.2.1 Any salaried, full or part-time, voluntary or retired Verger who is at least 18 years of age may apply to be a **Full Member** of the Guild.

### 2.3 Associate Membership

2.3.1 Any Verger who has not yet reached the age of 18 will be an **Associate Member** until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and thereafter a **Full Member**.

2.3.2 Any person of any age who is not a Verger but supports the aims and objects of the Guild may apply to be an **Associate Member** of the Guild.

2.3.3 Application for membership from persons belonging to churches other than those described in clause 2.1 may be considered for Associate Membership at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

2.4 No person shall be allowed to apply for any class of Membership other than Full Membership or Associate Membership. Full Members shall only **belong to one Branch** and pay subscriptions annually to that Branch. In addition, Full Members may apply for Associate membership of other Branches.

2.5 **Fellowship** of the Guild may be bestowed on any person who has significantly served the Guild or rendered exemplary service. Fellowship awards will be agreed by the Executive Committee. Fellows are encouraged to meet as a body from time to time. No subscriptions shall be due from any Fellow. The number of Fellows at any one time shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

2.6 **Life Membership** of the Guild may be awarded by the Executive Committee on recommendation. No subscriptions shall be due from any Life Member. The number of Life Members at any one time shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

2.7 Only **Full Members** of the Guild shall be **entitled to vote** on any resolution proposed at any Annual General Meeting duly convened under the terms of this Constitution.

2.8 Only members of the Guild shall be entitled to stand for election to any Office of the Guild specified in clause 3.1. The National Chaplain need not be a member.

### 3. ORGANISATION OF THE GUILD

The Guild is organised on a national and a local level.

#### 3.1 **National Administration**

3.1.1 The Guild is administered by an **Executive Committee** which shall comprise:

- a) Chairman
- b) General Secretary
- c) Treasurer
- d) Legal Advisor (ex officio and non-voting)
- e) Training Officer
- f) Media Officer
- g) Welfare Officer
- h) National Membership Officer
- i) Overseas Membership Officer
- j) Chaplain (non-voting)
- k) Regional Representatives

- 3.1.2 of the Executive Committee a **Standing Committee** shall be formed and comprise:
- a) Chairman
  - b) General Secretary
  - c) Treasurer
  - d) Chaplain (non-voting)
  - e) Legal Advisor (ex officio and non-voting)
- 3.1.3 Other committees may be formed as required; these are covered in the Statutes (6) of the Guild.
- 3.1.4 Unless otherwise stated in the Statutes, all officers of the Guild shall be **nominated** for their appointment by the Branches of the Guild, and elected by the AGM and shall hold office for a term of three years, whereupon such appointment is renewable indefinitely.

### 3.2 Local Administration

This section has been moved to the Guild Statutes.

## 4. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 4.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Guild will be held at a convenient location usually immediately preceding the Annual Training Conference.
- 4.2 At the Annual General Meeting the Agenda shall include consideration and the adoption/receipt of:
- a) Executive Committee Reports;
  - b) The examined accounts;
  - c) Reports from National Officers (having been submitted to the General Secretary in writing upon request, for inclusion in the Annual General Meeting agenda).

The Annual General Meeting will also consider:

- d) Appointment of Office holders;
  - e) Confirmation of Committee membership; and
  - f) Venues of National Festivals (usually one in each Province).
- 4.3 Items for inclusion on the Annual General Meeting agenda should be with the General Secretary not less than 28 days before the date of the meeting. There will not be an item of “any other business” but provision will be made for an open forum which the National Officers will attend.
- 4.4 In exceptional circumstances an **Extraordinary General Meeting** of the Guild membership may be called by the General Secretary upon resolution of the Standing Committee, giving all Members 28 days notice.

## 5. EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS

The Annual General Meeting will appoint a suitably qualified Independent Examiner to scrutinise and comment on the Annual Accounts.

## 6. STATUTES

The Executive Committee may initiate Statutes to govern the operation of the Guild and the performance of its Officers. These must be ratified by an Executive Committee Meeting and will be binding on the Membership. Statutes are contained in the Appendices.

## 7. DISCONTINUANCE OF MEMBERSHIP

If any Member, due to their conduct or action, brings discredit on the Guild then that person's Membership may be discontinued by the Executive Committee, usually following recommendation from the Member's principal Branch, such action being endorsed by the Annual General Meeting.

## 8. DISSOLUTION OF THE GUILD

In the event of dissolution being agreed by resolution at a General Meeting, National assets of the Guild shall be returned to the Branches in equal shares for distribution to nominated charities, or in the case where there are no surviving Branches to nominated charities as decided by the Executive Committee.

## 9. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution shall be effective from August 2022. Alterations to any item may only be agreed at a General Meeting called for that purpose, with prior notice having been given at least four months previously to all Members.

## 10. ASSETS OF THE GUILD

The assets of the Guild shall be held jointly by the Officers of the Guild. The list of assets will be detailed at the Annual General Meeting.

## 11. LIABILITIES AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

The Executive Committee, through the National Treasurer, will insure the Guild's physical assets, and those risks covered by legislation, with an appropriate insurance provider, and insure appropriate Guild officers or officials against accident whilst on Guild business. The Treasurer will also ensure that appropriate public liability and other relevant insurance cover is provided during Guild events. They will also pay the appropriate fees to the regulatory bodies to cover relevant Data Protection and other Legislation. The Executive Committee will endeavour to meet any other statutory regulations covering the work of the Guild.

## 12. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Any matters not covered by the above mentioned rules shall be referred to the next meeting of the Executive Committee for a decision and such decision shall be final.