

# CONFORMED TO CHRIST

## Structures and Standards in Parish Development

Third Edition

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**PARISH RESOURCE SERIES**



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## Part I

### STANDARDS: MEMBERSHIP, PASTORAL CARE AND PARISH DEVELOPMENT

This book provides an introduction to the ways in which establishing standards and developing organizational structure contribute to parish formation and life in the Body of Christ. The sections describing the roles that standards and structures play in the creation of healthy parishes are followed by sample standards, job descriptions, and documents to serve as a guide for Clergy or lay leaders seeking to strengthen the life of their congregations.

Standards related to membership, pastoral care and parish development are stated and implied in our canons, the Book of Common Prayer, various statements of General Convention and diocesan conventions, and Episcopal guidelines. This section will provide an outline of some of the issues to be considered in establishing and implementing standards in the parish church.

In order to maintain or establish a dynamic of faith in the parish that both accepts people as they are and invites them deeper, there need to be standards: 1) that place leadership, oversight and governance primarily in the hands of those of "Apostolic Faith" and the more mature end of "Sacramental Faith" and 2) that provide pathways (choices) for people to take the next step.

#### A. Types of Standards

The following are examples of standards and areas in which standards may be needed. The examples are drawn from various diocesan and parish statements unless otherwise noted.

1. Sacramental: Standards for the administration, scheduling, reception and participation in the sacraments of the Church, e.g., sponsors at Holy Baptism are to be baptized persons; "baptism is appropriately administered within the Eucharist as the chief service on a Sunday or other feast"; baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints Day or on the Sunday after All Saints Day, on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord, and when a bishop is present; sponsors participate in the person's formation by prayer and the example of their Christian life. (See BCP, pp. 298, 312)

Visitors are welcome to receive Holy Communion who have been baptized with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who have been admitted to Communion in their own church. Children may receive Communion; church school schedules should not interfere with a child's participation in the Eucharist.

2. Governance: Standards for the exercise of formal authority and participation in the governance of the church. E.g., ministries are expressed according to calling and gifts; voters at the parish meeting are members who faithfully attend worship and give financially. Vestry membership is based on commitment to the mission of the

Church, as stated in the Book of Common Prayer, faithfulness in worship, learning and pledging, willingness to learn necessary skills and knowledge, and ability to carry out responsibilities. The Rector presides at Vestry meetings, as at the Eucharist, to call the diversity of the people and their gifts to a life of self-offering and mission.

3. Oversight: Individuals and groups that share oversight responsibilities with the Rector may be called to a fuller form of spiritual discipline. These forms may include a written Rule of Life; requirement to participate in worship every Sunday and on major feast days; sacrificial and proportionate giving; etc. Individuals and groups in this category may include the Parish Development Team; Executive Committee; guilds of Liturgical Assistants or Catechists; and Service or Evangelism Team.
4. General Participation in Parish Life and Ministry: Standards for the common life shared by all members and groups of the parish, e.g., responsiveness to norms of Christian behavior regarding handling disagreements, following through on responsibilities, supporting the parish's legitimate authorities in their responsibilities and decisions.

## **B. The Purpose of Standards**

1. To help establish in the parish the climate, structures and processes that draw the parish as a corporate expression of the Body of Christ more deeply into Christ and into Catholic and Apostolic faith and practice. We are concerned with establishing a practical, local expression of that "holy order" in which the Christian community is called to live.
2. To offer "pathways" for people to give themselves more fully to Christ and to Catholic and Apostolic faith and practice.

A starting point for defining the practice of Catholic and Apostolic faith would be the baptismal covenant (BCP, pp. 301-305), the catechism's statement of the ministry of the laity (BCP, p. 855) and statement on the duty of all Christians (BCP p. 856). This can be focused and understood as a dynamic process by using two frameworks: "The Christian Life Model" (Appendix A) offers a way of understanding the essentials of proficient practice in the Anglican tradition; the "Renewal-Apostolate Cycle" (Appendix B) provides a means for seeing the elements of Christian life and ministry within a cycle of being renewed in our baptismal identity and purpose and sent, in Christ, into families, work and communities. As one matures in Christian life and practice, the pattern of death and resurrection (of losing life to find life, of self-offering, etc.) shows itself within a proficient living of the essential elements of Christian life (worship, doctrine, action) and a generally productive renewal and apostolate cycle.

## **C. Standards: The Shape of the Parish and Dynamics of Faith**

The purpose and use of standards in the parish need to be understood as part of an

approach to pastoral theology and care, Christian formation, and parish development. The framework "The Shape of the Parish" (Appendix C) is a tool that can help make some of the connections. The model describes the parish as consisting of people in four types of faith. Those referred to as being of "Sacramental Faith" are most of the members we see gathered on Sundays. They are relatively consistent in their sense of responsibility toward the parish. Many parishes tend to think of this group as being "the parish". A second type of faith is often recognized with a mix of judgment and acceptance in those of "Christmas and Easter Faith". They come infrequently. They are functionally "unchurched". They tend not to understand or accept "sacramental" religion. The notion that the Church is a human and divine institution makes little sense to them. Jesus Christ is usually not seen as human and divine. They most probably have little sense of Christian vocation.

There are two other types that are usually invisible for most of the congregation. Members with an "Apostolic Faith" are relatively disciplined and proficient in regard to their practice as Christians, having developed a relatively stable discipline of worship, study and Christian action. They have not "arrived"; in fact they see themselves as just beginning. They are engaged in a process of experimentation and reflection. It is possible that a parish may not have anyone of "Apostolic Faith." There may be people close to it who have not progressed or matured because the parish has not adequately nurtured them or the priest has not guided and coached them. Those with a "Vicarious Faith" are related to the parish through geography, family or friends. They are not likely to be members but in some sense they identify with the parish or are influenced by the parish's life and ministry.

A task common to both pastoral care and parish revitalization is establishment of the climate, structures and processes that both love and accept people with each type of faith and enable and nurture growth in the Christian life. We love people where they are now and we invite them into a deeper, broader, more purposeful life in Jesus Christ.

In practice there is a tendency for parishes to move toward one extreme or the other. At one extreme some parishes become almost sectarian in the high expectations they set forth for everyone. There is a strong invitation and challenge but frequently little empathy or patience. Initially this may appear to be the result of a distorted "Apostolic Faith". More commonly the source of invitation and challenge is people of "Sacramental Faith" who are experimenting with forms of prayer, ministry and life that are new and exciting to them and who want others to have the same experience.

The other extreme, which is more common, is the parish that settles for a tone of bland acceptance. Little is asked of people. Those in power are likely to come from the immature or tentative edge of "Sacramental Faith".

In this paper we are focusing on the role of standards. Most of what provides the dynamic we seek comes from acts of worship, learning, stewardship, service, evangelization, the building of community life, and spiritual guidance and coaching. Any act of self-offering, or invitation to give oneself more fully, plays a part. Standards are just one small, yet essential, part of this larger fabric.

The standard of "faithful attendance" might serve as an example. Most of us would not accept attendance at worship two or three times a year as "faithful." It would strike us as a reductionist understanding of faithfulness. We might at least think in terms of frequent and regular attendance. Better yet we might adopt the standard of joining with others for "corporate worship week by week." To go even further, we might understand the standard as participation in the Holy Eucharist every Sunday and major feast and the use of some form of the Daily Office. The Apostolic and Catholic tradition of the Church would obviously set the norm at the higher end of the scale. That serves to inform the parish church with the understanding of the wider church.

For those of "Vicarious" or "Christmas and Easter" faith, the standard of faithful attendance exists. It is not hidden from them. Most know that the Church expects it. It does not cut people off. They are welcome to come just to the potluck dinner or to the Christmas Eve Mass. Those who are on our rolls or are interested should receive all parish and appropriate diocesan communications. The pastoral care of the priest and the congregation is available. We will counsel them, hear their confession, visit them in illness, and bury them. However, if they would like to vote in the parish meeting, be baptized, have a child baptized, or serve as a Liturgical Assistant, they will need to make the choice of "faithful attendance." Just knowing that it is an expectation and that many people give themselves to it may cause some to wonder if there is something they are missing.

For people of "Sacramental Faith" the standard of faithful attendance may be used as a "rule" or guide that reinforces parishioners against the temptation to let life, purpose and identity drift. Or the standard may feed a growing sense that Communion, life in community and the responsibility for shaping that corporate life need to have corresponding levels of investment and practice.

For those of "Apostolic Faith" the standard of faithful attendance is the foundation of the Christian cycles (renewal and apostolate, extradependent and intradependent, gathered and scattered, death and resurrection). The "faithful" cannot give up the standard without falling into pride. The standard is the base upon which they build a more mature spirituality and ministry.

The same standard will be understood and applied differently depending on the type of faith and the particular situation. The occasional attendance of a person just beginning to reconnect with the parish is something to give thanks for and a place from which we can work. The same attendance for a chalice bearer is both the sign of a troubled spiritual life and an unacceptable example for others.

#### **D. Other Relationships to Parish Development**

1. Standards should further parish development. Parishes "develop" when they live more deeply into the fundamental marks of the Church - unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity; when they grow stronger in worship, doctrine, action and oversight; and as they enter into and reflect the heart, mind and work of Christ.
2. If the community is to know its own integrity as the Body of Christ, the "sign" of the

sacrament cannot become disconnected from the reality. Promises (related to??) must really be promises - not merely the formality of "getting the baby done" or reaching the usual age for confirmation. The blessing of a marriage must ring true as an extension of the process of sanctification already nurtured by the weekly Eucharist.

3. Standards can reveal the reality of the wider Church, and help root the parish in that broader authority. As members become aware of the concrete expressions of that authority – in rubrics, canons, scripture, tradition, the directions of the Bishop – parish life becomes stabilized; the laity are made less dependent on the teaching and interpretation of each individual priest; a climate is set in which people expect to be guided and influenced by the Church's teaching and standards. The logic of the wider church's standards helps parishes manage continuity and change; congregations live in the wider Church, and when the wider Church changes the parish responds in holy obedience toward unity and mission.
4. Published standards are useful tools in educating people about the nature and mission of the Church, the place of the rites and sacraments in the life of the Church, and the primary task of the parish.
5. Properly used, standards can head off potential parish conflicts, by making expectations public "before the fact," and by providing general background, explanation, and references to the authority of the larger Church. At the same time, the introduction of clear standards in a situation where understanding and practice have degenerated over the years may cause initial tension.

## **E. Developing and Applying Standards**

1. Standards (rules, guidelines, etc.) are best seen in the context of pastoral teaching and coaching rather than legalistic enforcement: most priests are unlikely to refuse Communion to persons who have already presented themselves to receive, even if on technical grounds the priest could justify the refusal; Vestries often allow for a year or two of teaching and announcements before enforcing a voting canon in a parish where the standard had lapsed. The issue is to make use of the standard in a manner that advances the two purposes of having standards (establishing a climate and offering a "pathway").
2. The priest and lay leaders need to take an honest look at the context within which standards are being introduced. Many clergy and lay leaders find the matter of standards uncomfortable. In the development of initial written statements clergy and laity must cope with the various deficiencies and distortions in the past teaching of the parish ("Nobody ever told us we had to do that before!"); clergy's overall authority issues and those of the parish, including the parish's long term attitudes toward the Bishop, the diocese, the larger Church, and the particular stances toward authority of key parish leaders; the overall climate and discipline of deanery and diocese ("The other parishes around here don't require that"); and the immediate group of people who, during a transition in standards, may feel picked on or

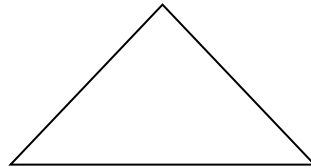


judged.

3. When viewed on a case-by-case basis, the application of standards is a complex matter. This can be described as a tension among three elements – Objective Standards, Implications for the Body, and Individual situations. Each element has its own claim and integrity, but must be related appropriately to the others. "Compromise" is not the goal. We need to seek a way of applying standards that adequately meets each element's proper claim. We want to avoid that which would sentimentalize and privatize faith and that which would make it harsh and lacking in empathy.

Achieving a dynamic balance of the three elements maintains and advances the integrity of the covenant community and its common life. Effective balance can be undermined by either assuming a protective and inflexible stance or by allowing the community's expectations to be washed away in the face of individual feelings and needs.

Objective Standards  
(Canons, rubrics, implications of the rite)



Implications for the Body  
(The "message" that is given by this action, implications for catechesis, evangelization, spiritual formation, etc.)

Individual Situation  
(The person's ideas, feelings, needs; previous patterns of relationship to the Church, etc.)

4. Standards provide choices for people, e.g., a choice to attend regular and give faithfully if I am to vote; a choice to begin to participate in the community's life of prayer, learning and service if I am to set my child's life in that context through Holy Baptism; etc. Properly used, choices can create a "pathway" that brings a person into a deeper relationship with Christ and his Church. To support the development of such pathways, the priest must try to create standards that encourage healthy decisions. A misguided sense of what is "pastoral" can lead some clergy (or Vestries) to "take away" the standard and in so doing "take away" the struggle and reflection in which the person might engage in making spirit-filled decisions.

The basic disciplines of the Christian life connect the individual to the faith community – local and universal. Life in the Body is, over the long term, transforming, sanctifying, and humanizing in the deepest sense. Abuse of standards withholds from people Christ's invitation into the means of re-creation that God provides.

5. Parishioners need to make clear decisions about which faith community they are becoming part of and how they agree to live by its disciplines. Clergy should provide clarity about the standards expected in his/her parish and take care to avoid undercutting the discipline of neighboring parishes or spiritual communities. Transfer (or confirmation or reception from another communion) may be encouraged if the person shows a desire to live in this Christian community.
6. Clergy and lay leaders need to watch out for two traps related to applying standards. Some want so much to be "right" that they will be heavy handed and harsh. Others want so much to be "liked" that they will avoid the encounter that could lead a person more completely into the Christian life. Most of us know the tension between wanting to be "right" and wanting to be "liked".

## **F. Sectarian and Organic Approaches**

Any approach to the matter of standards reflects implicit or explicit assumptions about the nature of the Church and its relationship to the wider community.

Some approaches reflect a more "sectarian" view of the Church. Here the Church is seen as a separate society, or voluntary association, which people join by crossing sharply defined boundaries of religious experience, commitment and behavior. "Conversion" is a well-defined moment, and it is very clear who is "in" and who is "out." Using the "Shape of the Parish Model" (Appendix C), a sectarian view suggests that you are part of the Apostolic inner circle or you are not a Christian. Church is seen as separate from and sometimes against the larger society. Life and relationships are seen as sacred when they are brought within the sphere of church activity. The sacraments are only administered within the circle of fully committed members, and church authorities decide who is eligible for marriage, baptism, etc.

Other approaches reflect a more "organic" view of the Church as the fellowship and structure serving the religious needs within the life of the community. All of life is seen as sacred, and the boundaries of that fellowship called the Church are not clearly defined, having many gradations of connection and commitment. Formal membership does not presuppose any specific type of "religious experience." The opportunity for participation in the Divine Life will arise as a result of being part of the fellowship. In this model, the decision about whether to receive the sacraments may rest primarily with the family or individual, with the Church responding to virtually all requests; or it might be viewed as a mutual decision resulting from exploration and negotiation.

Most of us probably hold in our minds something of each model. The pastoral strategy that results is likely to be conflicted and spiritually inefficient. It is our assessment that the most promising route for an Episcopal parish is to develop a pastoral strategy based on the organic model but reshaped to take into account our contextual issues: mobility, social structures that are not integrated, the predominance of individualistic modes of thought and behavior (rather than what Robert Bellah refers to as "Biblical" or "Republican" modes), an intense loneliness, and a sense of confusion about identity and purpose.

In our context we cannot operate on the assumption that most people in a community have even a vicarious connection with the parish. The desire to minister to people as they are, accepting them as they come to us is still useful. We need to remember that they come to us as a people who are lonely, with an individualistic frame of mind, wanting fellowship and resisting it at the same time, wanting a sense of integration, identity and purpose and fearing to open themselves up to the influence of

others.

The task in any social context is the same: a) to establish the climate, structures and processes that draw the parish as a corporate expression of the Body of Christ more deeply into Christ and into catholic and apostolic faith and practice and b) and to offer "pathways" for people to give themselves more fully to Christ and to catholic and apostolic faith and practice. The details of pastoral strategy may vary. Some parishes will be more challenging, others more flexible. All need to consider whether the task is being adequately engaged.

In poor and highly impacted communities, where all structures of life (housing arrangements, family relationships, income, etc.) may be highly unstable, the parish will often have to carry most of the responsibility for connecting the Sacraments with the life of the Christian community.

In a middle-class community, a six-month preparation period for baptism or marriage of those without any current church connection can help people take the church as seriously as other voluntary commitments in their life – sports teams for the children, connection with a lodge or civic group, etc. However, in communities of people who may not have the same address for six months at a time or who may not be able to arrange transportation to hold a job, such expectations will simply exclude people from the Sacraments. Preparation here must be tailored to each situation. It will often fall on the priest and lay visitors to keep track of the person with drop-in visits, phone calls, and use of the informal network of parish and community. Still, people may often move and lose connection. The parish needs an assertive approach –offering pastoral care quickly and flexibly, assuming a certain pastoral "prerogative" to follow-up with the family system, and asking more of those with greater capacity for maintaining connection.

The following examples of pastoral strategy might help to stimulate further experimentation:

- When asked to baptize or marry people that are not of sacramental or apostolic faith, we can start from a stance that we want to do it. "Yes, I'd love to baptize the child. Let's get together a few times to discuss the best way to do that." The task is to open up conversation that may lead to a baptism, in which what happens at the font has integrity for the parents, priest, and congregation.
- A priest could take the approach that we will spend as much time as needed to develop a mutual decision that respects the objective standards of the Church, the implications of that action for the Church, and the individual's needs and opinions. This and the preceding approach assume a high degree of emotional and psychological maturity on the part of everyone involved (i.e., family or individual, priest, and congregation).
- A priest may operate on the explicit norm that if one is baptized or married in the parish, a formal relationship with the parish is thereby established. The priest is intentional about visiting from time to time, whether or not the family is attending or has taken official steps towards membership. Those involved would be put on the parish's mailing list, invited to become members, and "re-invited" regularly to enter into the Church's life in a variety of ways. They are encouraged to see this as "their" parish and are repeatedly encouraged to make tangible signs of that connection. This approach respects the integrity of the sacraments – as actions that occur within the context of Christian community – by placing more of the responsibility for maintaining and nurturing the relationship on the priest and the parish.

The approaches just described are not the same as the lax, "marriage chapel," practices in which some parishes have engaged. Uncomfortable with the tension between "dispensing" and "protecting" the

Sacraments, some clergy have created logical arguments that justify the baptism or marriage of anyone requesting it, with a "God will take care of the rest" approach. This is magical thinking rather than sacramental thinking.

The examples offered above are based on a different logic:

- Living connection with the Body is essential to the integrity of the Sacraments.
- There is a spectrum of mutual responsibility - which may be expressed differently in various cases and communities - between heavy responsibility for maintaining the connection being borne by the individual, and heavy responsibility for maintaining the connection being borne by priest and parish.
- The actual capacities and limitations of individual, priest, and parish must be taken into account -- real lives and souls are at stake. A priest may dream of being a kind of "community pastor" who keeps gentle tabs on the sheep until readiness is discovered for deeper connection. But if the priest's time and pastoral strategy is not in fact organized around this kind of activity, the effect is simply neglect. On the other side, a family social system that is chaotic, with little staying power in any aspect of life, is not apt to be able to respond to standards that require high initiative and follow-through on their part.
- The demographic context needs to be taken into account. In communities with stable populations there is more room for an approach with lower "entry" standards and more persistence by priest and parish over the long term. Where turnover is high, it may be necessary to negotiate for more connection at the outset if any experience of the faith community is to occur.
- The skills and orientation of the pastor must also be taken into account. Barry Evans of the Grubb Institute USA uses words like "open, exploratory, even negotiatory," as the stance a priest needs to take toward those requesting the sacraments. Most clergy do want to see themselves as "open." We also need to assess our capacity to explore, assess and negotiate. It is an art to provide enough energy and affirmation to hold the other party in conversation and also to determine what would, for them, be a significant step toward connection with Body. It requires even more stability and skill to maintain a follow-up ministry with a large number of people who take no steps on their own. Many clergy, overwhelmed by the pastoral demands of those whom they regularly see, resist calling on the lapsed and have difficulty negotiating demands or focusing time use. Furthermore, a long tenure is required to develop and pursue the network of relationships to make this strategy effective.

In all approaches to sacramental standards, the issue is to provide practical pathways which actually connect the sacramental action to the life of the Christian community, and which elicit from those requesting the sacraments as much maturity and intentionality in their relationship with Christ and the Church as they are capable of expressing at the time.

## **G. Introducing Standards to the Parish**

1. Consultation with appropriate parish and diocesan leaders is essential. This is done effectively when the priest takes the initiative by assembling background materials, drafting parish standards, and arranging times for appropriate groups to discuss the draft, ask questions about it and recommend revisions. It is wise to be clear from the beginning about who has the final decision in establishing and applying particular standards.

2. The process of introducing standards should be handled as a teaching opportunity. Shaping parish standards can open up exploration about authority, the primary task of the parish, the process of Christian formation and the meaning of liturgical acts. People might explore their images of Jesus, God, and people who have represented Christ to them. What is expected in the images? Do they tend towards sentimentality or legalism? Is there an appropriate blending of acceptance and challenge, or do the images only offer one or the other?
3. Sacramental guidelines and other standards should be readily and publicly available. A "parish handbook" and individual handouts in the tract rack or posted on the notice board are options. In parishes where people do not read such material, more effort may need to be put into "teaching announcements" during worship and other oral means of communication.
4. Lay leaders (Vestry, catechists, chalice bearers, etc.) can be equipped to understand, interpret and support standards in an appropriate manner.
5. Clergy and lay leaders need to become aware of and equipped to deal with their own internal biases and resistance in articulating and applying standards.

## Sample Standards and Policies

### HOLY BAPTISM

#### About the Sacrament

Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. The bond that God establishes in Baptism is indissoluble. (BCP p. 298)

In this sacrament "God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church, and inheritors of the Kingdom of God." In Baptism we are united with Christ in his death and resurrection, born into God's family, the Church, forgiven our sins, and given new life in the Holy Spirit. At Baptism "it is required that we renounce Satan, repent of our sins and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior." (BCP p. 858)

#### Readings for Reflection

In the Book of Common Prayer

Holy Baptism, pp. 298-308

The Catechism, "Holy Baptism" pp. 858-859

In the Bible

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Romans 8:14-17

Romans 6:3-5

Mark 1:9-11

Mark 10:13-16

John 3:1-6

2 Corinthians 5:17-20

#### Occasions for Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism is usually administered four times a year on the feasts recommended by the Prayer Book, in the context of the Holy Eucharist and in the presence of the faith community. The four occasions are: the Easter Vigil (March or April); the Day of Pentecost (May or June); All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day (November); and on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (January). It may also be administered when a Bishop is present. (BCP p. 312)

#### Baptism of Adults

If the candidate for Baptism is an adult, he or she is expected to have attended the Holy Eucharist on Sundays and major Holy Days for at least six months prior to Baptism, be prepared through instruction, and have developed a Rule of Life.

The same standard applies to a child old enough to receive instruction and make a commitment. When possible, adults and older children receiving the sacrament of Baptism will receive the Laying on of Hands by the Bishop at the same time.

Instruction will usually include the following:

1. Completing the parish's core program of instruction in Christian Faith and Practice or its equivalent.
2. Reading an "Introduction to the Christian Faith and the Episcopal Church."

3. Attending several meetings with the priest for spiritual guidance, formation of a Rule of Life, and instruction about Holy Baptism. Sponsors will be expected to take part in one or more of these sessions.

Sponsors of adults and older children present their candidates and thereby signify their endorsement of the candidates and their intention to support them by prayer and example in their Christian life. All sponsors must be baptized Christians who regularly participate in the life of a parish. At least one should be a member of this parish. Sponsors will be expected to take part in the preparation of the candidate they sponsor.

### Infant Baptism

Since the first century, the Church has baptized infants under certain conditions; that is, when their parents are active members of the Church. Thus the Church insures that the child will be raised in the "household of faith" and share in the repentance, and the ongoing faith and practice of the faith community. The baptism of infants should take place in a setting of Christian commitment, such as:

1. When one or both parents are active, worshipping, canonical members of the parish.
2. When a previously inactive family has demonstrated a Christian commitment by sharing in the worship and life of the parish for at least six months.
3. When, in the case of a family not otherwise actively connected with the Church, one or more of the godparents are active worshipping members who are serious in their responsibility to see that the child will be nurtured in the community of Christian faith and who have the active support of parents to do so. The godparent should be prepared to bring the child regularly for worship, instruction and fellowship. If an infant is not in such a setting, it is best to wait until the family is ready to fulfill the promises of sponsors or until the child can, in some way, make his or her own affirmations.

Before the baptism, parents and godparents (sponsors) meet with the priest or catechist for a period of instruction on the meaning of the sacrament, their duties to help the new Christian grow in the knowledge and love of God, and in their responsibilities as members of his Church.

Sponsors of infants, commonly called godparents, present their candidates, make promises in their own names, and also take vows on behalf of their candidates. Parents should be included among the godparents of their own children. Sponsors accept responsibility to support the candidate by prayer and example in the Christian life and to see that the child will be brought up within the Church to know Christ and to follow him.

All sponsors must be baptized Christians who regularly participate in the life of a parish. At least one should be a member of this parish.

### Emergency Baptism

In cases of extreme sickness or imminent peril, if a priest is not available, any baptized person may administer Holy Baptism by pouring water on him or her, and using the given name of the one to be baptized (if known) saying, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." The Lord's Prayer is then said. Other prayers (BCP p. 314) may then be added. The person who administers emergency Baptism should inform the priest of the appropriate parish, so

the fact can be properly registered. If the baptized person recovers, the Baptism should be recognized at a public celebration of the Sacrament with a bishop or priest presiding. The person baptized under emergency conditions, together with sponsors or godparents, takes part in everything except the administration of water. (BCP p. 313-314)



## HOLY BAPTISM

### An Alternate Form

#### About the Sacrament

Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. The bond that God establishes in Baptism is indissoluble. (BCP p. 298)

In this sacrament "God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church, and inheritors of the Kingdom of God." In Baptism we are united with Christ in his death and resurrection, born into God's family, the Church, forgiven our sins, and given new life in the Holy Spirit. At Baptism "it is required that we renounce Satan, repent of our sins and accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior." (BCP p. 858)

#### Readings for Reflection

In the Book of Common Prayer

Holy Baptism, pp. 298-308

The Catechism, "Holy Baptism" pp. 858-859

In the Bible

Ezekiel 36:24-28

Romans 8:14-17

Romans 6:3-5

Mark 1:9-11

Mark 10:13-16

John 3:1-6

2 Corinthians 5:17-20

#### Occasions for Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism is usually administered four times a year on the feasts recommended by the Prayer Book, in the context of the Holy Eucharist and in the presence of the faith community. The four occasions are: the Easter Vigil (March or April); the Day of Pentecost (May or June); All Saint's Day or the Sunday after All Saint's Day (November); and on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (January). It may also be administered when a Bishop is present. (BCP p. 312)

#### Baptism of Adults

For adults, and children old enough to receive instruction, a plan of preparation will be worked-out with the priest. The plan will include participation in parish worship, a period of instruction in Christian Faith and Practice, and discussion with the priest about long-term patterns of prayer, study and service. Sponsors will be asked to take part in the preparation of the candidate they sponsor.

#### Baptism of Infants

When an infant is presented for Holy Baptism a plan of preparation for the parents and other sponsors will be worked out with the priest. The plan will include participation in parish worship, a period of instruction in Christian Faith and Practice, and discussion with the priest about long-term patterns of prayer, study and service.

Sponsors of Infants, commonly called godparents, present their candidates, make promises in their own names, and also take vows on behalf of their candidates. Parents should be included among the godparents of their own children. Sponsors accept responsibility to support the candidate by prayer and example in the Christian life and to see that the child will be brought up within the Church to know Christ and to follow him.

All sponsors must be baptized Christians who regularly participate in the life of a parish. At least one should be a member of this parish.

### Emergency Baptism

In cases of extreme sickness or imminent peril, if a priest is not available, any baptized person may administer Holy Baptism by pouring water on him or her, and using the given name of the one to be baptized (if known) saying, "I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." The Lord's Prayer is then said. Other prayers (BCP p. 314) may then be added. The person who administers emergency Baptism should inform the priest of the appropriate parish, so that the fact can be properly registered. If the baptized person recovers, the Baptism should be recognized at a public celebration of the Sacrament with a Bishop or priest presiding. The person baptized under emergency conditions, together with sponsors or godparents, takes part in everything except the administration of water. (BCP p. 313-314)

## **Policy on Pastoral Care for Children**

We at this Church are intentional about nurturing children in their knowledge and love of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We recognize our duty to minister to them and to receive their ministry to us. This is especially true in the sacraments and worship we provide for them and in which they participate. This is also true in the ministries of Christian Formation and Outreach.

We recognize our responsibility to offer children pastoral care during significant times of change in their lives. While this is a responsibility of parents, it is also most definitely a responsibility of the Church. It is important for children to develop a relationship with the pastoral side of the Church early in their lives, so that when questions or problems arise, they will know that the ministry of the Church is present for them. This includes the ministry of Lay Eucharistic Ministers when a child is sick and unable to be present for the Holy Eucharist at the Church.

We recognize and respect parental authority and wisdom. We also understand our vocation as the Church to offer children a confidential and listening ear. In our respect for parental authority, we will make every effort to contact parents, when appropriate, and ask permission to talk to and pray with their children. We respect each child's expectation of confidentiality in the pastoral care relationship. This expectation of confidentiality, however, is not absolute. If the clergy or laity providing the pastoral care have a well-founded concern for the child's safety, then confidentiality will be understood as a secondary concern. This is consistent with all related Diocesan policies.

## FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

### Preparation for Children

A child may start receiving Holy Communion in this parish when:

1. The child is six years or older (the age may vary from parish to parish);
2. The child desires to receive;
3. The child has a sense of importance about the action, appropriate to his or her age;
4. The child has been baptized and has been participating regularly in the Eucharist along with his/her family for at least four months;
5. A period of preparation has been completed.

When you think that your child is ready to start receiving, talk with the priest. Arrangements will be made to start the preparation and a date will be set for the First Communion.

The preparation is a cooperative effort between child, parents, priest, and catechist. Each will have a role to play in the child's preparation, although the parents are the primary people preparing the child. The parents need to take charge of specific teaching areas in the preparation process. However, the most important preparation for First Holy Communion is the child's own life, especially his or her life as part of the family. It is the love and forgiveness expressed and experienced in the family that builds toward the receiving of God's love in the Blessed Sacrament.

The day of First Communion should be a day of family celebration and joy in which the Holy Communion plays the primary but not the only role. The sharing of life in a loving relationship is at the heart of family unity. This is extended and made richer by entering into a deeper relationship of love with God: by sharing together in the meal of Bread and Wine, the Body and Blood of Christ. This is Jesus present with us and for us, Jesus loving us and strengthening us to be part of his Body the Church, part of his work in the world.

You will need to have a Bible and a copy of the Book of Common Prayer in the home.

### The Usual Schedule

- A. Initial Visit - The catechist and/or the priest visit the home
  - a. To bring materials for the parents to use with the child.
  - b. To talk about the use of those materials. The catechist will be involved in at least one session with the child. The rest will be up to the parents unless arrangements are made for additional sessions with the catechist. In any case, the parents must be involved in the sessions.
  - c. To talk with the child. To get to know the child. To ask what the child knows about the Eucharist. To share what it was like when the catechist or priest started to receive and what it means now, etc.
2. Parent helps the child prepare - The catechist helps as agreed. The parent may want to borrow a book from the parish library. The more you understand as an adult, the more you can help your child understand.
3. done in preparation. The child should share what he has done and be prepared to answer, "Why

do you want to receive Holy Communion?" The group will pray together.

4. Rehearsal - Usually there will be a short rehearsal at the church a week before the day of First Communion.

### Things for Parents to Do and Prepare

1. Attend Eucharist with your child every Sunday and major Holy Days. It's very important that you participate with your child. Take an active part - make responses, join in the prayers and hymns. Help your child follow in the Prayer Book, but don't get your nose "stuck" in the book. Pay attention to what is happening at the altar.

Sit near the front so it is easy to see. Don't get upset if your child asks a few questions. Answer them quietly and briefly if it is at a time when it will not be a major distraction to those around you. Otherwise, ask your child to wait a few minutes.

Bring your child to the rail for a blessing. Tell the child in advance that there will be a blessing instead of Holy Communion. Have her/him cross her/his arms on the chest.

- B. After the Eucharist talk with your child about what he saw, did, smelled, heard, etc. What did the priest do? Other people? What parts were important? Why? What questions does he have? You may want to make a list of things to discuss with the catechist or priest.
- C. On one Sunday you might walk around the church with your child. Ask her to show you things she likes. What questions does she have?
- D. Work with your child on any workbooks or assignments you have been given.
- E. Help your child to prepare to tell the priest why he wants to receive Holy Communion.
- F. Teach your child some of the prayers and responses in the Eucharist.
- G. Pray for your child - for growth in the Christian life, for a heart and mind open to God's ways and love.
- H. You may want to help your child make a scrapbook on the Eucharist - of drawings, and pictures from old magazines.
- I. Be sure to read and discuss the story of the Last Supper from Scripture - Matt. 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25. You may want to act it out in your own play.
- J. Talk with your child about her baptism. The Eucharist is a means to help strengthen us in the life begun in baptism. Take your child to the baptismal font in the church, talk about your baptism.
- K. Work with the child on the Christian life he started in baptism. Discuss and do a project that draws out the way in which your child is involved in the three elements of Christian living - worship, doctrine, and action. What worship is he involved in - with others, family, alone? What is the child learning about Christian Faith? Help your child look at ways in which he shows love to others.

### The Day of the First Holy Communion

1. Your child should meet the priest fifteen minutes before the service begins. She will be part of the procession and will take a seat in the first few pews. (This is only done if there are several children for the procession.)
2. Make the day a special one. Participate in any activities at the parish - coffee hour, dinner, etc. Do

something special as a family.

### In the Following Year

The good that has been started in the First Holy Communion must be nurtured and encouraged in the months and years that follow.

1. Participate in the Eucharist every Sunday and on major Holy Days with your child. Develop the practice of preparing for Holy Communion and giving thanks after. Make going to church on Sunday an important family event. Do something special after the Eucharist at least once a month.

When you are away from the parish, go to the Eucharist at a nearby church. If you are ill on Sunday, call someone else in the parish to take your child. Now is the time to communicate by word and action that Christians do this every Sunday and support one another in doing it.

2. If you wish, arrange with the priest to have a house Mass. This would be done in your home using bread and wine that you provide. It's best to do this within six weeks of First Communion. It can be done after school during the week or in the evening. You may want to invite a couple of other people from the parish. Have refreshments after the Eucharist.

## CONFIRMATION

### About the Sacrament

"Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by the Bishop." (BCP p.860)

"In the course of their Christian development, those baptized at an early age are expected, when they are ready and have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the Bishop." (BCP p.412)

"Those baptized as adults, unless baptized with laying on of hands by a bishop, are also expected to make a public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism in the presence of a bishop and to receive the laying on of hands." (BCP p.412)

"It is required of those to be confirmed that they have been baptized, are sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith, are penitent for their sins, and are ready to affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord." (BCP p. 860)

### Readings for Reflection

In the Prayer Book

"Confirmation", pp.412-419

"Other Sacramental Rites", p. 860

In the Bible

Isaiah 61:1-9

Romans 12:1-8

Romans 8:18-27

Matthew 16:24-27

Matthew 5:1-12

Galatians 5:16-25

John 14:15-21

Ezekiel 37:1-10

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Ephesians 4:7, 11-16

Luke 4:16-22

### Confirmation of Young People

Confirmation represents a solemn commitment of one's life to Christ. Such a commitment must be undertaken voluntarily and is strongly supported within the parish as a normal component of Christian nurture and development.

### What is required of young people preparing for Confirmation?

1. That they have been baptized.
2. That they have been sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith. This will involve attending the Young People's Catechism Class, completing all assignments, and passing several examinations.
3. That they are ready to affirm their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and are penitent for their sins. They will write a letter to the priest explaining their desire to be confirmed. Then they will meet with the priest to talk about their letter and discuss their commitment to Jesus Christ and the Christian Life.

4. That they have developed and are living by a Rule of Life that is fitting for their age. This is to include participation in the Holy Eucharist on Sundays and major Holy Days, daily prayer, and making a pledge.

Parents are expected to be supportive of their child's preparation for Confirmation. The child may need help and encouragement with the Catechism Class. In helping them, parents may discover some ideas and practices that are new to them. They should feel free to talk with the teachers and the priest. Course outlines will be available to parents.

Parents will also be responsible to prepare the child for participation in the class. This will include helping the child develop habits and acquire knowledge in the fundamentals of prayer and participation in worship (For details see "To be Admitted to Catechism Class" below.) Parents needing assistance should talk with the priest.

Parents own example of living the Christian Life will be more important to their child's formation as a Christian than anything we can do in Confirmation preparation. If parents discover that there are ways in which they would like to grow in the Christian Life, they should feel free to call on the priest for any help he or she might offer.

### Young People's Catechism Class

1. There will be 28 sessions of 1 1/2 hours each and four all day gatherings. Specific times will be announced.

Some classes may involve trips to other parishes or attending special events. Such trips may take place at other times during the week.

2. Students are expected to participate in all sessions. Four make-up sessions will be permitted for reasons other than sickness.
3. Each student will need to have his or her own copy of the Book of Common Prayer and the Holy Bible (RSV, New English or Good News Bible). Be sure the Bible includes both Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha. The bible should be a copy that can be used for underlining and adding notes. A paperback copy may be used.
4. Students are expected to provide their own pens, pencils, paper, and a three-ring loose-leaf notebook of standard size. There will be a small fee for materials needed for the class.  
(Students who may have difficulty affording books or materials for the class should speak to the priest.)
5. There will be four exams during the program. Students will be able to use their prayer books and Bibles during each exam. A passing score will be 70. If a student does not pass, the exam may be taken again. The exam questions will be available several weeks before each exam so the student may prepare for it.
6. Students will be expected and encouraged to come to the priest and/or their teachers if they want special help with the course work or with a personal need.



## To Be Admitted to Catechism Class

Before a young person may take part in the class, he or she must be living the good habits listed below and have acquired basic knowledge about prayer and participation in the life of the Church. Parents are responsible to prepare their child and should feel free to ask the Rector for assistance.

Young persons wishing to enter the class must:

1. Be in the habit of
  - a. participating in the Holy Eucharist every Sunday,
  - b. engaging in daily prayer, and
  - c. making a pledge.
2. Show evidence of knowing
  - a. how to take part in the Sunday Eucharist, including
    - i. Responses (opening, lessons, Gospel, dismissal) the Sanctus and Lord's Prayer. (All should be memorized)
    - ii. Use of the body in worship – when to stand, sit, and kneel; when to make the sign of the cross; when to bow and genuflect.
  - b. A short form of the Daily Office. This may be one or more of the forms in the Prayer Book (pp. 137-140), or some other similar form. The Apostles Creed (BCP p. 96) should be known from memory.
  - c. A form of grace at meals from the Prayer Book (p. 835) should be known from memory.
  - d. Some of the traditions of the Church.
  - e. Where to find things in the Prayer Book including the Table of Contents, the Daily Office, Holy Baptism, the Holy Eucharist Rite I and II, Confirmation, the Reconciliation of a Penitent (confession), Ministration to the Sick (Holy Unction), the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage, Ordinations, and the Catechism.
  - f. The two fast days of the Church and other Days of Special Devotion (BCP p. 17).

## CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

### About the Sacrament

"Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God" in which they enter into a life-long union for the purpose of:

their mutual joy and spiritual nurture,  
the help and comfort given one another,  
that their life together might be a sign of Christ's love  
to this sinful and broken world, and  
when God wills, for the procreation of children and their  
nurture in the knowledge and love of God.

"Christian marriage signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and Holy Scripture commends it to be honored among all people." (BCP pp. 122-423)

### Readings for Reflection

In the Prayer Book: "The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage", pp. 422-423  
The Catechesis, "Other Sacramental Rites", pp. 860-861

In the Bible:	Genesis 1:26-28	Colossians 3:12-17
	Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24	I John 4:7-16
	Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7	Matthew 5:1-10
	Tobit 8:5b-8	Matthew 5:13-16
	I Corinthians 13:12-17	Matthew 7:21, 24-29
	Ephesians 3:14-19	Mark 10:6-9, 13-16
	Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33	John 15:9-12

### Preparation for the Marriage

It is expected that those who choose to marry before a priest, in the midst of a Christian congregation, are doing so because of Christian conviction. It is therefore expected that at least one person in the proposed marriage be a baptized Christian and a regular participant in the worship life of this parish. It is also expected that the couple's intention is to live together as husband and wife within the life and love of the Christian community. It is important that the couple be known to the clergy and parish for a significant period of time before the wedding.

The Canons of the Church regarding Marriage will be observed carefully. This includes the requirement of pre-marital counseling, as directed by the priest. The Bishop's permission is required if either party has been divorced. The marriage must be attested to by at least two witnesses and conform to the laws of the state. (BCP p. 422)

As the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is a service of worship, plans concerning the ceremony, flowers, and music are under the direction of the priest.

Before any arrangements are made, be sure to speak with the priest regarding the use of the church and clergy availability. This is to be done at least three months prior to the wedding. Weddings will not be scheduled during Advent or Lent. Weddings may be held at most reasonable times. Check what you have in mind with the priest. Usual times for weddings are: Saturday morning or

afternoon or any evening. It is also possible for the wedding to take place as part of the Sunday Eucharist. Rehearsals are usually held in the evening before the wedding. They require at least one hour.

The priest will meet with the couple for pre-marital instruction and counseling at least five times prior to the marriage. Topics for the sessions will include: the Christian life; Christian marriage; exploration by the couple of some elements of their relationship, such as finances, housing, sexual adjustment, children, employment, etc.; and planning the wedding service. If further counseling is indicated, the couple may be asked to secure professional marriage counseling.

As part of their instruction the couple is expected to read the following:

1. "The Celebration and Blessing of Marriage" (BCP p. 423)
2. "Christian Marriage" guidelines and checklist
3. Other tracts and readings as suggested by the priest
4. A basic introduction to the Christian Life suggested by the priest.

### The Service

The service usually includes the Holy Eucharist with hymns. This is an appropriate celebration of the presence of Christ in the life of the newly married couple and of their participation in the life of the Body. The couple helps the priest in the planning of the service.

The couple may select scripture readings from the list in the Prayer Book on page 426. (See the "Marriage Preparation Check List" in this section). Choose one Old Testament, one Epistle, and one Gospel reading. The Old Testament and Epistle passages may be read by a friend or relative provided he or she is adequately prepared.

### Declaration of Intention

The couple will be expected to sign a "Declaration of Intention".

We, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church. We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society, and we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

At the Offertory, the bread, wine and water are presented to the priest by the newly married persons. This represents the special offering of their new marriage to God, as well as the life and labor of all present. If they choose, the couple may offer bread and wine that they have selected or have made for this event. Check with the priest before making such arrangements, so that the bread and wine provided are appropriate for the Holy Eucharist.

The Episcopal Church has guidelines regarding the reception of Holy Communion that should be communicated to friends and family. "All visitors are welcome to share the Holy Eucharist who have been baptized with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who have been

admitted to Communion in their own church. We are all called to repent our sins and to approach the Holy Communion as an expression of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. May visitors who desire on this occasion to receive Communion in the Episcopal Church find in it the means to strengthen their life within the Christian family and their participation in the church to which they belong, as we pray and work that God's Church may be one." (Adapted from Resolution A4.3, General Convention 1979 and found in "Who may Receive Holy Communion in the Episcopal Church", by J. Robert Wright, a Forward Movement Publication.)

Presentation or giving in marriage is optional. If it is to be done, it takes place after the Declaration of Consent (BCP p. 425). There are several possibilities:

1. The parties are giving themselves to each other in the marriage, so there is no special presenting.
2. Parents, other relatives or friends present both the woman and the man to be married. This recognizes that a larger community of love and support is involved in the marriage.
3. The father, or other relative, presents the woman.

If special flowers are desired, only the number of vases normally used at the altar is needed in the church. Flowers should be white and arranged in the church vases. The flowers should remain on the altar after the service.

Photographs may be taken during the service by one person selected by the couple, provided that an appropriate camera is used and that the photographs are taken in a manner that does not risk distracting the congregation from worship. Flash and/or automatic wind cameras are not to be used during the wedding. Please inform your friends and relatives.

When music is desired the following customs will be observed: "Any music used in connection with a wedding should be suitable for a church service, as distinguished from a social gathering. As in all services of the Church, it should be an aid to worship. Secular music does not fit the serious nature of the ceremony and is far better used at the wedding reception. Usage (often wrongly called "tradition") is not a fitting criterion for the employment in or before the service of love songs, operatic excerpts, or popular songs. The Book of Common Prayer, (p. 14) states that the words of anthems (this includes solos) are to be from the Holy Scripture, the Book of Common Prayer, or from texts congruent with them.

"'Background' music played during the ceremony is entirely out of place. Music at this time is an intrusion that can only serve to weaken the clear solemn words by giving them a mood of sentimentality. It is not necessary that the music for a procession is in march tempo; it is enough that it has a feeling of movement and a mood of dignity and joy.

"In choosing organ music for pre-service usage, it is well to know that music written for other instruments (especially "pop" bands and similar combos) will sound strange when played on the organ. The lack of percussion instruments and drums will make such pieces sound completely out of character. An abundance of excellent music more suitable for Church use, and also appropriate to the serious, yet joyful character of the wedding service, is available in the repertory of most competent organists." (Excerpt from "Music for Church Weddings", an official publication of the Joint Commission on Church Music of the Episcopal Church.)

The priest has final approval of all music. Forms of music that may be used include: hymns sung by the congregation-some hymns should be used whenever there is music at a wedding; organ music or that of another instrument; an anthem sung by a soloist or a small group. Music should be used for the processional, at the offertory, and at the recessional. Music may also be used just before the Ministry of the Word; as a gradual before the Gospel; and during the administration of Holy Communion.

### Fees

There will be a fee for the organist and for the sexton if their services are required. There is no fee for the use of the church or for the services of the priest. You may make an offering to the "Priest's Discretionary Fund" which is used to assist persons in need and for other special parish purposes.

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION CHECK LIST

- 1. Dates and times
  - a. The marriage service: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. The rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Instruction and counseling sessions:
    - i. \_\_\_\_\_
    - ii. \_\_\_\_\_
    - iii. \_\_\_\_\_
    - iv. \_\_\_\_\_
    - v. \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2. Readings for instruction and counseling sessions
  - a. "The Celebration and Blessing of Marriage" (BCP p.423.) Please note:
    - i. What are the purposes of Christian Marriage?
    - ii. Who are the ministers of the Sacrament? (Who does the marrying?)
    - iii. What are the promises you make?
  - b. Other tracts and readings:
    - i. \_\_\_\_\_
    - ii. \_\_\_\_\_
    - iii. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Introduction to the Christian Life
  
- 3. Get marriage license
  
- 4. Sign statement of intention
  
- 5. Plan the details of the service, Readings:
  - a. Old Testament Readings: (Choose one)
    - i.  Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female he created them)
    - ii.  Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)
    - iii.  Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7 (Many waters cannot quench love)
    - iv.  Tobit 8:5b-8 (New English Bible) (That she and I may grow old together)
  
  - b. After the reading: (Choose one)
    - i.  Psalm 67 (May God be merciful to us and bless us)
    - ii.  Psalm 127 (Children are a heritage from the Lord)
    - iii.  Psalm 128 (The Lord bless you from Zion)

- iv.  Silence
- v.  Hymn \_\_\_\_\_

- c. Epistle: (Choose one)
  - i.  1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is patient and kind)
  - ii.  Ephesians 3:14-19 (The Father from whom every family is named)
  - iii.  Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (Walk in love, as Christ loved us)
  - iv.  Colossians 3:12-17 (Love which binds everything together in harmony)
  - v.  I John 4:7-16 (Let us love one another for love is of God)
- d. Psalm: (Choose one)
  - i.  Psalm 67 (May God be merciful to us and bless us)
  - ii.  Psalm 127 (Children are a heritage from the Lord)
  - iii.  Psalm 128 (The Lord bless you from Zion)
  - iv.  Silence
  - v.  Hymn \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Gospel reading: (Choose one)
  - i.  Matthew 5:1-10 (The Beatitudes)
  - ii.  Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the light... Let your light so shine)
  - iii.  Matthew 7:21,24-29 (Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)
  - iv.  Mark 10:6-9,13-16 (They are no longer two but one)
  - v.  John 15:9-12 (Love one another as I have loved you)

- 6. Music (chosen in consultation with the Celebrant and Organist)
  - a.  Processional \_\_\_\_\_
  - b.  Before Ministry of Word \_\_\_\_\_
  - c.  Offertory \_\_\_\_\_
  - d.  Communion \_\_\_\_\_
  - e.  Recessional \_\_\_\_\_
  - f.  Name of Organist or other musicians \_\_\_\_\_

- 7. Have you selected a friend or relative to read a lesson?
  - a. Old Testament: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Epistle: \_\_\_\_\_

- 8. Presentation in Marriage: (Choose one)
  - a.  No special presenting
  - b.  Both woman and man to be presented
  - c.  Woman only to be presented

- 9. Rings

- 10. Witnesses: (At least two)
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 11. Bring marriage license to the rehearsal
  
- 12. At the service
  - a.  Organist fee
  - b.  Sexton fee
  - c.  Couple and witnesses sign official papers



## AT THE TIME OF DEATH

### About the Sacrament

"The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised."

"The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'"

"This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn." (BCP p. 507)

### Call Your Parish Priest

When there is a death in your family, or a family member is near death, call your priest. He or she can stand with you in your pain and share with you the strength of the Christian Faith in the face of death.

### Prayers and Readings: Near death or at the time of death

The Prayer Book provides prayers for the time when a person is near death (p. 462), and at the time of death (p. 462-465). When possible, the family and friends join together in the Litany (p. 462) led by the parish priest or by a layperson if the priest cannot be present.

### Prior to the Funeral

Prior to the funeral it is appropriate that family and friends come together for prayers. The Litany at the Time of Death (p. 462-464) or the Prayers for a Vigil (p. 465-466) may be used. The psalms found on pages 471-479 may be used with these prayers or they may be used for individual prayer and meditation. You may also find it helpful to read and meditate on the Scripture passages suggested on pages 494 and 495.

We suggest that you do not have a "viewing." While it does make sense for those closest to the deceased to see the body, general "viewings" are not a necessary part of Christian burial and may be an unnecessary emotional strain and financial burden. Bereaved persons may wish to have hours at the parish hall or at home to receive visits of love and condolence from family and friends. Time and place may be announced in the newspaper notice.

### The Service

1. "Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has opportunity to be present." (BCP p. 490)

|

2. "The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter." (BCP p. 490) It is appropriate that it be covered with a purple or white pall as a symbol of God's love and mercy and as an expression of our common life in Christ and our equality in the sight of God.
3. The service at the church will include the service for "The Burial of the Dead", Rite I (pp. 469-482) or Rite II (pp. 491-498); the Holy Eucharist, beginning at the Offertory; and the Commendation (pp. 482-484, or 499-500). The Committal (pp. 484-487 or 501-503) normally takes place at the graveside.

#### Planning the service:

1. There will be three scripture readings, one from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament, and one from the Gospels. The family may select these readings from those suggested on pages 494 and 495 (BCP). Otherwise, the priest will select the readings. If you wish, members of the family or friends may read the first two lessons.
2. There is a short homily after the Gospel reading. We do not do eulogies. Eulogies tend to focus on giving praise to the deceased, so those who have more obvious status or greater gifts in this life receive greater praise. The Church gives praise to God in whose love and mercy all are equally held as his children. If the homily is given by a member of the family or a friend they may want to consult the priest to assure the appropriateness of the homily.
3. At the Eucharist, "All visitors are welcome to share the Holy Eucharist who have been baptized with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who have been admitted to Communion in their own church. We are all called to repent our sins and to approach the Holy Communion as an expression of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. May visitors who desire on this occasion to receive Communion in the Episcopal Church find in it the means to strengthen their life within the Christian family and their participation in the church to which they belong, as we pray and work that God's Church may be one." (Adapted from Resolution A43, General Convention 1979 and found in "Who May Receive Holy Communion in the Episcopal Church", by J. Robert Wright, a Forward Movement Publication).
4. At the graveside, earth is cast upon the coffin. At the end of the Committal, the coffin is aspersed (sprinkled) with holy water and we pray that what was begun in baptism may be continued. Family members and friends may come forward one by one to asperse the grave as a symbol of their own prayers for the deceased. This takes the place of the secular practice of each person placing a flower on the coffin.
5. The customary vases of flowers used in the church at a Eucharist are sufficient (but not required). Money that would otherwise be spent on flowers may be given in the person's memory to the Church or to an appropriate charitable organization. In the newspaper notice, "Please omit flowers; memorial

gifts may be sent to...." will help relatives and friends. Large numbers of floral pieces will not be used in the church.

6. It is appropriate to have hymns sung by the congregation, or other forms of music at the service. Music should express the hope and faith that Christians manifest in the face of death. The use of secular music is not permitted. The guidance of the clergy should be sought in the selection of music.
4. The burial rituals of fraternal orders, military organizations, or other such associations, if used, are to be held at some time prior to the Church's burial service.
5. The priest will be in charge of the funeral service. Funeral directors should be so informed and given the priest's phone number.

### The Body

The body may be disposed of in ways other than traditional burial. It is commended as good stewardship to donate one's body or organs for medical, teaching, or research purposes. Cremation is also acceptable, the ashes to be kept in some proper place, such as a columbarium, or buried. All the funeral rites of the Church may be held in the church with the body or ashes present or not present.

### Fees

The church has no fee for the burial of her people. Therefore, the undertaker should never include in a bill any charge for the ministrations of the clergy. If the organist is used, he or she will charge a standard fee. Any money given to the clergy will be used for the Priest's Discretionary Fund.

### Advance Preparation

It is wise to make preparations before death occurs, including:

1. The selection of a burial lot, or other directions for the disposal of the body, such as donations or cremation.
2. The making of a will. It is "the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses." (BCP p. 445)
3. A statement, in writing, of your wishes regarding burial arrangements. You may use the form that follows.

Q. What is the Christian hope?

A. The Christian hope is to live with confidence in the newness and fullness of life, and to await the coming of Christ in glory, and the completion of God's purpose for the world.

Q. What do we mean by the coming of Christ in glory?

A. By the coming of Christ in glory, we mean that Christ will come, not in weakness but in power, and will make all things new.

Q. What do we mean by heaven and hell?

A. By heaven, we mean eternal life in our enjoyment of God; by hell we mean eternal death in our rejection of God.

Q. Why do we pray for the dead?

A. We pray for them, because we still hold them in our love, and because we trust that in God's presence those who have chosen to serve him will grow in his love, until they see him as he is.

Q. What do we mean by the last judgment?

A. We believe that Christ will come in glory and judge the living and the dead.

Q. What do we mean by the resurrection of the body?

A. We mean that God will raise us from death in the fullness of our being, that we may live with Christ in the communion of the saints.

Q. What is the communion of saints?

A. The communion of saints is the whole family of God, the living and the dead, those whom we love and those whom we hurt, bound together in Christ by sacrament, prayer, and praise.

Q. What do we mean by everlasting life?

A. By everlasting life, we mean a new existence, in which we are united with all the people of God, and in the joy of fully knowing and loving God and each other.

Q. What, then, is our assurance as Christians?

A. Our assurance as Christians is that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

## **Interment Policy in a Garden or Columbarium**

The Parish garden and columbarium are part of the sacred space of the church. We make this holy place available for the interment of the cremated remains of those who have had a connection with the life of the parish. Particularly included are members or former members, their spouses, parents, siblings, children and grandchildren, whether biological, adopted, foster, or step. Others may also be interred on the recommendation of the rector with the consent of the Vestry.

**Burial Rites:** The rector will prescribe the burial rites for all those interred in either the garden or columbarium.

**Records:** The rector will maintain a record of all interments. This record will contain the name of the deceased, dates and places of birth and death, and former position or relationship with the parish. There will also be a diagram of the columbarium and garden with the location of the remains of each person interred noted on it.

### **Interment in the columbarium**

**Location and description:** The Columbarium is located in the wall of the parish garden. The wall contains spaces or niches that are twelve inches wide by ten inches tall by eight inches deep. An engraved plaque will cover each space as ashes are interred there. Ashes will be interred within a container, as specified below. Each niche will have space for two containers of remains. The rector will choose the specific site in the columbarium wall after consulting with the family. The columbarium wall is part of the design of the parish garden. The Memorials Committee in accordance with the landscaping plan for the garden will consider any requests for special plantings in the area.

**Containers:** Cremated remains will be placed in an urn provided by the parish or in one that meets the parish's specifications.

**Memorial Plaques:** There will be an engraved brass plaque on each interment site in the columbarium. These plaques will give the name and dates of birth and death of the deceased. The church office will arrange engraving of the plaques.

**Reservation of space:** No empty niche in the Columbarium will be reserved in advance. When 1 space in a niche is taken, however, the 2nd space can be shared by anyone designated, either by arrangement made by the deceased prior to death, or according to the wishes of the family. Niches, however, can be purchased at any time.

**Costs:** There will be a fee of \$1,000 for interment in the columbarium. This fee will cover interment costs, the cost of engraving the brass plaque, and the cost of the interment container. There will be an additional fee of \$300 for a second person interred in the same niche. All fees may be reduced or waived at the recommendation of the rector with the consent of the Vestry.

### **Interment in the Parish Garden**

**Location and description:** The parish garden is an enclosed and landscaped space within the grounds of the Church. Space is available among the plantings for interment of ashes. Ashes will be interred directly into the garden; no container will be used. The rector in consultation with the family will choose the specific site in the garden. The Memorials Committee in accordance with the landscaping plan for the garden will consider any requests for special plantings.

**Memorial plaques:** Memorial plaques may be used to commemorate those buried in the garden. When used, plaques will be installed near the remains. The plaques will be approximately nine inches by four inches in size and will conform in style to those currently in use. The church office will arrange acquisition and installation of the plaques.

**Costs:** There will be a fee of \$300 for interment in the garden. This fee will cover interment costs and the cost of engraving the memorial plaque. The fee may be reduced or waived at the recommendation of the rector with the consent of the Vestry.

### **Other information:**

**Agreement:** The legal title to the interment place will remain with the Church and interment is by license of the church. The Church retains full authority to exhume and re-inter remains if, for any reason, the Church and/or the Columbarium or garden should ever be relocated. Family members who wish to have disinterment and removal of remains may apply to seek approval from the Vestry. The next of kin of the deceased whose remains will be interred will be given a copy of this policy and be asked to sign an acknowledgement of his/her receipt of the policy.

**Distribution:** Copies of this policy will be distributed to all local funeral homes for their files. Copies will be made available to all current parishioners.

**Policy revisions or exceptions:** The Vestry will review this policy statement periodically and reserves the right to make such revisions as changing conditions require.

## FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

A statement for the guidance of my parish and family.

### A. THE WORSHIP SERVICE

1. Services are to be conducted at \_\_\_\_\_ (Parish Church), (City or Town). The parish priest will be in charge of the services and all related arrangements. Funeral directors should be informed and given the priest's phone number. It is my desire that the services be conducted as instructed by the parish priest and as provided in the Book of Common Prayer. The priest will make selections when no preference is expressed below.
2. Please use
  - The Burial of the Dead: Rite One (BCP p. 469)
  - The Burial of the Dead; Rite Two (BCP p. 491)
3. The Liturgy of the Word (Please choose one from each category)
  - a. Old Testament
    - Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death forever)
    - Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort those who mourn)
    - Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good to those who wait for him) (The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God)
    - Wisdom 3:1-5, 9
    - Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer lives)Choice of reader: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. After this lesson
    - Psalm 42:1-7 (As the deer longs for the water-brooks)
    - Psalm 46 (God is our refuge and strength)
    - Psalm 90:1-12 (Lord, you have been our refuge)
    - Psalm 121 (I lift up my eyes to the hills)
    - Psalm 130 (Out of the depths have I called)
    - Psalm 139:1-11 (Lord, you have searched me out)
    - Hymn \_\_\_\_\_
    - Silence
  - c. New Testament
    - Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed) (The imperishable body)
    - I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (Things that are unseen are eternal)
    - II Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (We shall be like him)
    - I John 3:1-2 (God will wipe away every tear)
    - Revelation 7:9-17 (Behold, I make all things new)
    - Revelation 21:2-7Choice of reader: \_\_\_\_\_

d. After this Lesson

- Psalm 23 (The Lord is my shepherd)
- Psalm 27 (The Lord is my light and my salvation)
- Psalm 106:1-5 (Hallelujah! Give thanks to the Lord for he is good)
- Psalm 116 (I love the Lord, because he has heard the voice of my supplication)
- Hymn \_\_\_\_\_
- Silence

e. The Gospel

- John 5:24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life)
- John 6:37-40 (All that the Father gives will come to me)
- John 10:11-16 (I am the good shepherd)
- John 11:21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life)
- John 14:1-6 (In my Father's house are many rooms)

4. The Holy Communion

a. I would like the following people to present the offerings of bread and wine to the deacon or celebrant at the Offertory

- i. \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_

b. Eucharistic Prayer:

When using Rite I

I p. 333

II p. 340

When using Rite II

A p. 361

B p. 367

C p. 369

D p. 372

5. Music

Music is an integral part of Christian worship. Please list several hymns you would like.

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6. Additional requests for the service:

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B. OTHER INFORMATION

1. Memorial Gifts

The Church does not make use of any lavish display of flowers. The customary vases near the altar are sufficient to remind those present of the joy of Christ's Resurrection. In place of flowers, memorial donations may be made to:

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Other(s) (please list): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Time for Friends and Family to Gather

I would like an opportunity to be provided for my friends and family to gather:

at the parish

in my home

elsewhere: \_\_\_\_\_

I would prefer that there not be any general viewing.

3. My Remains

a. I wish my remains to be

buried (in a modest casket)

cremated

donated for research

an organ to be donated for transplant

b. I would like my remains to be interred in: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. My preference for a funeral director: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Will and Lawyer

a. My will is on file at: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. My lawyer is: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

It is "the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provisions for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in

health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able to leave bequests for religious and charitable purposes." (BCP p. 445)

5. Family Information

a. My next of kin is (name, address, phone): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Other Immediate family are (name, address, phone; attach sheets if necessary):

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c. Others to be notified of my death are (name, address, phone; attach sheets if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

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d. Names and birthplaces of parents:

Father: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Other Information

Date and place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Social Security number: \_\_\_\_\_

Military Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: (You may want to attach papers that provide information such as bank accounts, safety deposit box, location of insurance policies, credit cards to cancel, list of assets and liabilities, etc.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Name)

These instructions should be placed on file at the parish office and a copy given to a close friend or relative.

**A STATEMENT OF WISHES REGARDING TERMINAL ILLNESS OR INJURY**

To my family, my friends, my physician, my priest, and my lawyer;

If the time comes when I am no longer mentally capable of taking part in decisions about my own future, let this statement stand as the testament my beliefs and wishes.

As a Christian, I understand quality of life to mean spiritual unity with God and each other in Christ. Nothing can separate us from his love, including suffering and death. I hope and pray that such measure of pain, suffering or disability as I may have to bear will deepen my participation in the death and resurrection of our Lord. At the same time, I believe with the Church that I am not obligated, nor are my family or doctors obligated, to use or continue using extraordinary means of preserving life.

Therefore, I ask that my family, friends, doctors, and clergy:

1. Regard my life as purposeful, even if I am unconscious or severely impaired.
2. Pray with me, even if I am apparently unaware of these prayers.
3. Discuss with each other, as fully as may be possible and appropriate, what would constitute ordinary and extraordinary means of prolonging life. I understand ordinary means to include those medicines, treatments and operations which offer a reasonable hope of success and which can be obtained and used without excessive pain, excessive expense, or other excessive difficulties.
4. Support the member(s) of my family responsible for decisions about treatment, should they decide to avoid or discontinue extraordinary means of prolonging life.
5. Make provision, if possible, for me to die at home, in a hospice or in some other environment of human support and companionship, even if the absence of emergency technology may hasten the moment of death.
6. Provide for the administration of drugs for terminal suffering, even if they may hasten the moment of death.
7. Make provision, if possible, for removal for transplantation of any organs or tissues which may enhance the life or health of another.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness(es): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## PARISH OPERATING PRINCIPLES FOR WORSHIP

1. We make use of the services provided in the Book of Common Prayer and other authorized services of the Episcopal Church (such as those found in the Book of Occasional Services) following the rubrics and recommendations they provide.
2. We always strive to do these services to the best of our ability, offering the best of the Episcopal tradition as the Church now understands it, and as it fits this community. In this, we participate in the common prayer of the wider Church and of the Church in history.
3. In our tradition, primary responsibility for worship is assigned to the Rector. The priest is responsible to act in conformity to the standards of the Episcopal Church. This is, in reality, a protection for each congregation so that the historical and common worship of the wider Church is maintained, keeping the parish's worship life rooted in the mainstream of the Church's current practice.
4. The Rector's responsibility for worship will be exercised in continuing consultation with the Vestry and with lay persons actively engaged in assisting in worship who:
  - Have the interest and gifts;
  - Are knowledgeable regarding prayer and liturgy in our tradition; and
  - Are willing to give the time to take part in the consultative process.

We currently have in place the basic pattern of Prayer Book worship, which includes:

- The Holy Eucharist as the primary act of worship on Sunday;
- Public use of the Daily Office;
- Regular teaching programs for prayer and spiritual life;
- Full use of the Holy Week and Easter liturgies.

Within this pattern, the worship guild and the Rector work on ways to deepen and enrich worship life. For example, we explore ways to emphasize the harmony and unity of our worship space; continually improve the functioning of our Liturgical Assistants and Acolytes; develop a list of needed gifts for worship; etc.

**PARISH BUDGET**  
Policy and Procedure Standards

1. Identify line items for which various people may authorize disbursement within the amount allotted, e.g.,
  - Rector/Vicar authorizes: discretionary fund, sacristy/worship, evangelization, stewardship, education, parish development, office supplies, postage, music, clergy continuing education and possibly salaries.
  - Property committee authorizes minor property expenses.
2. Submit regular monthly budget reports to Vestry for brief review only and more extensive reports quarterly for fuller discussion;
3. Anticipate and approve special collections in advance of the budget year;
4. Secure Vestry approval of special purpose funds (library, flowers, etc.) before they are established;
5. Establish a "Priest's Discretionary Fund." It is normal practice for the priest to do this. Into this fund go whatever the parish has budgeted, offerings from marriages and burials, special gifts, and any money that comes in discretionary fund envelopes. This fund is turned over to the new priest after a transition;
6. Establish a new policy for "Memorials" that keeps matters in the hands of the priest and the Vestry;
7. The parish needs to be clear that all funds are under control of the priest or the Vestry and not of the congregation as a whole, or of any particular guild or group. Any funds held by groups in the parish are done so with permission of the Vestry.

## **POLICY ON MEMORIAL AND THANKSGIVING GIFTS**

Gifts may be made to the parish at any time. Gifts not designated for any specific purpose will be placed in the memorial savings fund for special purposes determined by the Vestry.

Gifts may be designated for particular purposes in the following way:

1. They may be given toward some item or purpose included in lists of special needs compiled from time to time by the Vicar and/or Vestry in their respective areas of responsibility.
2. A member may suggest another purpose for a gift. Any gift related to Worship, Christian Education or Spiritual Formation must be approved by the Vicar. Any gift involving additions or renovations to the property unrelated to worship, or the establishment of any new parish fund, must be approved by the Vestry. Gifts for major property alterations to the sanctuary or nave must be approved by both Vicar and Vestry. Members are asked to discuss their ideas about such gifts with the Vicar or a Warden (as appropriate to the nature of the gift) before determining your family intentions, so that the designation of the gift may be mutually satisfactory, and a source of joy for all concerned.

At the time any gift, designated or undesignated, is received, the names of the donor and the person being remembered are recorded in the parish memorial book in the back of the church. Plaques are not attached to specific items.

Money for flowers may be given at any time. Flowers are frequently offered on the anniversary of the birth or death of a loved one; in thanksgiving for the birth of a baby, a birthday, a wedding anniversary, Baptism, Confirmation, etc. All monies for these occasions go directly to the Altar Guild member who oversees the Sunday flower arrangements, coordinates dates, and keeps a record of all receipts and expenses.

## **AUDIT PROCEDURES**

The majority of parishes maintain annual operating statements consisting of income and disbursements. This is a recommended checklist of those Audit Procedures necessary for the performance of a satisfactory audit that will result in the issuance of a Certificate of Audit.

Larger parishes will be expected to appoint or hire a Certified or Independent Public Accountant. Smaller parishes whose total annual budgets are \$75,000 or below are encouraged to use a CPA or IPA, but may use an "audit committee" of at least three members of another parish or mission not otherwise involved in financial matters of the church being audited; however, a committee of the same parish not otherwise involved in financial matters would be acceptable if necessary. Exceptions to these requirements must be approved in writing by the Bishop's Office.

### Cash Receipts

1. Check cash receipts as entered in cashbook against weekly cash count sheets and duplicate deposit slips.
2. Verify proper distribution of total receipts to the various columns (e.g., plate offering, pledge payments, etc.); check and crosscheck all totals.
3. Check for balance in Transfer Accounts that should have been closed out prior to year-end (Mite Box, Presiding Bishop's Fund, Theological Education, etc.)
4. Reconcile bank balance in books with bank statement at beginning and end of year.
5. Make a total of the receipts as entered on the pledge records; compare total with amount recorded in cashbook; account for any major discrepancies.

### Cash Disbursements

1. Compare paid checks with entries in books.
2. Examine checks carefully for authorized signature(s) and proper endorsement.
3. Check paid invoices against entries in cashbook; note proper distribution to the various expense columns.
4. Compare total paid expenses to budgeted amount; verify substantial differences.
5. Trace transfers to savings accounts, including Memorial Funds.
6. Trace all voided checks to cash disbursement book; also checking statement to make sure check has not cleared.

### Invested Funds and Endowments

Canons state "Trust and permanent funds and all securities of any kind shall be deposited with a Federal or State bank, or a Diocesan Corporation, or other agency, approved in writing by the Executive Council, under either a Deed of Trust or an Agency Agreement."



Therefore, it is only necessary that the Audit Procedure include:

1. Verification of receipt and proper disposition of any new funds received in the year under audit.
2. Examination for proper authorization for surrender of funds; determine that all transactions are in accordance with the provisions of the original instrument.

\_\_\_\_\_ Church located at \_\_\_\_\_

### BASIC RECORDS FOR AUDIT

The Treasurer will make available the following records as needed:

	Record Provided
1. Cash Receipts and Disbursements Book (or Computer Printout)	_____
2. Checkbook stubs for year; cancelled checks & bank statements	_____
3. File of paid invoices	_____
4. Weekly record of cash receipts (Sunday counter sheets)	_____
5. Duplicate deposit slips or pass books	_____
6. Record of endowment and investment fund transactions, if any	_____
7. Savings, including Memorial Fund, pass books	_____
8. Copy of year-end Treasurer's Report to the annual parish meeting	_____
9. Record of pledges and payments	_____

Note: If any of the above records is missing, it should be noted.

### Statement of Internal Control

The Treasurer must answer in writing the following:

1. Who counts the Sunday offering? (Vestry and/or named individuals) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When is Sunday offering counted? \_\_\_\_\_  
When is the deposit made? \_\_\_\_\_  
Do at least two people count the offering?  Yes  No  
Do the counters sign counter sheet?  Yes  No
3. What procedures are in effect for counting and depositing other cash receipts?  
How are expenditures authorized? (Example: Requisition System) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Are all expenditures made by check? (List exceptions, if any)

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5. Who is authorized to sign checks? Name(s) & Position(s)

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---

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6. Is a full and complete accounting of all funds, including savings, Memorial, investment and endowment funds, made in the Annual Parochial Report?

Yes  No

If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Is a list of unpaid bills and balances due (if any) prepared at year-end?

Yes  No

8. Are statements sent to each pledging unit?  Yes  No

If yes, frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Are all Trust and Permanent Funds with the Trustees of Donations and Bequests or deposited with a Federal or State bank as required by National Canon?

Yes  No

If yes, explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Were any new Trust and Permanent Funds received or any existing funds surrendered during the year?  Yes  No

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATE OF AUDIT**

TO: Vestry

We have examined the accounts of the Treasurer of \_\_\_\_\_  
Church located at \_\_\_\_\_  
for the year ended December 31, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

The necessary "Basic Records for Audit" were provided to us, except as noted below.

We are satisfied with the Treasurer's responses to the "Statement of Internal Control,"  
except as noted below.

In the course of our examination, we have noted the following:

It is our understanding that all Treasurers are adequately bonded and all properties are  
adequately insured under blanket policies with the Diocese and therefore, these were  
not part of our examination.

Respectfully submitted,

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Audit Committee

Copies to: Clerk  
              Bishop

Based on Policies of  
the Diocese of Connecticut

## GUIDELINES FOR AUDITING/REVIEWING CLERGY DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

**Statement of Purpose:** It is understood that, by Canon Law, Discretionary Funds for the use of clergy were first established as a vehicle to distribute alms to those in need. (See the National Canons of the Episcopal Church). It was the function of "the Clergy in charge of the Parish or Mission" to receive funds to be distributed at his/her discretion for the poor and for other purposes related to his/her ministry. For some clergy, the Discretionary Fund has become a type of "Parish Petty Cash Fund" or, to use the Internal Revenue Service Term, "business expense" account. While for some this may have facilitated a degree of ease of record keeping for clergy, it has also led others to misuse the Discretionary Fund, converting it, in some cases, to personal income rather than business purposes.

The following guidelines are recommended for use by clergy and vestries and their designated auditors in auditing Discretionary Funds. Said audits shall be submitted with the annual parish audit.

1. It is understood that Discretionary Funds are monies given into the care of the clergy, to be used at his/her discretion, in the discharge of his/her ministry. It is also understood that these monies are given to the "priest in charge," which is not only the person to whom they were given, but also the "office" the person occupies and to any and all incumbents or successors. They are not personal money.

Personal honoraria are income, should be reported as such, have taxes paid on them, and then may be used personally. Clergy should announce publicly their policy; i.e. honoraria either are used personally, or are placed in the Discretionary Fund for the advancement of ministry, in the clergy's discretion.

Those who wish to contribute to the Discretionary Fund should do so in such a way that funds appear first in other Parish Records. Clergy who place honoraria into a Discretionary Fund should ask that checks be made payable to the Church, not the individual. If checks made payable to the individual clergyperson are deposited into the Discretionary Fund, we understand that by civil law, the clergyperson has made a donation to the Fund, and should report the honorarium as personal income, and the deposit as a "donation" for Income Tax purposes.

Should income from Trust Funds ever be placed into a Discretionary Fund, it is understood that the principal of the Trust Fund is not to be administered alone by the priest-in-charge, but by the Vestry. Income from the Trust Fund should appear in other Parish records before being deposited into the Discretionary Fund. All Canons concerning the investment of funds are to be observed in letter as well as in spirit.

2. If it is appropriate protect the anonymity of those who receive aid from a Discretionary Fund, clergy should not use a name in drawing checks from the

Discretionary Fund. As necessary, and within reason, checks may be drawn to "cash." There should, however, be a personal and confidential note or diary kept by the clergyperson, as to who received these funds. If challenged the clergyperson can produce this record, which acts as an "audit trail" for possible verification.

3. It is not advisable to use a Discretionary Fund as a "Petty Cash" fund, nor should "Professional Expenses" of the clergy be paid from the Discretionary Fund. If necessary, separate accounts should be established for these purposes. It is strongly recommended that the Treasurer and/or a Warden of the Parish be a signatory of this fund, to avoid suspicion on the part of the Internal Revenue Service. In all instances, it is strongly recommended that two signatures be on any such account. These funds are not part of the personal funds of the clergyperson, and are not to be used as such.

All business-related items that are paid for from the Discretionary Fund, and are intended for the personal use of the clergyperson, and not to be used by subsequent incumbents, shall be reported as personal income by the clergyperson. Valid expenses for the clergy's ministry should be paid by the Parish and not through Discretionary Funds.

4. An Audit of Discretionary Funds should be performed by the same firm of persons who do the usual Parish Audit. If possible, it is advisable to have one discreet auditor, perhaps the senior partner of the firm, or a warden, perform the audit of the Discretionary Fund. If, because of the size of the congregation, it is necessary to have a Parish Committee do the audit, the person who audits the Discretionary Funds should be chosen by the Vestry and approved by the clergyperson. It should be impressed upon such persons that Discretionary Funds are sometimes used for those with personal needs, and that the names of such people are to be kept in strict confidence.
5. If the auditor finds material "exceptions" in the audit/review of the Discretionary Fund, it should be so marked on the Diocesan Audit Form, and submitted with the regular annual audit.
6. If the auditor finds material "exceptions" within the Discretionary Fund, the auditor will report the exceptions to the Bishop of the Diocese to be resolved pastorally between the Bishop and the cleric.

Based on Guidelines of  
The Diocese of Connecticut

### **GUIDELINES FOR PARISH CONFLICTS**

Disagreements are a normal part of parish life. How the parish addresses disagreements and conflicts determines whether they will be healthy and growth producing or

divisive and destructive. The ways we live together and minister as a parish are important to members, the community we are part of, and the larger Church. We will disagree about what is the most faithful, effective and appropriate manner of parish life and ministry. There are times when disagreements over these matters, over who will have influence in a situation, or over personal styles will develop into a full blown conflict. Christians are called to handle their disagreements and conflicts in light of their baptismal promises, especially to "respect the dignity of every human being". The following are suggested guidelines for a parish in conflict.

### **I. The Use of the Guidelines**

- A. Parish leaders, clergy and lay, have an obligation to adopt an approach to conflict that is consistent with the nature and mission of the Church.
- B. These guidelines are specifically about clergy/lay conflict. They will also apply to other situations and make use of other examples.
- C. The guidelines should be understood to apply in most situations. There will be reasonable exceptions.
- D. Make appropriate use of consultants and diocesan staff in applying the guidelines. Follow the guidance of the Bishop.
- E. The guidelines should be generally available in the parish and can be productively used in adult education.

### **II. The Issue**

- A. Our concern in conflict management is the Church not ascribe blame or find fault. Clergy and lay leaders must decide:
  - 1. Whether they want to continue in Christian life and ministry together. Do they want to resolve the situation?
  - 2. Whether they can find a way to work out the conflict so that the parish can restore or establish faithful and productive relationships and act on the mission of the Church.
  - 3. Whether they will work to understand this conflict in terms of the Gospel, specifically in terms of the Church's nature and mission. They also need to identify the specific areas in which decisions need to be made that will allow for a sufficient level of resolution.
  - 4. As a conflict continues to unfold, these decisions will need to be looked at in light of what is being experienced and learned.

### **III. Steps**

- 1. Steps to follow when in serious disagreement:

1. Share the complaint/concern directly with the person. Listen carefully; respond by acknowledging what you accept or understand and note areas that need clarification or in which there is still disagreement. If the matter is serious enough you may need to ask to talk again. If, after this initial dialogue, there is not an adequate degree of resolution and the matter is significant enough,
  2. Ask another person whom both parties trust to join the discussion. If there is still not an adequate degree of resolution and the matter is significant enough,
  3. Take the dispute to whoever is the appropriate person or group with formal authority. Ask for guidance or mediation (e.g., two members of the parish in conflict might go to the Rector for assistance, a small group upset with the Rector might go to the Wardens, children in the church school might go to their teacher). Then, if there is not an adequate degree of resolution and the matter is significant enough,
  4. An outside consultant might be brought into the situation to mediate and assist the parties to resolve the problem. (The Bishop's Office can suggest a consultant.) When (in a dispute between the Rector and the Vestry) there is not an adequate degree of resolution and the matter is significant enough,
  5. The Rector and/or wardens and/or vestry, and only these parties, might take the issue to the Bishop for his advice and/or judgment.
2. When going through the steps:
1. Prepare yourself for meetings by: prayer and meditation; trying to understand the ideas and feelings of all parties; examining your own behavior and, as appropriate, making a confession; talking about this with other Christians who will be honest with you and help you think about your role in the conflict; being specific regarding concerns, providing examples, explaining what it is that you want.
  2. As you reach each step, take a prayerful and blunt look at whether it is responsible to pursue the matter further. It takes courage to "let go" when we have not gotten our way. It also takes courage to continue on a difficult path. What in your mind would be an adequate degree of resolution? What makes the matter significant enough to pursue?
3. When an appropriate authority has made a decision to resolve the conflict,



support that decision and person.

4. Always go through the prior steps. If someone is making a serious complaint against another, do not simply listen. Ask them if they have spoken to that person. Urge them to do so. Bishops sometimes receive complaints against a priest from people who have not directly discussed it with the priest or taken it to the wardens or vestry. Normally Bishops will not meet with people other than the Rector, wardens or vestry and will refer others to the appropriate leaders within the parish.
5. Avoid sharing information with anyone not appropriately involved in a given step.

#### IV. General Standards in Conflict

- A. Keep all parties involved and informed. Information is only useful for resolving/managing a conflict if it is available to all the parties. Avoid sharing or receiving information when the source cannot be divulged. Information received in other ways only creates a hostile climate and encourages gossip.
- B. There should not be any meetings that other primary parties are unaware of. The Vestry should never have secret meetings. Usually the Vestry should not meet in the absence of the Rector, even if the Rector says he/she approves. Normally the Bishop should not meet with the wardens or vestry without the knowledge and usually the presence of the Rector.

Because of the pastoral relationship, it is appropriate at any time for the Bishop to meet alone with a priest.

Under the guidance of a consultant or representative of the Bishop, it is often necessary to arrange for private working groups as part of a process of conflict management, e.g., a meeting just with the wardens or with a dissident group. However, the fact that such a meeting will take place should usually be public information.

- C. Do not inflame the situation. Threats to cut one's pledge, leave the parish, etc., are always unacceptable. Emotional blackmail is equally unacceptable regardless of the form it takes, e.g., sullen withdrawal, emotional outbursts, attacking another's motives, continuing to raise an issue after the decision has been made, etc. Avoid "dramatic" acts; don't surprise others by your actions.

- D. Work to contain the conflict. Limit involvement to those who must be involved.

Nurture an environment of trust and order by making use of formal structures, using the guidelines, following the advice of consultants or bishops, etc. Do not spread rumors. Do not share the details with the whole parish or in a manner that might seem like gossip. Those who already know of the conflict should be kept informed of the general steps being taken and of any information that all parties agree might be made public for good cause. Most members will need to be asked to trust that the Rector, Wardens and Vestry (along with the consultant and/or Bishop's Office) are attending to the conflict.

- E. Other parish clergy, whether assistants or simply members, must take great care in their behavior. Their sensitive position in the parish requires that they either support the Rector fully or quietly and discreetly stay out of it. They must take care not to allow themselves to be put in the position of being a "counter Rector," an alternative source of symbolic authority.
- F. Persons who cannot honestly and actively give themselves to the work of renegotiation and reconciliation should be asked to resign from positions of leadership. Persons who actively continue in a stubborn pattern of bitterness, hostility and an unwillingness to work for reconciliation may, after appropriate conversation and warning, have the disciplinary rubrics (BCP p. 409) applied to them. This should be done jointly by the Bishop and Rector as the canons and rubrics allow.

#### V. Ways To Avoid Unfaithful, Destructive Conflict

- A. Accept that conflict is a normal part of parish life calling for our patience, courage, compassion, prayer and discussion. Do not expect quick or easy solutions.
- B. Develop a sense of direction and shape to parish life. Establish a long-range parish plan that describes how this parish will carry out the mission of the Church. Make use of a framework for thinking about, evaluating and planning, e. g., the Christian Life Model (Gallagher, Power From on High, Ascension Press), Next Steps in Mission, (Office of Communications, Episcopal Church Center), New Directions in Ministry (Turner, Forward Movement), etc.
- C. Help the parish to be clear about the Episcopal Church's tradition, standards and understandings of the appropriate relationship among people, and between priest and congregation. Start with the assumption that in this parish we will live in the larger Church and that we will do things in the manner the Church has provided in the Book of Common Prayer, in the Canons, through the guidance of our Bishop, etc.
- D. Seek the help of a consultant and/or the Bishop's Office as soon as you reach that

step. Do not let the conflict sit and simmer.

**VI. Scripture For Meditation and Study**

Matthew 18:15-17  
Matthew 18:21-22  
Luke 17:3-4  
Matthew 10:11-14

I Corinthians 6:1-7  
I Corinthians 13  
Luke 10:5-6, 10-11

## A POLICY ON ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

The Episcopal Church in the United States of America acknowledges its call to exercise a healing ministry with, and to offer guidance to, problem drinkers, chemically dependent persons, and members of their families and communities.

Alcoholism and the abuse of other drugs are treatable human disorders that are manifested in a three-fold impairment of body, mind, and spirit. The Church concurs with health authorities that alcohol abuse and other substance abuse disorders are major health concerns in our society. They affect not only the alcoholic or drug abuser's physical, spiritual and mental health, but also interpersonal relationships within families and among co-workers, friends, and helping persons. These disorders may strike any person regardless of family status, age, gender, financial situation, education, employment, race, or creed.

In order to fulfill the obligation to provide leadership and support to Christ's people in this ministry, the policy:

- Calls all clergy and lay people to take to heart the seriousness of the illnesses of alcohol and drug abuse and their manifestations as disrupters of spiritual, family, economic and social life;
- Urges Christians to do all in their power to offer the love of Christ in his healing ministry to afflicted persons and their families;
- Urges congregations to support Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, Alateen, Adult Children of Alcoholics, Narcotics Anonymous, chemical dependency programs, and halfway houses in their communities;
- Encourages congregations to provide opportunities for learning about the nature, prevention, treatment, and pastoral care of alcoholics, drug abusers, and their families and communities;
- Encourages clergy and pastoral counselors to pursue continuing education opportunities in these fields; and,
- Endorses and adopts as diocesan policy the following (resolution of the 68th General Convention) with regard to the treatment of alcoholic or drug dependent clergy and lay employees:

Alcoholic or drug dependent employees of the church should be treated with pastoral love and concern. Church health insurance policies should include provision for the treatment and care of persons afflicted with these illnesses. Treatment intervention for the person and family along with counseling and continuing support during recovery should be coordinated by the clergy and other support groups in the parish. Every effort should be made to offer job protection and re-employment, with salaried sick leave during hospitalization, to alcoholics and drug abusers accepting treatment. Those refusing treatment will not be offered this protection. (National Episcopal Coalition on Alcohol, "Quarterly Commentary," No. 8, Fall 1985, Washington, D. C. page 9-10.)

Toward these ends, a Committee on Alcohol and Substance Abuse is established. This committee will assist in the development of resources in the areas of alcoholism and substance abuse prevention, intervention and treatment, the identification of consultants to assist interested clergy and congregations and will advise on the development of appropriate ministry strategies and personnel policies in this area.

The Parish will:

- A. Adopt a stated policy on the use or exclusion of alcoholic beverages at social functions. A recommended "Model Policy on the Use of Alcoholic Beverages in Congregations" is attached.
- B. Review previously adopted policies in the light of the attached "Model Policy."
- C. Establish an alcohol policy as the duty of the clergy, wardens, and vestry, or other governing body, to formulate, disseminate, and assure compliance with such a stated policy at all functions sponsored by the congregation or taking place in church-owned or operated facilities.

## **A MODEL POLICY ON THE USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN CONGREGATIONS**

Alcohol and substance abuse, epidemic in our society, affect not only the physical and emotional components of human health and behavior, but also the spiritual health of the total person. The Church has a clear mandate to minister to those who suffer from alcoholism and a social responsibility to set appropriate guidelines for the use of alcoholic beverages. Although the responsible social use of alcohol is permitted, the Church has a duty to those who, for one reason or another, choose not to drink.

1. Persons who choose not to drink alcoholic beverages should not be made to feel embarrassment, discomfort, or inconvenience in exercising their preference.
2. If alcohol is served, non-alcoholic beverages and food are to be made readily available with the same attractiveness and accessibility.
3. Any beverage or food which contains alcohol must be clearly be labeled as such.
4. Moderation is to be observed in the serving of alcoholic beverages.
5. Church meetings or functions should not be planned or advertised so that the focus of the event is centered on the use of alcohol (e.g., a "Wine and Cheese Party").
6. Recognizing the effect of alcohol as a mood-altering drug, it is advisable to consider the nature of the function at which it is proposed that alcoholic beverages be served.
7. All legal restrictions including those regarding the sale of alcoholic beverages or service to minors must be observed.
8. Care must be taken to insure that responsible persons are in control of the serving of alcoholic beverages in order to assure moderate consumption. Such responsibility includes providing alternative transportation for anyone whose driving ability might be impaired.
9. Chemical usage, other than alcohol, is clearly controlled under Federal, State, and local laws and, as such, should be forbidden at any church function.

Based on Guidelines of  
the Diocese of Connecticut

## **BUILDING USE POLICY**

1. Any ministry of the Church or any group comprised mainly of parishioners may use parish facilities provided they make their request in advance to the Parish Administrator, make adequate arrangements for locking and unlocking the building and setting the burglar alarm, and observe appropriate behavior while using the building.
  
2. Any outside group, even if its membership includes members of the Church, shall be subject to the following additional conditions for using parish facilities:
  - The group shall pay a fee of \$20/hour plus \$15/hour for the Sexton's time (based on additional work and/or overtime hours he must spend to accommodate the group).
  - The group must sign a Letter of Agreement that indemnifies the Church from any liability for accidents or injuries to members of the group while on parish property.
  - All arrangements must be made two weeks in advance of the date the group wishes to use parish facilities.
  - The above fees can only be waived if the group in question makes a written request to the Parish Administrator one month prior to the date of proposed use. After consulting with the Rector, the Parish Administrator will notify the group two weeks in advance of the date of proposed use as to whether the fees will be waived.
  - The group using our facilities is responsible for the care of the property, and for the cleanliness of equipment and furnishings they use. Reimbursement is required for any damage incurred during use.
  
3. None of the above policies shall be construed as conflicting with the canonical authority of the Rector as it pertains to the use of Buildings, Land, Facilities, and Equipment.

USE OF BUILDING LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Name of Organization\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone\_\_\_\_\_Date of Proposed Use\_\_\_\_\_

Portion of the facilities to be used:

Parish Hall\_\_\_\_\_

Parlor\_\_\_\_\_

Library\_\_\_\_\_

Garden\_\_\_\_\_

Kitchen\_\_\_\_\_

Equipment needed:

number of chairs\_\_\_\_\_

number of tables\_\_\_\_\_

other\_\_\_\_\_

Sexton

Set up needed?\_\_\_\_\_ By when?\_\_\_\_\_ (date/time)

Agreed:\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

(signature of person responsible)

*Note: By signing above, the organization indemnifies the Church from any and all liability for accidents or injuries to members of the organization while on parish property.*

Phone number for contact purposes\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

++++  
*For Parish Use Only*



## Part II Organizational Structures in Parish Development

### INTRODUCTION

The life of the Church can never be reduced to organizational definitions. Nevertheless, questions of organization are important. Our methods and structures will tend either to express and reinforce the true nature and mission of the Church, or to establish a parallel system disconnected from the spiritual reality of the Body of Christ. The "spiritual" and "business" affairs of the parish go together like body and soul.

This does not mean that there is one form of organization that is "Christian." All organizational structures and methods must be measured by their suitability to express the nature and mission of the Church, to fit the current needs of the Body, to be faithful and effective, and to work in harmony with our polity and spiritual tradition.

#### Long Term vs. Short Term Groups

One way of beginning to think about appropriate structures is to clarify whether a group has a long-term responsibility or a more specific short-term task. The proliferation of committees, especially in medium-sized or small parishes, can overtax the system and make oversight difficult.

For long-term units – such as the vestry, guilds related to worship, etc. – it is helpful to develop a broad statement defining the scope of their responsibilities, authority and accountability, plus a list of specific ongoing duties the group is to perform. Short-term groups are best brought together around specific objectives, determined by Rector or vestry, which the group can accomplish and then disband.

In small- and medium-sized parishes, we may at times have too many intermediate groups. A handful of permanent groups – with substantial work to do, clear accountability and authorization, real training for the task, and an explicit understanding of where they fit into the mission of the Church – can be supplemented with very focused task forces to keep energy flowing, involve many different people according to their gifts, and maintain flexibility in the style of the work.

#### Types of Groups

Most of the way we organize for work is determined at the parish level; parishes have the discretion to shape structures that fit the situation. The only parish group required by national canon is the Vestry. The description of its primary responsibility is very brief, and all details of organization are left to diocesan canon and parish by-laws. Diocesan canons usually define the membership and responsibilities of another group, the assembly of voting members of the parish (in the form of annual and special

meetings). Vestries exercise their canonical responsibilities and collaborate with the priest in parish oversight in different ways. In the past, it was not unusual for the Vestry and its working groups to focus only on finance, property, and formal relations with the clergy.

Today, it is widely assumed that this body of elected leaders will have some role in shaping the overall direction of the parish and in monitoring the parish's overall life and ministry. Such a role requires equipping the vestry with regard to the nature and mission of the Church, and with regard to leadership and oversight in the Christian community. It also requires clarity about the way our polity lodges final authority in various matters with different groups and individuals. When these canonical responsibilities are understood and respected, a creative interplay of authority and habits of mutual consultation can be established.

In addition to the mandated<sup>1</sup> structures of Rector (or Vicar), canonical officers, vestry (or Mission Council) and membership meeting, most parishes have other working groups. Most have a mixture of different types of groups, but the differences among the types of groups are not clear-cut, and parishes using the same terminology frequently mean quite different things.

**Committees:** Some parishes organize work primarily through committees – reporting to the Vestry, to the Rector, and/or to the annual meeting. (Increasingly, parishes are structuring all committees to report to the Rector and/or Vestry, including such groups as Episcopal Church Women, so that it is clear that the oversight responsibilities of Rector and Vestry include all aspects of parish life. There are no “independent” organizations. Many parishes are changing practices to make this clear.) Someone is designated to chair each committee and members are appointed, often by the Rector.

Committees are often given (intentionally or by default) wide latitude in defining and carrying forward their task. Sometimes a Vestry member is asked to serve on each committee to help provide linkage. This, however, needs to be based on calling and gifts – both for leadership and for the particular area of work.

In a committee structure, it takes considerable effort to establish and maintain lines of accountability and to give each group a clear mandate. It is tempting for leaders to wait for ideas to "arise" from committees without clear charges, instead of doing more disciplined groundwork themselves by gathering relevant information and establishing overall direction. The result is often a committee that drifts aimlessly and produces little. The opposing example is the committee which “takes the bull by the horns”, develops its own strong direction and thrust, and then has difficulty attaining the support of Rector and Vestry, often because the committee's direction does not

<sup>1</sup> In a new congregation start-up, or in advanced stages of decline, it may be necessary to operate under a more direct missionary authority of the Bishop without even these minimal group structures.

harmonize with values, goals and directions of the top leaders.

Committees may also run into difficulty if it is not clear to whom they report and what sort of participation is envisioned. Are they providing advice or decisions? Are they to plan or to implement, or both? Christian Education Committees, for example, may run into difficulty if they see themselves as finally accountable to the Vestry, since authority in that area is lodged with the Rector. Even if the Rector chairs the group and/or clarifies the accountability, members may not know whether they are giving advice, making policy decisions, or preparing to implement a program. Priests in a committee system may feel either overtaxed attending meetings (since the priest often supplies the only coordinating link with other programs and goals) or out of touch.

**Council:** Some parishes have, alongside the Vestry, a Council composed of representatives from each planning and program group (such as Church School, ECW, various committees). The Vestry continues with the fiscal management and overall policy responsibility, working from Council recommendations. Usually someone from the Vestry serves on each program sub-group of the Council. The Council may be chaired by someone appointed by the Rector and approved by the Vestry. Council members may be appointed by the Rector or, in some cases, the Council may be an elected body with larger or broader membership than the Vestry. It has no decision-making authority except as specifically delegated by Rector or Vestry. In this structure, the Vestry may limit its role to property and finance.

The Council structure makes room for a larger number of people to be involved in planning and decision-making. On the negative side, there may be competition between Council and Vestry for primary leadership, and the pressure for consensus may hinder assertive leadership.

**Commissions:** Typically, Commissions are formed to deal with major areas of parish life (Education, Worship, Evangelization, etc.) Sometimes parishes hope to assign a different Vestry member to chair each Commission, but this plan often falters because it does not leave enough room for appointment based on gifts. The Commission chair may recruit other members, who take responsibility to plan, implement and review in the designated area. Each Commission may report at every Vestry meeting. The Commission may form sub-committees for special tasks.

This system is usually intended to keep closer working contact between the Vestry and the various groups and to keep the Vestry as the coordinating body. As we have noted, Vestry members may not have the skill, interest, or time to chair these major planning groups. There may also be a blurring of who has authority for final decisions - a Worship Commission may technically report to the Rector, but that focus of responsibility may lack functional reality in this system of monthly reporting to the Vestry.

**Guilds:** A guild is a more or less “permanent” organ within the life of the parish with longer-term membership than a committee. Guilds emphasize a sense of vocation to carry on a particular ministry for the sake of the whole. There is often direct provision for spiritual growth within the work – in the form of group devotions and/or a rule of

life for the members. There is direct accountability, often to the Rector, based on the nature of the ministries guilds have undertaken.

Some parishes have adopted this style of organizing for most essential ministries: altar care, lay assistants at worship, lay catechists, visitors to the newcomer and lapsed, etc. The fact that it is not a familiar structure in secular organization may be of some benefit in helping people move in self-perception from "doing a job" to taking on a ministry. Guilds can have a helpful tenacity. For example, in some parishes far into decline, the altar guild may be the only functioning structure.

At worst, guilds without good oversight, accountability and training can become ingrown, rigid, elitist, or resistant to harmonizing with the direction and needs of the parish and the larger Church. At best, they can exercise rooted and faithful leadership with a strong sense of service.

### Selecting Structures: Parish Size, Life Cycle, and Maturity

Size is an important factor in the selection of structural options. A Commission system, for example, calls for multiple "managers" leading and coordinating major pieces of work. This is more apt to fit the program-sized parish (150 - 350 average adult attendance), where the size of the system requires multiple centers of planning and action. In a pastoral sized congregation (50-150), the same structure is likely to overload the lay leadership and produce the feeling that there are more "chiefs" than "Indians." Family sized congregations (50 or less) are apt to need only a few well-functioning groups. The yearly turnover of a committee system will often seem silly with so few members to fill the roles, and the development of individual gifts becomes a high priority if parish life is to have depth and staying-power.

When a parish is being born, it is important to avoid imitating a "settled" congregation. Energy needs to be focused around questions of birth: identity, climate, nature faith and practice among leaders, evangelization, finance and property concerns, and establishing meaningful service to the community. This is not the time to create all the structures that will be needed several years down the road. Structures will appropriately focus around the leadership of the priest appointed to plant the new congregation.

In times of decline, the same structural issues return, with the additional difficulty that remnants (in fact or memory) of old groups still exist. Energy often goes toward "reviving" the remembered past rather than toward responding to the present crisis and the context as it is now. Where a Vicar has been appointed to undertake a redevelopment effort, the Bishop's Office might helpfully "contract" with priest and congregation to "strip down" structurally for the new missionary task - to focus all leadership energies in a flexible way on the same growth-oriented tasks identified above. This provides a decision point for old leaders (many will not be able or willing to lead the redevelopment effort and need the opportunity to discover this); and it will help create the center of energy in which new leaders can be identified and developed.

In times of stability, parish structures should be designed to keep people engaged in a

process of revitalization - otherwise stability turns to stagnation. Continuing training for group members, specific opportunities for spiritual growth within each group, and a cycle of assessment and planning will help maintain the vitality of individual groups and the system as a whole.

In all phases of the life cycle, structures need to fit the maturity of the system. Maturity involves competence with the task, motivation and commitment to perform it, and depth in Christian faith and practice. Where people have not had the opportunity to mature in these dimensions, a more directive leadership style is required: training, equipping, and providing overall direction and specific guidelines that will enable people to grow. As members mature in these dimensions, leader behavior needs to shift toward supportive participation and delegation, so that groups are challenged to take greater responsibility for their work and their own development. Clergy and key lay leaders need training in how to assess and respond to different stages of maturity.

### Parish Development Teams

Whatever system is employed for organizing working groups, an additional structure that many parishes find useful is the Parish Development Team (Job Description included in this section). It differs from other kinds of groups in the following ways:

- Its concern is to help the parish maintain a focus on key developmental issues.
- It is primarily an advisory group to the Rector or Vicar, and secondarily to the Vestry. No decision-making authority is lodged with this group.
- Membership is based on knowledge about parish development, leadership skill, and maturity in Christian faith and practice. Usually, substantial training is provided at the time the group is formed, and comparable training is required for new members when they join.

Parish development teams can help the parish initiate developmental processes such as planning, discernment, and annual assessment of parish life and ministry. They can help the clergy assess developmental issues and priorities, with the help of common frameworks received in the training. They can give special focus and energy to key developmental areas in the parish's life at a given time, beginning with special training (from the diocese or elsewhere) and/or intensive study with the Rector. Such a use of the team might be helpful in launching new and comprehensive efforts with evangelization, stewardship, etc.

The key to the team's effectiveness is selection (mature, cooperative persons with leadership gifts and a stable life of faith are open to going deeper both in faith and in leadership skill), and training (a broad base of understanding about the nature and mission of the Church, the shape of parish life, and development processes and dynamics). Some dioceses offer workshops which could be the basis of a team's training; sometimes a consultant can be brought in to train one team, or teams from several parishes (with each team working on its own parish data during the training

sessions, so as to build trust and common understanding within each team during the training). If training is not available, or if the priest is not prepared to structure an intensive period of study and reflection to train the team himself, a Parish Development Team should not be attempted.

### Plans for Oversight and Supervision

Parish groups can be strengthened when the priest and the leader of each committee, guild, etc., has his or her own oversight plan. This is a statement of what one needs to do as leader so that the work of the group goes forward, with some specific oversight objectives (rather than program content), for the next 6 to 12 months. The concern of the leader in this plan is building the maturity of the working group in pursuing its objectives.

Each person might draft such a plan herself. A consultant might take parish leaders through a process for creating their own plans or key people in the same area of responsibility (finance, worship, etc.) might discuss what each needs from the other to do their work, and then draft individually their plans for oversight. Or all key parish leaders could come together for a common process, in which each would write and share oversight objectives for their area, discuss the objectives, and receive feedback. At that point they would revise and finalize the plan.

Supervision from the Rector increases the effectiveness of those sharing in oversight responsibility. The Rector might meet with leaders, individually or as a group, every 4-6 months, to review progress, revise objectives, etc. The priest would help leaders reflect on progress and prepare for the future:

- What has happened since we talked last?
- How do you feel about how it's gone?
- What do you want to do now?
- How might you undermine yourself?

Other helps to oversight include:

- Staff position descriptions
- Vestry manual including by-laws, job descriptions, budgets, etc.
  - One copy prepared for each Vestry member
  - Each new member receives a copy of the manual
- A notice board to make public:
  - list of members (or at least leader)
  - purpose of each group
  - schedules

### Demand System and Leadership Role

Parish structures are best seen as a way of shaping the "demand system" on clergy and other leaders. Even in the tiniest congregation, leaders' attention will be drawn in many directions, and priorities will often dissipate in a sea of projects and details.

Groups, meetings, job descriptions should all be designed to call attention to the essentials of the Church's life and mission and to keep leaders asking how that will best happen here.

For structures to serve this role, the ordained leader needs to be:

1. aware of the impact of the demand system on his or her behavior and on parish identity,
2. assertive enough to take initiative in shaping that demand system, and,
3. sufficiently skilled as an administrative leader to promote and manage effective parish structures.

### General Observations about Structuring Parish Groups

1. Always train people for the task. Training should provide common language, a sense of connection with and accountability to the parish and the larger Church, entry for new people, encouragement for members who may feel less knowledgeable, practical information which improves performance, and background understanding which promotes spiritual growth and personal satisfaction.
2. Once the guild or group is well established, the group itself, building lay involvement in oversight, can take responsibility for training.
3. One of the functions of all parish groups is to provide "entry points" for newer members – ways people can begin to connect with a smaller sub-community, discover their gifts, and form personal bonds. Groups that are clearly structured and ministry-oriented support the spiritual development of newcomers.
4. Keep the Church's mission and parish goals in front of all groups. Help them see their relationship to the primary task of the parish church and to the parish's specific goals.
5. Attend to the issue of efficiency. Avoid too many overlapping groups by means such as having all groups meet at the same time, every two months at a "parish meeting night;" don't try to have all groups moving at "full speed" at the same time. Have a yearly parish schedule to help each group see itself as part of the whole.
6. Structures need to focus the parish on essentials. Make sure all primary areas of ministry are monitored by some group. Let groups die when the time comes, and

don't spend energy trying to "kill" unproductive groups. Simply focus on essentials (worship, doctrine, action, oversight) and development objectives. Each group builds a life of worship, study and action appropriate to its purposes.

7. Relate structures to orders, vocations, and gifts. For example:

- Priest: Provides Pastoral Oversight of Parish Life and Ministry. Chairs the Vestry (just as presiding at the Eucharist) in a way that brings diversity into harmony of holiness and mission.
- Deacon: Symbolizing and Enabling Service and the Extension of Pastoral Care. Many work with a service guild (also possibly evangelization, administrative matters. Lay Eucharistic Ministers – depends on diocesan view of vocational deacons).
- Ministries of the Laity: Look for those with the calling and gifts for specific groups and tasks. Not every Vestry member can lead a meeting. Not everyone has an interest in improving stewardship, reflecting on sermons, etc.

### The Process of Establishing Job Descriptions

With an existing group, a process can be initiated to enable members to participate in shaping the job description. The following questions can be posed:

- What is the group already responsible for?
- What is there in the parish plan, by-laws or other documents that may help define the task?
- To whom are we accountable? How do we fit into the structure of the parish, the canonical responsibilities of Rector and Vestry? Who needs to be consulted with regularity? Who needs "ownership"?
- Who has final authority for decisions? What are the limits of the group's authority?
- What would we like to see added to/removed from the present expectations of us?
- What changes are occurring – inside and outside the parish – which will affect our work?

Depending on the area in which the group works, the proposed job description (in writing) should be approved by Rector or Vestry, and shared with other parish leaders and members.

When a new group is being formed, the job description work should be done before the group is recruited. A written description is approved by Rector and/or Vestry. A chairman, then other members, is recruited on the basis of general agreement with, and



gifts for, the job described. After a period of working together, the group may be asked to review the description and suggest changes to Rector and/or Vestry. The group may be asked annually to develop a list of specific objectives.

# SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS

## PARISH BYLAWS

BYLAWS OF \_\_\_\_\_ EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
City, State

Introduction. These bylaws are adopted pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of \_\_\_\_\_ (the "Diocesan Canons") and are intended to govern the calling and conduct of parish meetings, the election of a Vestry and the conduct of its affairs and such other matters as might be contained herein. To the extent that these bylaws are inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of the Diocesan Canons, the latter shall prevail and be followed.

### ARTICLE I - PARISH MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the members qualified to vote in a parish shall be held on the \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday in (month) unless the Vestry designates some other date for the required annual meeting, provided such alternate date shall be no more than two months either before or after the date specified for the annual meeting by this section.

Section 2. Preliminary Annual Meeting. The Vestry shall designate a date and time at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting at which there shall be a special preliminary annual meeting for the purposes of (a) receiving the report of the elections committee, (b) accepting Vestry nominations from the floor, and (c) the presentation of any amendments to these bylaws which are to be considered at the annual meeting. No elections shall be held nor any votes respecting amendments to these bylaws shall be taken at such a preliminary annual meeting.

Section 3. Special Meetings. Upon the call of the Vestry, a meeting of the members qualified to vote in a parish may be held at any time, provided that notice of at least two weeks has been given.

Section 4. Notice. Notice of any annual, preliminary or special parish meeting shall be given in each of the following ways:

- a. By announcement at each public worship service held during the fifteen days preceding the scheduled meeting; and
- b. By publication in the parish newsletter or by other general parish mailing mailed at least ten days prior to the scheduled meeting; and

c. By posting notice of such meeting on the parish house bulletin board continuously beginning no later than the second Sunday preceding the scheduled meeting.

Section 5. Voting Qualifications. An enrolled confirmed adult communicant in good standing in this Church may vote when present at any meeting of this parish in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of this Diocese.

Section 6. Voting. Amendments to these bylaws shall be decided in accordance with the provisions of Section 4 of Article VI below. Motions, resolutions, elections and other matters presented to a parish meeting for vote shall be decided by a simple majority of the qualified members present and voting.

Section 7. Presiding Officer. The rector shall preside at all parish meetings. When the rector is unavailable or incapable of acting, the senior warden shall preside.

## ARTICLE II - Vestry Composition and Election

Section 1. Size. The Vestry shall be comprised of twelve members.

Section 2. Election. Each year, an election shall be held for four Vestry positions under the rotating system designated by the Canons of our Diocese.

Section 3. Elections Committee. At least two months prior to the date of the annual meeting, the Vestry shall appoint no fewer than five members of the parish to serve as an election committee. No member of the election committee shall be a nominee for the Vestry in the year in which they serve on the election committee. The election committee shall seek nominations of potential candidates by placing appropriate notices in The Epistle and such other activities as they deem appropriate to encourage nominations from those persons qualified to vote at a parish meeting. The election committee shall review all potential nominees and present to the Vestry for its consideration and approval a slate of eight candidates willing to serve as Vestry members if elected. Additional nominations of persons who have affirmed their willingness to serve on the Vestry may be made at the preliminary annual meeting referred to in Article I, Section 2 above by any person qualified to vote at the annual meeting. The election committee shall also be responsible for preparing and disseminating biographical or other information on each candidate in advance of the annual meeting and for conducting the elections at the Annual Meeting.

Section 4. Qualifications. As provided by the Canons, all resident members of the parish who are sixteen years of age or older and who are enrolled confirmed communicants in good standing shall be eligible for election to the Vestry. A retiring or former member of the Vestry is not eligible for re-election to the Vestry until two years have elapsed from the expiration of his or her preceding term of service at the time he

or she takes office for the new term, except that any Vestry person appointed during the last year to fill an unexpired term of one year or less may be eligible for election to a full term.

Section 5. Election Procedures. Vestry elections shall be held at the Annual Meeting and the following provisions shall govern such elections.

- a. The number of nominees for election to the Vestry shall be at least twice the number of positions on the Vestry to be filled at that meeting.
- b. Elections for members of the Vestry shall be by paper ballot. Prior to the annual meeting, the election committee shall prepare an initial ballot listing the nominees in alphabetical order. Each ballot shall provide an appropriate instruction or mechanism to allow a voter to vote for up to the number of positions on the Vestry to be filled at such election and no more. Any ballot which contains a vote for more than the number of positions to be filled at such election will not be counted in the election. Cumulative voting shall not be permitted and any ballot by which a voter seeks to cast more than one vote for a candidate shall be counted as only one vote for that candidate.
- c. A majority of those present and voting in the annual meeting at each ballot or vote which is taken shall be necessary to elect a member of the Vestry. Nominees receiving a majority shall be elected. If additional ballots are required, the nominees to be voted on shall be limited to twice the number of positions remaining to be filled and, within that number, shall be those nominees not elected on the previous ballot who, on that ballot, received the highest number of votes. However, should there be a tie vote for the last position on any subsequent ballot; the number of nominees to be placed on that ballot shall be increased to include the two or more nominees whose votes were tied.

Section 6. Filling Vacant Positions. In the case of a vacancy on the Vestry by reason of death, resignation, or other cause, the remaining members of the Vestry may fill the vacancy from among those persons eligible to serve. A person elected to fill a vacancy shall hold office until the expiration of the term of the person whose office is to be filled.

### ARTICLE III - Vestry Meetings

Section 1. Monthly Meeting. The Vestry shall meet at least monthly. At the first regular or special meeting of the Vestry following each annual parish meeting, the Vestry shall establish a date and time for each regular monthly meeting for the coming year. The regular monthly meeting of the Vestry shall then occur each month on the scheduled date until such meeting time is modified by subsequent Vestry action. Written notice of the designated date and time for a regular monthly meeting shall be

given to each Vestry person at least one week prior to the first Vestry meeting to be held pursuant to the adopted schedule. Provided such written notice is given, no subsequent written notice to the Vestry of a regularly scheduled monthly meeting is required.

Section 2. Special Meetings. The rector may call a special meeting of the Vestry for a date and time other than a regular monthly Vestry meeting. Should the rector refuse to call such a meeting and, in the opinion of the wardens or a majority of the Vestry, such a meeting would be of importance, the wardens or any three members of the Vestry may call a Vestry meeting. In such a case, however, the rector shall be notified of the time and place of the called meeting of the Vestry. Except by unanimous consent, all Vestry members shall receive at least three days' advance notice of the time and place of any special called Vestry meeting.

Section 3. Quorum. At each Vestry meeting, the presence of a majority of the membership of the Vestry shall be necessary to constitute a quorum. Motions, resolutions, elections and all other matters presented to the Vestry for vote shall be decided by a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

Section 4. Minutes. Accurate minutes of each Vestry meeting shall be kept, signed by the secretary or clerk, presented at the next meeting for approval, revised if necessary, thereafter approved, and preserved with the records of the parish.

Section 5. Open Meetings. All regularly scheduled monthly Vestry meetings shall be open to attendance by any person qualified to vote at an annual parish meeting. The Vestry shall attempt to schedule its meetings and give appropriate notice thereof to the parish in order to facilitate attendance at its meetings by parish members who are not on the Vestry.

Section 6. Executive Session. The rector or, in his or her absence, the presiding officer, shall be entitled to call the Vestry into executive session in order to discuss and determine any matter involving the parish staff, a pastoral concern of the rector for which he or she seeks Vestry guidance, a potential or asserted liability claim against the parish or a member of its staff or any other matter which the rector or presiding officer reasonably believes requires confidential consideration. Only members of the Vestry and the rector shall be entitled to attend an executive session of the Vestry. An appropriate record of the matters dealt with during the executive session shall be maintained but the record shall be kept confidential and shall not be published with the regular minutes and records of Vestry meetings. Matters dealt with at executive session shall be confidential.

#### ARTICLE IV - Organization of the Vestry

Section 1. Wardens. There shall be a Senior Warden and a Junior Warden elected as provided in Section 3 of Canon 22 of the Diocesan Canons and with the powers, duties and responsibilities as set out in said Canon. The Vestry may from time to time establish additional duties and powers for the wardens not inconsistent with the requirements of the Diocesan Canons.

Section 2. Treasurer. There shall be a treasurer elected by the Vestry. The treasurer need not be a member of the Vestry but may be selected from outside the membership of the Vestry. The treasurer shall maintain the financial and business records of the parish, make monthly financial reports to the Vestry, prepare the annual financial report for submission at the parish annual meeting, comply with financial record keeping and reporting requirements of the Diocesan Canons and perform other duties as might be assigned by the Vestry from time to time.

Section 3. Secretary. There shall be a secretary elected by the Vestry. The secretary need not be a member of the Vestry but may be selected from outside the membership of the Vestry. The secretary shall take minutes of all Vestry and parish meetings, prepare the same for approval by the Vestry and maintain the minutes and other official records of Vestry action.

Section 4. Finance Committee. There shall be a standing Finance Committee consisting of the wardens, the treasurer and any additional Vestry member elected by the Vestry. The Finance Committee shall monitor the financial matters of the parish and shall undertake appropriate planning, review and management of parish financial matters.

Section 5. Other Committees. The Vestry may create other committees from time to time as it deems necessary or appropriate to carry out its work. The rector shall make appropriate appointments to those committees.

#### ARTICLE V - Financial Reserves

Section 1. Capital Improvements Reserve. Amounts designated by the Vestry to be held for specific capital improvements purposes may be accumulated and set aside as directed by the Vestry for specific or general capital improvements.

Section 2. Investments. Reserve funds shall be invested pursuant to the parish investment policy as adopted by the Vestry. Income from the investment of reserve funds shall be available for current parish financial requirements if needed and it shall not be required that such income be allocated or added to the reserve.

#### ARTICLE VI - Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 1. Annual Report. The Vestry shall furnish to each annual meeting a full report of its actions and all monies extended under its direction during the preceding year, including a report from each standing committee of the Vestry with respect to the work done by such committee. As part of its annual report to the parish meeting, the Vestry shall submit a report setting forth its evaluation of the work and program of the parish, the objectives towards which it believes that the parish must work, and its specific recommendations for objectives to be included in the program and the budget of this parish for the fiscal year next following that for which a budget is being adopted.

Section 2. Record of Meetings. The Vestry shall make and preserve a full record of its acts and the work of each of its committees. The Vestry shall also make and keep a full record of the acts of any special or annual parish meeting.

Section 3. Parliamentary Guide. Roberts Rules of Order, newly revised shall be the parliamentary guide for all matters not covered in these Bylaws, but may be deviated from by a majority vote of the Vestry with respect to a Vestry meeting or the persons present and qualified to vote at any special or annual parish meeting.

Section 4. Amendment to the Bylaws. These Bylaws may be amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the persons present and qualified to vote at an annual parish meeting. No new bylaw, or change in an existing bylaw, shall be considered or adopted without first having been submitted to and reported on by the Vestry to the preliminary annual meeting provided for in Article 1, Section 2 of these Bylaws. Floor amendments to these Bylaws shall be allowed only upon a two-thirds majority vote of those persons present and qualified to vote. All bylaws or amendments thereto shall take effect from and after the adjournment of the Parish Annual Meeting at which they shall have been adopted.

## PERSONNEL POLICIES

### INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this manual to define and clarify the personnel policies of the Church. The policies contained herein are an expression of concern for the welfare of the employer and the employees, and they are designed to clarify the conditions of work that will provide for maximum productivity and satisfaction for the church staff.

The Wardens shall be responsible for the application of these policies and have the right to recommend modifications for approval by the Vestry. These policies can be superseded by a written agreement between the Wardens and the Rector.

It is the church's policy to afford equal employment opportunity to all qualified persons without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical impairment or national origin.

Because the work of the parish is a ministry of the Episcopal Church, it is important that employees understand that they are considered to be in the service of Jesus Christ and should see their employment as a form of ministry. As a matter of practicality, employees hired should not be members of the parish; all exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Rector and Wardens.

### GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

General employment policies and definitions are as follows:

#### Salaried Employee

- **Full-time:** An employee hired to fill a specific position for an indefinite period and paid a salary. The salary, whether expressed in terms of a weekly, monthly, or annual rate of pay, does not imply and should not be deemed to constitute a promise or contract by the Church of a minimum guaranteed period of employment. A full-time employee regularly works 30 or more hours per week. These employees are entitled to benefits as described in this manual.
- **Part-time:** An employee who is paid a salary for a predetermined average number of hours per week that is less than 30 hours. These employees are entitled to benefits as described in this manual.

#### **Hourly Employee**

An employee who is paid an hourly rate for each hour worked. These employees are entitled to benefits as described in this manual.



## **Clergy**

These personnel policies apply equally to clergy positions unless specifically stated otherwise in this manual, in their letter of agreement with the church, or in the canons of the Episcopal Church.

## **Hours of Work**

The church office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Full-time employees work for 40 hours per week. Work hours for part-time employees will be established in conjunction with their supervisor. Employees may be required occasionally to work at times other than their regular schedule. Such work will be arranged in advance by their supervisor.

## Days Off

Full-time clergy will have one day off during the week to offset their work time on Sundays, other times during the weekend, and evenings.

## Job Coverage

All employees are to be sure their job responsibilities are covered during their times off and that this coverage is communicated to their supervisor.

## Job Conduct

While there may be less formality in the church offices due to the spirit of Christian fellowship among employees, there is no lessening of the need for making productive use of time at work as good stewards of the resources of the church.

## Confidentiality

An employee's work may involve confidential matters. It is necessary to respect this confidentiality.

## Care of Property

Each employee is responsible for maintaining office or work space in an efficient and attractive manner. He or she will also assume security and protective care of assigned equipment. No church property may be loaned out or removed from the church without the approval of the Parish Administrator.

## Policy against Harassment

The church strictly prohibits sexual misconduct or harassment of any kind by any person sponsored by or working for the church as an employee or a volunteer. Certain employees are required by the Church Insurance Corporation to attend a sexual conduct workshop within six months of their employment.

## **STAFF RECORDS, JOB DESCRIPTIONS, EVALUATIONS**

### Personnel File

A personnel file will be maintained for all employees by the Parish Administrator. This file is confidential, with access limited to the employee, the Rector, and the Wardens. It will contain the application for employment, federal and state payroll forms, job description and performance evaluations, documentation of hours worked (nonexempt employees only), excessive hours worked (exempt employees only), vacation and sick time taken, and any other pertinent information.

### Job Descriptions

Each full-time and part-time employee shall be given a job description. This job description shall be reviewed in detail with each employee by the supervisor as part of the initial training process. Each job description shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Required education, experience, and training;
- A description of the expectation of the position as part of the ministry of the church;
- Detailed description of specific job responsibilities;
- Employment expectations of performance standards.

Each job description will be reviewed and updated at least annually in conjunction with performance evaluations. Further, the job description is used as a guideline for measurement of performance and any resultant adjustments in compensation and employment.

### Performance Evaluations

A written performance evaluation of each lay employee shall be made 90 days after date of employment and once each year, by his or her immediate supervisor. The purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Help develop, between employee and supervisor, a better mutual understanding of the major work to be done, resulting in an updated job description;
- Objectively evaluate the employee's job performance against job standards;
- Involve the employee in planning work, targeting performance, and measuring results;
- Encourage discussion of career aspirations and develop a plan to work towards those goals;

- Provide open discussion of job responsibilities as they relate to desired results; and
- Provide a consistent and fair assessment in determining salary adjustments.

The written evaluation will address the items above and any other items relevant to performance. It will be signed by both the employee and supervisor, and a copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file along with the updated job description.

### Review of Rector and Other Clergy

The Vestry will meet once each year in January or February to review the work and ministry of the Rector and the parish. An outside consultant may be included in the meeting if that seems desirable. The Senior Warden will preside over this review.

## **COMPENSATION**

The Church endorses fair and equitable schedules of compensation for each position on the staff. Each employee's compensation, along with employee benefits, will be documented by letter of agreement at the time of hiring and annually as compensation adjustments are made. Employees will be paid twice monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of the month.

### Overtime

**Nonexempt employees** (those who are not exempt from the overtime regulations established in the Fair Labor Standards Act):

- Nonexempt employees receive overtime pay of one and one-half times the hourly wage (for salaried employees: total weekly salary divided by 40 hours) for all hours worked in excess of 40 per week.
- Overtime work must be preapproved by the supervisor.

**Exempt employees** (those who meet the exemption test of the Fair Labor Standards Act):

- Employees hired in exempt positions are hired with the understanding that they work as long as it takes to complete their job, which is understood to be at least 40 hours per week for full-time and a specified number less than 30 hours per week for part-time.
- Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay.
- Exempt employees are often expected to work beyond normal hours and are not normally entitled to compensatory time off. However, they may be granted time off with pay as compensation for excessive time worked above their expected work week with the approval of their supervisor. The excessive time worked needs to be documented and approved by the supervisor as it is worked. Compensatory time authorized but not taken at the time of termination will not be paid.

## Mileage

Unless otherwise specified at the time of employment, travel by lay employees for church business must be approved by a supervisor and will be reimbursed at the standard IRS business rate.

## Salary Raises

The Executive Committee will annually review the salary of each employee and take note of prevailing rates in the community, as well as related positions in our Diocese and the National Church. During preparation of the budget in the fall, the Rector and Wardens will review salaries and recommend a target cost-of-living raise percentage for all employees to the Vestry, which will then review and adjust the percentage according to money available. The Rector will make suggestions for staff adjustments and new positions to the Wardens. The Wardens will present its recommendations to the Vestry.

## **ABSENCES**

### Personal Illness/Injury/Personal Leave

**Sick and Personal Leave:** Salaried employees will be granted time off with pay for periods of illness, doctor or dental appointments, and other personal needs as follows:

- Employees with less than one year of service will earn one day of sick/personal leave for each month of service. After one year, an employee may accumulate up to 12 working days each calendar year. Part-time salaried employees receive a proration of 12 working days based on their specified part-time hours.
- The church may require the certification of a physician that an employee is unable to work or that the employee is able to return to work and resume regular work responsibilities.
- Employees using sick/personal leave must notify their supervisor at the beginning of the work day.
- Absences due to illness or emergency in the immediate family may be charged to sick/personal leave.
- Sick/personal leave accumulates to a maximum of six weeks; it is not paid upon termination.

**Maternity leave:** After one year of service, employees may receive up to six weeks' paid leave in relation to a pregnancy. In addition, employees may submit a written request for a pregnancy leave of absence, without pay. (Pregnant women should note that the infant is automatically covered by medical insurance for a brief period after birth, but must be officially added to the policy as a dependent for continued coverage.)

**Family leave:** The parish provides up to four weeks' unpaid family leave for the birth or

adoption of a child, serious illness of a family member, or other reasons approved by the Rector and Wardens.

Vacation

Salaried lay employees shall be eligible for vacation based on the following schedule:

Length of Employment on January 1      Vacation Days during Current Calendar Year

Up through 5 years	1 day per month, up to 10 days
After 5 years through 10 years	1.5 days per month, up to 15 days
After 10 years	2 days per month, up to 20 days

Although vacation time begins to accrue at the initiation of employment, no vacation time can be used until the employee has worked for three months.

Part-time employees receive a proration of vacation days based on their specified part-time hours.

Full-time clergy are eligible for four weeks of vacation each year. This will be prorated during the first year of employment based on days employed divided by 360 days.

Vacation may not be taken in advance of being earned.

All employees are encouraged to take the vacation to which they are entitled. Up to five days' vacation can be carried over from one year to the next. Additional vacation time can only be carried over when the reason for not taking the vacation was a request by the employee's supervisor.

Although the entire year is available for vacation, employees are encouraged to take most of their vacation time during the summer months.

Vacation requests and changes thereto must be approved by the supervisor. Vacation requests will be approved in the order received.

If a holiday falls during an employee's vacation time, that day will not be counted against vacation days taken.

Upon termination of employment, an employee will receive pay for the amount of unused vacation earned in accordance with the schedule above, except where an employee fails to provide a minimum of four weeks' notice when resigning or when an employee is terminated due to serious neglect or negligence in the performance of job responsibilities, disregard for the best interest of the church, or willful misconduct.

Full-time employees will receive the paid holidays listed below. Part-time employees, both salaried and hourly, receive pay for that part of the holiday which would normally have been worked.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday or Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- Day after Christmas
- Additional two days between the day after Christmas and New Year's Day, at the discretion of the Rector

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the employer may designate the Friday before or the Monday after as a day off.

The Parish Administrator will establish a schedule of work on holidays, where required, and publish it one month in advance of the holidays. Salaried employees required to work on a holiday will be given compensatory time off for the hours worked.

**Bereavement:** Absence due to bereavement will be arranged at the discretion of the Rector and Wardens.

**Approved absence without pay:** Upon approval in advance by the supervisor, an employee may be granted absence without pay. Request for such time should be submitted in writing, at least 30 days in advance if possible.

**Jury duty:** The parish recognizes its employees' civic obligation to serve as jurors when called and therefore grants leaves of absence with pay to full-time and part-time employees, in accordance with the following provisions:

- Part-time employees' pay will be based on a prorated share of their scheduled work hours.
- An employee who is called to jury duty will be paid the difference between what is received for serving on the jury and the regular salary.
- On days for which continued jury attendance is not required, the employee is expected to report to work.

- Employees are encouraged to use their own judgment in requesting exemption from jury duty, when permitted by law, if their participation on the jury will cause hardship for the employer or the employee.

**Unexcused Absence:** Habitual tardiness or absences for other unexcused reasons will be the subject of disciplinary action, including loss of pay and possible termination.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The church encourages employees to attend meetings, institutes, and seminars for their professional growth. Upon prior approval of his or her supervisor, an employee will be allowed time for such meetings, with pay. Registration fees and travel expenses will be reimbursed by the church to the extent that funds for that purpose are available in the current year budget for the employee.

Full-time clergy may be eligible for a sabbatical leave. Eligibility will be addressed in the letter of agreement with the church or approved by the Wardens and Rector.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

All lay employees, full-time and part-time, are covered by:

- **Social Security**, with required amounts withheld from their salaries, matched by the church and paid to their account with the federal government, and
- **Workers' Compensation**, for injuries as a result of an accident during the course of employment. All employees are responsible for advising their immediate supervisor if such an accident occurs.

**Unemployment Insurance** coverage is not provided; such insurance is not mandated for church employees under state law.

**Medical insurance:** The church provides a comprehensive plan for medical and hospitalization expenses for full-time employees at no cost to the employee. Details of this plan are available from the Parish Administrator. Employees' dependents may or may not be covered by medical insurance; this is negotiated at the time of hiring.

**Life insurance:** The church provides life insurance in the amount of one years' salary for all clergy.

**Pension:** All full-time employees are covered by a pension plan. Details of the plan are available from the Parish Administrator.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

When a lay employee feels that an unfair decision has been made regarding any aspect of his or her employment or work, the following steps may be taken:

1. The employee should present his or her position to the immediate supervisor in order that an attempt may be made to discuss and resolve the matter.
2. After step one, if the employee wishes to pursue this matter further, he or she may present the situation to the Rector in order that an attempt may be made to discuss and resolve the matter. Either the Rector or the employee may request that the Wardens be included in the discussion and resolution of the matter.
3. If a lay employee wishes to pursue the matter further, he or she may appeal to the Wardens with the Rector not present. The Wardens then make recommendations to the Rector.

Clergy employees appeal to the Bishop.

## **TERMINATION PROCEDURES**

A full-time employee is required to give a minimum of four weeks' notice when resigning his or her job with the church. Written notice shall be given to the supervisor. Failure to provide such notice will result in the employee's loss of compensation for any accrued but unused vacation or other benefits.

In the event of employment termination by the church, a full-time employee will be paid for accrued but unused vacation and will be given a minimum of four weeks' notice, unless termination is due to the employee's serious neglect or negligence in the performance of job responsibilities, disregard for the best interest of the church or willful misconduct.

Under COBRA requirements, terminated employees have the option of continuing their medical insurance coverage for a maximum of 18 months, at their own expense.

## **RETIREMENT PROCEDURES**

The Diocese requires clergy employees to retire at or before age 72. They may retire after 30 years of service. In keeping with Diocesan policy, the church expects lay staff to retire at or before age 72. They may retire at age 55. They will be eligible to continue medical benefits at their own expense.

Each year in May, the Church Pension Fund sends a statement to each insured person which indicates: what salary is being reported, whether he or she is fully vested (five years under the defined benefits plan), and how much pension the person will receive



at age 65 retirement (estimated with figures of the year before and standard raises).

The Church Pension Fund, 800/223-6602 or 212/661-6700, can be contacted for further information on retirement benefits.

## GUILD OF ST. JOHN AND ST. MARY

### A guild of liturgical assistants

#### Membership

For those who serve in some liturgical ministry, e.g., chalice bearers, parish lay readers, diocesan lay readers, sub-deacons, etc.

Participants must be confirmed members, have a disciplined spiritual life that includes participation in the Eucharist every Sunday, be licensed as a chalice bearer and/or lay reader by the Bishop on recommendation of the Rector and Vestry, or authorized by the Rector as a Lay Reader to officiate at the Daily Office.

#### Training

1. The Rector will provide a plan for training to be completed before the liturgical assistant begins functioning. This will normally include completing the parish's adult course in Christian Faith and Practice.
2. Assistants are to become familiar with sound liturgical practice. The Rector will provide materials. (See Background Reading for Liturgical Assistants).
3. Liturgical assistants are to be familiar with the Book of Common Prayer.
4. As part of their continuing education liturgical assistants are expected to take advantage of parish and diocesan programs on worship, prayer and the spiritual life and to continue a course of reading as recommended by the Rector.
5. Liturgical assistants are to attend rehearsals as scheduled throughout the year.

#### Expectations

- I. Show a strong commitment to Christ and his Church through participation in the Eucharist every Sunday and other major Feasts, having your own Rule of Life, including proportional and sacrificial giving to the work of the Church, participating in an educational program or retreat each year, being generally supportive of the ministry and life of the parish and Rector, conforming to parish worship traditions as explained by the Rector, and working and praying to bring others to Christ and his Church.
- II. Function faithfully and effectively in your duties.

#### Duties

1. Be on a schedule that calls for you to serve on a rotating basis. Be present when scheduled or find another liturgical assistant to serve.
2. Liturgical assistants may be authorized to assist at the Holy Eucharist, to officiate

at the Daily Office, to assist at burials and marriages, etc. Members of the guild who are also licensed diocesan lay readers may perform ministries appropriate to that position. All of these ministries are performed under the direction of the Rector.

3. Attend guild meetings, rehearsals and training as scheduled, including the corporate Communion on (or near) September 14, The Feast of the Holy Cross.
4. Arrive at least fifteen minutes before a service begins. Follow all instructions of the Rector in regard to how you are to function as a liturgical assistant. Strive for a sense of grace, order and harmony. Assist as requested in all necessary tasks after worship, e.g., putting away materials, hanging vestments, etc. Keep your alb, cassock and surplice clean and in good condition.
5. Consult with the Rector regarding the worship life of the parish. The guild, along with others the Rector may invite from time to time, will be the parish worship committee.
6. Other possible duties might include: supervising and training acolytes, or training new liturgical assistants. Some might be qualified to teach others about worship and prayer, etc.
7. Perform other related duties as requested by the Rector.

### Accountability

Be responsive to the rector's requests regarding your duties and how such duties are performed. The rector is the final authority for all worship matters in the parish.

## Background Reading for Liturgical Assistants

### A. Liturgical Functioning

Howard, Thomas, The Liturgy Explained, Moorehouse Barlow, Wilton, CT, 1981

Michno, Dennis, A Priest Handbook, Moorehouse Barlow, Wilton, CT, 1980

Kavanaugh, Aiden, Elements of Rite, Pueblo Publishing, New York, 1982

Booklets from Associated Parishes

### B. Putting Worship in the Context of Parish Development

Reed, Bruce, The Dynamics of Religion, Darton, Longman and Todd, Ltd, London, 1978

Gallagher, Robert, Power from on High: A Model for Parish Life and Development, Ascension Press, Philadelphia 1982 (Available through

Seabury Bookstore, 815 Second Avenue, New York, 10017)

Thornton, Martin, Pastoral Theology: A Reorientation, SPCK, London, 1961

Price and Weil, Liturgy for Living, Seabury Press, New York 1979

**GUILD OF ST. VINCENT**  
**A Guild of Acolytes**

I. ALL ACOLYTES

1. Attend meetings and special rehearsals.
2. Serve when scheduled; arrange for substitute and notify advisor if a schedule change is needed.
3. Care for own vestments.
4. Cooperate with those in charge. Follow guidelines as provided.
5. Maintain fellowship with other acolytes (not required to attend recreational activities, but required to show caring and respect for others).
6. Serve as directed by Advisor and Rector.
7. Participate in the Eucharist every Sunday and Major Holy Days; make a sacrificial and proportional pledge.

II. LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP

A. Probationer - at least six (6) months

Duties:

1. Develop own "rule of life"; talk individually with an advisor at least once during the six months about how you are doing.
2. Learn basic server roles, to the point where no one has to tell you what to do next. Torchbearer on Sunday, Gospel procession on a feast, Boatbearer (as needed).

B. Acolyte - one year or more

Duties:

1. Maintains rule of life; talk with advisor, priest, or other spiritual guide at least once a year about your rule.
2. Learns the roles of:
  - Crucifer
  - Server at credence table
  - Thurifer (as needed)
  - Trainer of other acolytes
3. Fulfills all duties of previous level.
4. Serves on a regular rotation, unless directed otherwise.

C. Senior Acolyte

Duties:

1. Serves as crucifer on Sunday.

2. Serves as thurifer on major feast.
3. Assists in training of new acolytes.
4. Help new acolytes develop a rule.
5. Responsible for making sure acolyte team completes all tasks before and after the service.
6. Acquires ability to lead a brief form of the Daily Office with the acolyte group.
7. Reviews with sub-deacons, Rector, and other acolytes, points of difficulty in the service. Reviews with other acolytes on the team points of confusion, or mistakes - immediately after the service.

### III. GENERAL ORGANIZATION

- A. Meetings: The Guild will meet as scheduled by the Rector or the guild advisor for study programs and rehearsals. Attendance is required of all acolytes. Under usual circumstances, an acolyte who misses more than two meetings during the probationary period will have his or her probation extended until a more consistent pattern is established. Those already invested as acolytes may be returned to probationer status for missing meetings without sufficient reason (or for other lapses in fulfillment of duties). Meetings will be held from September through June; will begin with a Collect said together (such as Collect #61 on page 832); and will conclude with a brief form of the Daily Office (pages 137-140) led by an advisor or a Senior Acolyte.
- B. Study Programs and Rehearsals: The content of the meeting will normally be a study relating to spiritual life, the history and meaning of the liturgy, the Seasons of the Church Year, or other related topics. The acolyte advisor will normally conduct the meetings. Meetings may sometimes include rehearsals.
- C. Recreational Activities: The Guild may schedule recreational activities after the meetings and at other times. The activities should be ones in which all can participate, physically and financially. The advisors are responsible for the final choice of activity; they may, if they wish, poll the group for ideas and preferences. Such activities will normally begin or conclude with a form of the Daily Office in the church, led by the Rector, an advisor, or a Senior Acolyte.
- D. Service to the Parish: Each year the Guild, in consultation with the Rector, will identify one or more projects of service to the parish, such as cleanup activities, hosting a parish function, etc.

## NOTE REGARDING THE INITIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE GUILD

- A. Admission as Probationers: All present acolytes who wish to continue to serve and to accept the discipline of the Guild will make their initial promises at the time appointed. The Vicar and Acolyte Advisors will determine which of the present acolytes have sufficient experience and knowledge to prepare for admission as Senior Acolytes after the six-month's probation. The probation period for these members will include additional training.
- B. Investiture as Acolytes and Senior Acolytes: Those who have been faithful during the probation period will be invested on the Feast of St. Vincent.
- C. Parish Guilds may want to join the National Order of St. Vincent. (Order of St. Vincent, P.O. Box 6022, South Bend, Indiana 46660.)

**GENERAL GUIDELINES**  
**For liturgical assistants and acolytes**

1. Know your general duties.
2. Be on time.
3. No side conversations, whispering, gestures, etc.; no unnecessary moving about.
4. Keep hands folded in front of you when moving from place to place.
5. Participate in prayers, hymns, etc. - to set an example.
6. Wear shoes, not sneakers.
7. Conform to all traditions of ceremony re: bowing, genuflecting, sign of cross, etc.
8. Stay alert, look for what comes next; move and act carefully, reverently and with dignity.
9. No cross, pins, etc. are to be worn with the vestments. If you are an "associate" of a Religious Order or Christian Community, the associate's cross or medal may be worn with the Rector's approval.



**GUILD OF ST. VINCENT  
ADVISOR'S JOB DESCRIPTION**

1. Have a sound knowledge of liturgy and standards of worship. (See Background Reading for Liturgical Assistants).
2. Have a rule of life and set an example in attitude and behavior as a person living the Christian life within the Body of Christ's Holy Catholic Church.
3. General oversight of all acolytes to include: recruiting, scheduling, training, seeing that vestments fit properly, and ordering new ones when necessary. Scheduling meetings for training, education and social events.
4. Appointed by and responsible to the Rector. Share any concerns immediately with the Rector and work to resolve said concerns.
5. Develop among Senior Acolytes the ability to train the other acolytes, under the direction of the Advisor.
6. Attend educational programs, especially those that would deepen your knowledge of liturgy.
7. Encourage and support members of St. Vincent's Guild in their rule of life. Have an annual gathering of the guild members on St. Vincent's Day (Jan. 22nd).
8. Other duties as directed by the Rector.

## **GUILD OF ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH**

### **A guild of parish catechists and educators**

Members are appointed by the Rector who will provide a training program to prepare new members for their duties.

#### Duties

Members of the guild will be responsible for:

1. Teaching the young people's confirmation class.
2. Leading Bible study and meditation groups.
3. Assisting the Rector in conducting Baptism instruction, First Communion preparation, the core course in Christian faith and practice, New Members' classes, etc.
4. Developing a special area of interest in which they are competent to teach an adult class.
5. Being able to advise others regarding suitable reading materials.
6. Consulting with the Rector on matters related to the Christian formation and education of adults and children.
7. Carrying out their duties under the direction of the Rector.
8. Attending regular meetings of the guild including the corporate Communion on (or near) October 17, the feast of St. Ignatius of Antioch.
9. Having a Rule of Life, which fulfills the Duties of All Christians (as summarized in the Catechism).

#### Training

Admission to full membership in the guild will take place at a regular guild meeting, after:

1. The person and the Rector agree that he or she is prepared to fulfill all the duties listed above except #4 (which may be worked on while a member).
2. Completion of the core program in Christian faith and practice.
3. Completing a reading program of at least five books covering basic Christian doctrine, the Bible, Church History, worship and spirituality, and Christian behavior and action.
4. Demonstration that he or she is very familiar with:
  - a. The Book of Common Prayer
  - b. The Story of the People of God - an overview from Abraham to the modern Church
  - c. The Basic teachings, standards, customs and traditions of the Church and this parish

5. Doing some teaching, under supervision.

**GUILD OF ST. BARNABAS**  
**A Christian Action Committee**

A guild appointed by the Rector and confirmed by the Vestry that provides oversight and leadership for enabling Christian action in the parish. Part of the guild's task will be to encourage an understanding of service, evangelization, and stewardship:

1. that emphasizes their relationship to the Church's concern for justice, and
2. that stresses that the primary area in which they are carried out is in the laity's daily life and work.

While the guild provides oversight of all areas of service, work in each area may be done by a different group. Tasks may also be folded into the work of the Parish Development Team. A larger parish may decide to have guilds for each area.

A. Service

1. To identify possible forms of corporate service by the parish in:
  - a. the immediate community, and,
  - b. other areas of the diocese, nation or world.
2. To recommend to the Rector and Vestry from the list of possible forms of service those areas in which the parish might best carry out a ministry by direct service and/or by providing funds to other organizations.
3. To facilitate the participation of parishioners in the selected ministries of corporate service.
4. To consult with clergy, catechists and church school teachers in order to integrate basic understandings about service into the regular educational efforts of the parish.

B. Evangelization

1. To develop among parishioners a broad base of understanding, acceptance, and support for evangelization. To consult with the clergy, catechists and church school teachers in order to integrate basic understandings about evangelization into the regular educational efforts of the parish.
2. To monitor the parish's efforts with special attention to the processes and structures for inviting, greeting and orienting. To recommend action to appropriate persons and groups.
3. To keep track of visitors and new members. In cooperation with the clergy, to visit or arrange for the visiting of newcomers.
4. To consult with the clergy, catechists and church school teachers in order to integrate basic understandings about evangelization into the regular educational efforts of the parish.

## C. Stewardship

1. To facilitate a broad awareness in the parish of stewardship as:
  - a. an issue in the spiritual life,
  - b. including our involvement in and care of creation,
  - c. parish concern for care of its life and resources and for its own self-support.
2. Pledging
  - a. To establish a pattern of education that teaches the Church's understanding of pledging as proportional or sacrificial and having the tithe as a standard. To consult with the clergy, catechists, and church school teachers in order to integrate this teaching into the regular educational efforts of the parish.
  - b. To plan and conduct whatever approach to gathering pledges is agreed upon by the Rector and Vestry.
3. Training

The Rector will provide a training program to prepare members for their duties. Once established, the training of new members may be conducted by the guild as directed by the rector.
4. Duties

Members are to fulfill the Duties of All Christians (as summarized in the catechism). Each person is to have a Rule of Life, including adult Christian education and a proportional and sacrificial pledge.

## PARISH GREETERS

The parish greeter exercises a ministry of Christian hospitality to the newcomer and visitor to the parish. The greeter is often the first person met at the church and helps form that important "first impression." The greeter's words, actions and personal presence help set a tone of welcome and give the worshipper the information and assistance necessary to participate comfortably in parish worship and fellowship.

### Training

Parish greeters will be trained to:

1. Answer questions about the liturgy, the Episcopal Church, parish resources and activities.
2. Be able to conduct a tour of the church including information on the building, parish history, and the use of liturgical elements in the church (e.g., the Baptismal font, aumbry, etc.)
3. Be able to explain liturgical customs such as bowing, genuflecting, the sign of the cross, etc.
4. Deal with people with special needs, (e.g., parents with infants, handicapped persons, people who become ill, etc.) Greeters will meet several times a year for training, problem solving, and fellowship.

### Organization

The Rector will appoint a director who will be responsible to:

1. Schedule greeters,
2. See that meetings are held and arrange for training,
3. Work with the priest to anticipate needs at special services and look ahead at the parish schedule.

The director and all greeters are responsible to the Rector.

### Responsibilities

1. Arrive 20 minutes prior to the Eucharist. Open doors and turn on lights if necessary, check heat or fans. Check order of worship - note any changes or special events.
2. Greet people as they arrive. Introduce yourself to strangers. You'll soon learn the names of fellow parishioners. Always give a leaflet to visitors and have them sign the guest book. Ask parishioners familiar with the liturgy to sit near visitors to help them follow the service if necessary. Ask persons to bring up the Communion elements.
3. At the Offertory, assist with the collection of the monetary offering. Be sure the Communion elements are brought up to the altar.
4. At Communion, as parishioners go to the rail while the priest and liturgical ministers receive Communion, be aware of visitors who may be looking for some direction about what to do. If needed, assist older or infirm persons to or from the rail. Parish greeters should receive Communion with the last rail of communicants, and if

necessary, open the rail gate for the exit of the procession when Communion is over. Do not control movement from the pews, but let people form lines to the altar.

5. After the service stand in the back with the parish priest to greet people. Invite newcomers and visitors to coffee hour; accompany them yourself or ask a parishioner to accompany them and introduce them to other members. Give them a copy of the newsletter, etc.

6. After coffee hour and when people have finished individual prayers in the church, check for papers or trash, turn off the lights and check heat or fans. Be sure not to rush people out of church by beginning to work around them.

7. If you are unable to serve one of the Sundays for which you are scheduled, find a substitute.

## PARISH DEVELOPMENT TEAM: A

A team appointed by the Rector (and confirmed by the Vestry) that works with the Rector to provide oversight and leadership for parish development efforts. The Team is to enable and guide the parish in its revitalization as a local expression of the Body of Christ. It is accountable to the Rector.

### Training

1. All members of the team will receive comparable training that provides a common base of language, frameworks, and knowledge.
2. The initial training period of two or three days will be in the process and pattern of parish development including:
  - a. A pattern for parish life and ministry: a conceptual framework to provide shape to the parish's evaluations, planning and an understanding of the essential elements of its life and ministry
  - b. The process of planned change: diagnosis, action planning, implementation, and evaluation.
  - c. The process of discernment: the grounding of planning and major decisions in a disciplined discernment process, of faith sharing, meditation, the study of scripture and intercession.
3. Reading materials will be provided.
4. Advanced training will be provided in knowledge and skills for developing strategy for revitalization, (e.g., use of Shape of Parish model, Renewal-Apostolate Cycle, parish size and transitions, leadership styles as related to system maturity, contextual factors, etc.) and the implementation (e.g., communication skills, team building skills, etc.)
5. New members of the team will receive training that allows them to learn the same basic language, frameworks and knowledge as current members.
6. All members of the Team will be assisted in establishing a Rule of Life if they do not presently have one.

### Duties

1. To enable the parish to engage in a process of planning and discernment to:
  - a. provide the necessary training and education for others (along with the clergy and catechists),
  - b. facilitate the necessary activities of each step, and
  - c. monitor progress and initiate movement and needed modifications.
2. To enable the parish to focus on the essentials of the Christian Life using a conceptual framework designated by the Rector for a pattern of parish life and ministry - in planning, evaluations, general parish education regarding mission and the Christian life, as a tool in establishing a Rule of Life, etc.



3. To arrange for a yearly evaluation of parish life and ministry (general assessment of parish life and ministry, clergy evaluation, etc.)
  - a. propose a design for the approval of the Rector and Vestry, and
  - b. implement the design as approved.
4. To assist parish guilds and groups to engage in a process of planning and discernment focusing on the essentials of the Christian life in their own work and to play appropriate roles in the overall development of the parish.
5. To reflect on the parish's life and ministry in terms of its development/revitalization into a fuller/deeper expression of the nature and mission of the Church (unity, holiness, catholicity, apostolicity – strong, balanced, rooted worship, doctrine, action and oversight). On a regular basis the Team will assist the Vestry to share in such reflection.
6. To engage in problem solving around particular concerns and possibilities related to parish development. As appropriate, the Vestry and/or other lay leaders are involved in the problem solving.
7. The Team may be asked to pick upon any essential area of parish life not addressed by another group.
8. The Rector will chair the team. Members serve at the Rector's invitation for terms of two years. The Team is directly accountable to the Rector and reports to the Vestry on its work at least yearly.

#### Qualifications

1. Personal maturity - can listen, make decisions, resolve own concerns directly, follow through, accept criticism, work under authority, and accept responsibility for leadership.
2. Spiritual maturity - Stable pattern of prayer, study, action; growing in faith, courage, and compassion.
3. Investment - in the future of the parish, and in those who could be here if we reached them.
4. Collaborator - able to work well with other leaders, the Rector, the Bishop's Office.
5. Discerning - able to perceive more subtle or complex issues; able to see the connection between spiritual and organizational issues.
6. Ready to name the truth as he/she sees it, in love, even if it will be uncomfortable.
7. Have, or be ready to obtain, significant training in parish development
8. Ability to help the Rector offer strong, focused, developmental leadership.
9. Willing to meet monthly, and sometimes more often when the development need is critical.
10. Have a Rule of Life that fulfills the Duties of All Christians (as outlined in the Catechism) and includes adult Christian education, quiet day and/or retreat each year,

a proportional and sacrificial pledge.

## PARISH DEVELOPMENT TEAM: B

This is a job description for a parish development team in a situation where the need is for an emphasis on a more rapid process of revitalization. It also assumes the existence of a Congregational Revitalization Agreement (see Appendix D). The purpose of such an agreement is to state the parish's primary objectives for revitalization over the next two or three years and what will be done by the parish, the Rector or Vicar and the Diocese to accomplish these objectives.

### A. Qualifications to Serve on a Parish Development Team

1. A member of the parish that attends the Holy Eucharist each Sunday, pledges, and works, prays and gives for the spread of the kingdom of God.
2. Trained in a diocesan workshop on evangelization, stewardship or parish revitalization. Desires to continue learning about parish development.
3. Able to work in a cooperative manner with other parish leaders and the Bishop's Office.

### B. Overall Task

To provide leadership for the parish's ministry of revitalization, especially evangelization (with an emphasis on inviting new members).

### C. Duties

1. Provide leadership in implementing the Congregational Revitalization Agreement. Maintain a collaborative working relationship with the Vicar, Wardens, Vestry and Diocese enabling a united effort.
2. Give special attention to evangelization ministries especially inviting new members. Attention needs to be given to defining the parish's relationship to the community, reaching untouched populations, greeting and orienting, etc.
3. Recruit others to carry out specific aspects of these ministries.
4. Work closely with the consultant and the Bishop's Office.

### D. Relationship to the Vicar and the Vestry when the Priest is Part-Time

The team is broadly accountable to the Vicar and Vestry to work on the ministry as defined above. The team needs to use its judgment when to consult the Vicar and Vestry, when to present something for endorsement or approval, and when to act on its own, so as to ensure a cooperative effort. If difficulties develop in this that cannot be resolved by work with the consultant, a member of the Bishop's Staff will meet with the people involved.

The team needs to be wary of becoming distracted with matters of parish life, administration and development not directly related to its task. In this revitalization process the emphasis must be on evangelization and parish growth. It is the team's job to uphold that emphasis. The Vicar will provide for sacramental and pastoral care, along with general institutional maintenance, in

cooperation with the Vestry. If the team has suggestions in these areas that may significantly affect the revitalization effort, those ideas should be passed on to the appropriate people.

It is assumed that the team is chaired by a lay member of the team. The team nominates someone to be confirmed by the Vicar and Vestry. The clergy would not usually be involved in the team's work except when the matter being dealt with calls for their participation.

E. Relationship to the Vicar When the Priest is Full-Time

The Vicar appoints the members of the team after consultation with the Vestry. The Vicar chairs the team. A schedule of regular reports to the Vestry is maintained.

## VESTRY JOB DESCRIPTION

The leadership of the parish rests with the Rector and Vestry. Together with the Rector, the Vestry provides spiritual leadership and direction for the parish. They also provide for the management of the business and financial affairs of the parish and the care of its property.

### Responsibilities

The Vestry is the elected lay council of the parish, sharing with the Rector in various ways responsibility for the oversight of parish life and ministry. Like all leaders within the Body of Christ, they are responsible to "seek God's glory and promote the mission of the Church." (Book of Occasional Services, p. 162) Specific responsibilities include:

- Serving as "Agents and legal representatives of the parish in all matters concerning corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy."
- Approving persons at various stages in the process for Holy Orders.
- Working with the Rector to prepare an annual report for the diocese and national Church, including the preparation of an accurate list of members in good standing.
- Overseeing the upkeep of property and the business affairs of the parish.
- Notification of the Bishop in the event of a vacancy and participating in the process of selection of a new Rector.
- Supporting and collaborating with the Rector in the general oversight of parish life and ministry, and in the development of long-term plans for the development of parish life and ministry.
- Assisting in the resolution of conflicts within the parish by upholding the standards of the larger Church and of the parish, by encouraging direct communication among alienated parties and discouraging gossip, by encouraging the Rector to communicate with the Bishop on matters of serious conflict, and by encouraging the use of skilled, third-party help when needed. (See "Guidelines for Parish Conflicts")

All these responsibilities are seen in relation to the responsibilities of the Rector as pastor and presiding officer of the parish. (Canonical responsibilities of a Rector are summarized later).

These responsibilities belong not only to the Vestry as a body, but also to each member during their time of service.

### Qualifications

When Vestry members are commissioned (Book of Occasional Services, p. 162), their presenters certify that they have been prepared for this trust by "Commitment to Christ as Lord, regular attendance at worship and knowledge of their duties." These qualifications should be shared by all leaders within the faith community.

Vestry members are elected from among those confirmed Communicants over the age of 16 who are faithful attendants at the services of the Church in the Parish and faithful and frequent contributors to its support. Other requirements may be established by parish by-laws and diocesan canons.

### Term

Three years, unless elected to fill an unexpired term. No one may serve more than six successive years on the Vestry in any capacity.

### Specific Duties

To attend all meetings of the Vestry and all Parish Meetings (annual or special). The Vestry normally meets:

- Once a month (except either July or August).
- Several times a year for a special half-day meeting to deal with major development issues and decisions.
- In response to urgent matters requiring Vestry leadership or decision. The procedure for calling special meetings is found in the parish by-laws.

To bring to the attention of the Rector, Wardens and/or Vestry, matters of parish life and ministry that may need attention. In any serious matter, the Rector should be notified immediately.

To participate fully in discussion and decision-making and be ready to interpret decisions of the Vestry and Rector to other parishioners in a supportive way.

To maintain a file or notebook of Vestry business in good order and return it when term ends.

To attend a special orientation meeting for new Vestry members shortly after the annual meeting.

To be present at the main Eucharist on the Sunday after the annual meeting, when new Vestry members are commissioned.

To notify the Rector in advance if a meeting must be missed.

### When the Office Cannot be Fulfilled

When a Vestry member cannot, for any reason, fulfill the duties, responsibilities and qualifications above, they should notify the Rector or a Warden of this fact so that the vacancy may be filled. The missing of three successive meetings (regular or special) or more than four meetings (regular or special) in a calendar year by any member will be grounds for the Vestry to declare a vacancy automatically and proceed to fill it.

## Vestry Job Description - Another Example

Serving on the vestry is a unique experience – similar to serving on secular, community boards in some ways, but different in other, important ways. The most obvious difference is that vestry members are first called to follow Christ and to work together in God's name. The vestry has a responsibility for ensuring that the spiritual mission of the church is maintained, as well as for carrying out the more secular duties related to church property, finances and personnel. The vestry functions under the concept of "shared ministry," in which the rector and the vestry are part of an interdependent team that involves other parishioners in a variety of leadership and supportive roles.

### Legal Powers of the Vestry

The National Canons state, "The Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy" (Title I, Canon 14).

### Responsibilities of the Vestry

The vestry is the elected body of the parish which shares with the rector the responsibility for oversight of parish life and ministry. Specific responsibilities include:

- Help define and articulate the mission of the congregation
- Support the mission by word and deed
- Ensure adequate resources in leadership and in financial stewardship
- Manage resources effectively
- Determine that appropriate programs, policies and procedures have been developed and are followed
- Oversee the upkeep of church property
- Oversee the business affairs of the parish
- Select parish representatives (e.g., for Diocesan Convention, Community Boards)
- Select a new rector, in the event of a vacancy
- Assess its own performance

### Responsibilities of Individual Vestry Members

In order for the vestry to function effectively, each vestry member must actively participate in vestry activities and in the life of the parish. Specific individual responsibilities include:

- Regularly prepare for, attend and participate in vestry meetings
- Be an active member of one of the vestry action teams (see below)

- Assist in stewardship education
- Attend the annual vestry retreat
- Attend the orientation session at the beginning of each term of vestry service
- Interpret decisions of the vestry and the rector to other parishioners in a supportive way
- Maintain confidentiality on sensitive topics
- Support the mission of the church, putting overall interests of the church above personal or group interests
- Be receptive to individual parishioner's concerns and, if necessary, be willing to discuss these concerns with the rector, wardens and/or vestry.
- Learn about the mission, goals, programs, services, activities, strengths and needs of the congregation, diocese and the national church

The above list presents duties that are specifically associated with vestry activities. In addition, vestry members are especially encouraged to participate in diverse aspects of parish life, in order to lead by example and to be visible as leaders:

- Regularly attend worship services
- Lead a life that includes personal disciplines of prayer and Bible study
- Faithfully contribute financially to the mission of the church through an annual pledge to the Church
- Serve in visible roles in parish worship (greeters, ushers, etc.)
- Take part in various ministries and missions of the church
- Share in the social activities of the church

#### Legal Qualifications of Vestry Members

According to the parish By-Laws, "All resident members of the parish who are 16 years of age or older and who are enrolled confirmed communicants in good standing shall be eligible for election to the Vestry."

#### Organization of the Vestry

**Wardens:** Two wardens are elected each year. The senior warden is chosen by the rector and works closely with the rector on many aspects of church life; therefore, the senior warden is sometimes referred to as the "rector's warden." The junior warden, who is elected by the vestry, is primarily responsible for the church buildings. Another special function of the junior warden is to serve as an ombudsman for members of the parish, and thus this position is sometimes called the "people's warden."

**Clerk:** The clerk is a vestry member who, together with the parish administrator, is responsible for keeping minutes of vestry meetings and parish meetings, for correspondence related to vestry business and for maintaining vestry records.



**Treasurer:** The treasurer, who may or may not be a vestry member, maintains the financial and business records of the parish, prepares monthly financial reports for the vestry, and prepares annual financial reports.

**Action Teams:** Vestry members are organized into four teams of three members each, with each team responsible for being a liaison with parishioners who are engaged in mission and ministry in specific areas.

- Worship and Fellowship: Liaison with greeters, ushers, Stephen Ministry, discipleship groups, etc.
- Formation and Education: Liaison with Adult Christian formation classes, Journey to Adulthood program, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, and Nursery.
- Action and Outreach: Liaison with all the parish outreach ministries.
- Leadership and Oversight: Responsible for finances, buildings and grounds, and personnel. This team is composed of the wardens and the clerk; together with the rector and the treasurer, it comprises the executive committee of the vestry.

**Term of Office:** 3 years, beginning in January

## **ORGANIST/MUSIC COORDINATOR Position Description**

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

To support the worship of the congregation. The first priority is strong participation of the congregation in the hymns, Eucharistic settings, psalms and other music of the entire liturgy, and on full observance of the Church Year. Other objectives include: support for an environment of reverence and beauty in worship (through preludes, postludes, silence and occasional soloists and anthems); and development of the musical resources of the congregation (through support and training of the choir, involvement of others with musical gifts which may enhance the worship of, the congregation). See "Role of Music in the Church" from A Manual for Clergy and Church Musicians by Marion Hatchett.

## DUTIES

1. Assist the Rector in planning, arranging and preparing the congregation for music that supports the liturgy and the congregation's full participation within it.
2. Provide organ accompaniment for the primary Eucharist on Sundays and for the Feast Days listed in the attachment. To arrive at least 15 minutes before the liturgy. Normally the organist will need to prepare five hymns, two or three parts of the Eucharistic setting, psalm and prelude and postlude music.
3. Based on guidelines provided, prepare suggested lists of hymns for services for each season several weeks in advance, and consult with the Rector about the options for other liturgical music (Eucharistic settings, psalms, etc.)
4. Assist in the teaching of music to the congregation, directly and by preparing the choir to lead the congregation as needed.
5. Keep abreast of current understandings of liturgical music in the Episcopal Church, through reading, diocesan workshops, etc. Some financial assistance will be available each year for books and workshops, to be selected in consultation with the Rector.
6. Encourage and support the choir in learning and leading the music of the liturgy and in preparing occasional Communion anthems.
7. To maintain contact with capable soloists (vocal or instrumental) in the congregation, area music schools, etc., and arrange for their occasional use.
8. To be available approximately twenty-five hours per year to rehearse with choir and soloists.

## QUALIFICATIONS

1. Ability to provide accurate and supportive organ accompaniment to congregational music for the liturgy.
2. Familiarity with the style and principles of liturgical music and with hymns and settings common in the Episcopal Church today.
3. Ability to collaborate with the Rector in his/her responsibility for music in worship,

ability to evaluate musical options and resources in relation to the overall requirements of the liturgy, and willingness to develop liturgical knowledge as needed to enhance collaboration.

4. Sensitivity to the congregation's abilities, and a willingness to initiate suggestions for strengthening the congregation's participation.
5. Ability to rehearse, develop the skills of the choir, and teach basic principles of liturgy relevant to the choir's ministry.

#### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES AT WHICH THE ORGANIST PLAYS

1. The primary Eucharist each Sunday (except for scheduled vacation and sick days).
2. The eve or evening of Epiphany.
3. The evening of Maundy Thursday.
4. The evening of Good Friday.
5. The Great Vigil of Easter (late evening),
6. The evening of Ascension.
7. The evening of All Saints
8. Two services on Christmas Eve.
9. The eve or evening of the parish's patronal feast.
10. The Bishop's visitation for Confirmation. (Or another occasion).
11. Pastoral Offices (marriage, burial). The Organist will be given first option to play for these Offices, and will make himself/herself available as far as possible for them. When not available, he/she will attempt to arrange for another organist. These services are compensated separately, by the family, at the rate specified by the parish.

## PARTIAL LIST OF MUSIC GUIDELINES

1. Except in special cases, music will be selected from the Hymnal 1982, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, II, or *Wonder, Love, & Praise*. Prayer Book rubrics and directions will be honored.
2. Seasons of the Church Year will be carefully observed, (e.g., music will emphasize the distinction between Advent and Christmas seasons, etc.)
3. New music will be introduced at a pace that allows congregation's full and strong participation.
4. Special music (anthems, soloists, etc.) will be planned to enhance the celebration of the Church Year, and to enhance especially the festal liturgies (late Eucharist Christmas Eve, Easter Vigil, Pentecost, etc.). Consultation well in advance between Organist and Rector is essential and should occur before any music is discussed or rehearsed with soloists or choir.
5. Special Music (instrumental, solos, anthems) should always enhance the liturgical action of the congregation. Anthems are most supportive of the liturgical action when they take place at Communion. Solos may be appropriate at Communion as a prelude.
6. On Christmas Eve and on Easter morning, the congregation will be given a chance to sing many familiar hymns and carols.
7. Occasional consultation with members on music preferences should be planned well in advance with the Rector, and should include the whole congregation.
8. In relation to the pastoral offices of marriage and burial, members' initial discussion of music guidelines for the occasion should take place with the Rector. Before discussing particular music with a member in relation to such occasions, the Organist checks to see that the member has already discussed the matter with the Rector. As appropriate, the Organist will support and help interpret the standards of the Church as they are expressed in this parish.
9. In all communications, the organist will support and help interpret the priority on congregational participation, and the overall liturgical needs that the music exists to serve.
10. Sharing of information, concerns, critique, and suggestions from the Organist to the Rector is desired, in the context of their staff consultations.
11. The Organist is responsible to be supportive of the leadership of the Vestry and Rector, to air his/her own concerns directly and promptly to the Rector in matters relating to the position, to encourage others to express concerns directly and promptly to the person(s) responsible, and to discourage the airing of complaints other than with the person(s) responsible.

## TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

1. The Organist is appointed by, directly accountable to, and may be terminated by, the Rector.
2. The Organist is compensated within the provisions of an agreement approved by the Vestry.
3. The Organist is regarded as a self-employed contractor and is responsible for making his/her own tax payments. The parish reports fees paid to the Organist to the IRS.
4. For the first four weeks, the Organist's appointment shall be regarded as temporary. After four weeks, the agreement may be terminated by Organist or Rector with at least three weeks' notice.
5. The Organist is entitled to three compensated vacation Sundays a year, scheduled at least a month in advance in consultation with the Rector. When possible they will be Sundays when the Rector is not on vacation.
6. The Organist is entitled to one compensated sick day per year.
7. The Organist will be responsible to find supply organists for Sundays and feasts when he or she is absent.
8. The Organist will be compensated separately for any additional scheduled services he/she may agree to play, and for Pastoral Offices, at a rate determined by the rector in consultation with the Vestry.
9. An evaluation of the Organist's work will take place in May of each year.

## RECTOR

### Job Summary

Responsible for the overall leadership and the pastoral oversight of the congregation in all aspects of its life and ministry. Provides special emphasis to the ministry of parish revitalization and development. Exercises competent ministry of pastoral oversight, ministry of the Sacraments, and ministry of the Word.

### Responsible:

To the Bishop for conformity with the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church and faithfulness in priestly ministry and oversight.

With the Vestry for mutual ministry in establishing in the parish a faithful life of worship, doctrine, action, and oversight.

### Responsibilities:

1. Work closely with the parish development team, Vestry, and Bishop's Office to establish faithful and effective approaches to the parish's revitalization and development. Lead the parish in its revitalization.
2. Provide pastoral oversight that moves the parish toward a stronger life and ministry in worship, education, service, stewardship, and evangelization. Preside at Vestry and parish meetings. Hire, supervise, and terminate all other salaried staff. Provide for ministries of pastoral care, directly and with others in the parish. In collaboration with the Vestry, and other lay leaders, identify and equip people for ministry. Provide job descriptions and supervision for all parish groups and ministries. Finally responsible for seeing that the parish's life and ministry is maintained and strengthened, and for engaging others in that task. Share in the councils of the Church by participating in convention, serving on diocesan committees, when requested by the Bishop, and participating in other ministries of the wider church. Enable the parish's involvement in the life and ministry of the wider church. Engage in yearly mutual assessment of parish life and ministry.
3. Provide a ministry of the Sacraments and prayer including an adequate schedule for Sundays, Holy days, and daily prayer; provision for occasional services, the sick and shut-ins. Lay members with gifts for prayer and/or liturgical assisting are to be identified, equipped and supervised.
4. Provide a ministry of the Word through competent preaching and teaching. A frequent and regular pattern of appropriate learning opportunities for all members is to be maintained. Lay members with gifts for a teaching ministry are to be identified, equipped and supervised.
5. Participate in a system for collegial support and supervision including monthly gatherings and preparation of six month's working objectives.

### Critical Skills, Experience, Knowledge and Abilities;

1. Capacity to define and present his/her own vision and sense of direction for a parish; be in touch with the needs and desires of the congregation, cope with his/her own tendencies toward excessive control and/or passivity, and efficiently deal with dependent personalities.
2. Capacity to modify his/her approach to leadership to fit the current needs of the particular parish, sub-group or individual. An ability to match leadership style to the system's competence for a task, maturity in faith and practice, and level of commitment.
3. Has a capacity to develop pastoral strategy for nurturing and revitalizing parish life and ministry that is based on: sound pastoral theology, an understanding of the parish's dynamics and its role in the community, and a grasp of the primary task of a parish – renewing people in their baptismal identity and purpose and sending them into their apostolate in family, work and community.
4. Authenticity, seen in the congruence between priest's belief and behavior and between the public and private dimensions of the priest's life.
5. A capacity to cope with the typical stages of relationship between priest and congregations, revolving around acceptance of the priest as both symbol and person.
6. Has or will receive significant training in parish development, evangelization and mission strategy (an extensive diocesan course, the Parish Development Institute, LAND, etc.)
7. Basic skills for the administration of the sacraments, preaching, teaching, parish administration, pastoral care, etc.
8. Ability to work in a collegial manner with the Bishop's Office and other priests and in a collaborative manner with lay leaders.
9. Has a disciplined spiritual life that includes prayer, the reading and study of the Scriptures, continued learning, and the stewardship of his/her family/community life and personal well being.

Note: For a priest in charge for the first time, the assumption is that many of the skills will have to be equipped and refined in the first few years of work (especially 1, 2, 3, and 5). The initial concern is with the capacity to develop those abilities with training and supervision.

### Policies

1. A full day off each week (a rector's working week is six days).
2. Four weeks vacation (usually during the summer).
3. A week of spiritual retreat.
4. A week of continuing education.

5. A refresher leave (after five years of full-time service to the parish) of 3 months duration with full pay. That year's vacation may be added. It is understood that the priest will remain with the parish for a minimum of one year after the conclusion of the refresher leave period.
6. Rectors receive at least the diocesan minimum rate for compensation, benefits and expenses. Compensation above the minimum may be negotiated if the priest has exceptional skills and experience in parish revitalization and development. Additional compensation is required when the priest successfully completes a formal diocesan assessment process and may be negotiated with the Vestry, based on diocesan guidelines regarding length of service, prior experience, and parish development training.



## ASSOCIATE/ASSISTANT RECTOR'S JOB DESCRIPTION

**JOB SUMMARY:** Responsible for working along side the Rector in the leadership and pastoral oversight of the parish with special emphasis [HERE IS LISTED THE SPECIFIC OVERSIGHT DUTIES OF THE PRIEST].

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** The Rector for all matters of the parish and to the Bishop for conformity with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal Church and faithfulness in priestly ministry.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSOCIATE/ASSISTANT RECTOR:

- To work closely with the Rector, other staff, and lay leadership to develop faithful and effective ministries.
- To give direct oversight to [HERE IS LISTED THE SPECIFIC OVERSIGHT DUTIES OF THE PRIEST].
- To share in the councils of the Church by participating in the Diocese, serving on diocesan committees (when requested by the Bishop), and participating in other ministries of the wider Church. Encourage the parish's involvement in the life and ministry of the wider Church.
- To provide a ministry of the Sacraments and prayer and to assist in liturgical planning.
- To provide a ministry of the Word through competent preaching and teaching. Laity with gifts for teaching ministry are to be identified, equipped, and supervised.
- To modify leadership style to fit the current needs of the church.
- To match leadership style to a group's competence for a task, maturity in faith and practice, and level of commitment.
- To nurture a parish's life and ministry that is based on an:
  - Orthodox theology.
  - Understanding of parish dynamics and its role in the community.
  - Essentiality of parish life - renewing people in their baptismal identity and equipping them for their apostolate in family, work, and community.
  - To have congruence between one's belief and behavior and between the public and private dimensions of life, while coping with the typical stages of a relationship between clergy and laity, revolving around accepting the priest as both symbol and person.
  - To have a disciplined spiritual life that includes daily prayer and study of the Scriptures, regular continuing education and the stewardship of personal well-being.

**ANNUAL COMPENSATION:**

The Annual Cash Salary (Stipend/Housing/Utility Allowance) will be reviewed and adjusted each year in light of changes in the Consumer Price Index, the current Diocesan salary standard, and when applicable, the merits and scope of ministry performance and responsibility. Upon request by the Associate Rector, the Vestry will record in its minutes and set aside a portion of her total cash salary as "Housing Allowance" under the Internal Revenue Code. This shall be updated annually.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

Four weeks vacation each year, including Four Sundays, at a time that is mutually agreeable to the Rector and the Associate Rector.

One full day off each week on a weekday (not the same as the rector's) that is mutually agreeable to the Rector and the Associate Rector.

Two weeks of continuing education each year.

Term life Insurance will be provided through the Diocesan group life insurance policy, as mandated by Diocesan Council.

The parish will pay all reasonable moving expenses.

After five years of continual service, the Associate Rector will be granted a 3-month Sabbatical. During the Sabbatical, the parish will continue the full compensation she is scheduled to receive during that year.

## GENERAL REVITALIZATION OBJECTIVES

1. Strong overall parish life and ministry (worship, education, service, evangelization, stewardship that:
  - a. Nurtures and equips the ministry of all baptized people according to their gifts and calling for ministry in work, family, and community and internal parish ministries;
  - b. Is rooted in our tradition and;
  - c. Nurtures the Christian life of people at all phases of maturity, coaches and equips those of apostolic faith and practice for ministry, and encourages all toward a more prayerful, disciplined and compassionate Christian life.
2. Priest and lay leaders working faithfully and effectively together.
3. Clear, functioning grasp of mission strategy, including being engaged with the community in service and evangelization, moving to reflect the community in membership, and creating a definition of "the community".
4. Processes and structures for ongoing revitalization in functioning (e.g., process of planning and discernment, focus of parish on essentials of the Christian life, way to monitor life and development, etc.).
5. Improved institutional life (e.g., increased attendance, pledge units, average pledge, has workable financial strategy, property plan, etc.).
6. Continued participation in a support-accountability system beyond the parish (e.g., use of outside resources, receptiveness to influence and collaboration, have completed and acted on an exploration of the best way in which the parishes might be mutually supportive and accountable, etc.).

## SOME CANONICAL AND PRAYER BOOK REFERENCES TO THE RECTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

"To work together with your Bishop and fellow-presbyters as pastor, priest, and teacher, and to take your share in the Councils of the Church...Care alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. By your words and in your life, proclaim the Gospel. Love and serve Christ's people. Nourish them, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come. (BCP. p. 557)

"Control of worship and spiritual jurisdiction," subject to the directions of the Prayer Book, the Canons, and the Bishop.

Authority over all assisting clergy.

"Use and control of the Church and Parish buildings with the appurtenances and furniture thereof" at all times, for the full and free discharge of his office.

Instruct children in the catechism; inform youth and adults in "Doctrine, Polity, History and Liturgy of the Church," and concerning "all the missionary work of the Church at home and abroad."

Instruct parents and godparents before Baptism.

Prepare young persons and others for Confirmation, and present those he deems qualified to the Bishop.

Administer alms for "pious and charitable uses."

Give suitable opportunities for offerings to maintain the missionary work of the Church at home and abroad.

Read to the congregation (or otherwise publish) Pastoral Letters of the Bishops.

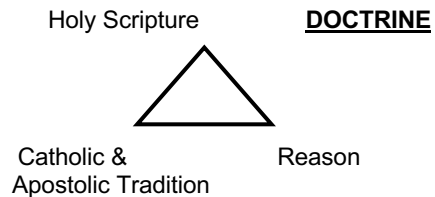
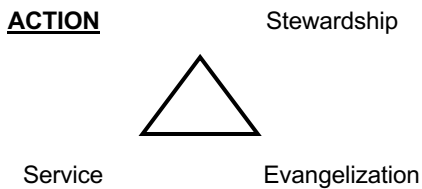
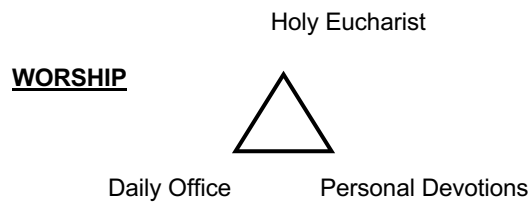
Counsel and recommend persons interested in applying for Holy Orders.

At the time of his visitation, inform the Bishop of the spiritual and temporal state of the Congregation, and exhibit the Parish Register.

Keep accurate parish records of services, sacraments, and communicants.

Preside at meetings of the Vestry.

## APPENDIX A: THE CHRISTIAN LIFE MODEL

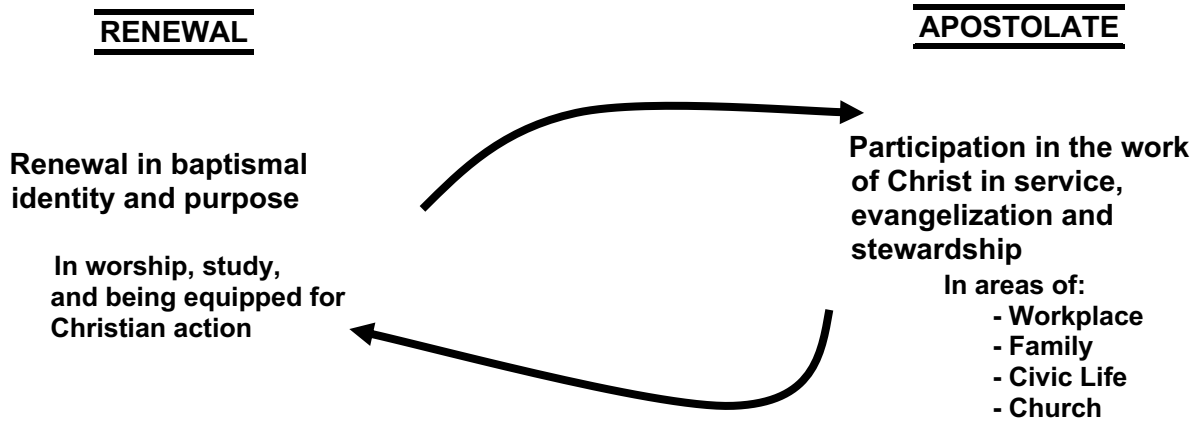


- Each is a way in which Christ comes to us and in which we seek Christ. Each is an entry into and participation in the unity to which we are called. In them we are called into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ - the heart of Christ, the mind of Christ, the work of Christ.
- The model can be used by parishes for self assessment, as a framework for planning, as a way to generally focus the parish on the essentials of the Christian life, and as a resource to individuals in shaping a Rule of Life.

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## APPENDIX B: THE RENEWAL APOSTOLATE CYCLE

The Renewal - Apostolate Cycle is a way of describing a central dynamic of Christian life. The primary task and central process of a congregation can be seen as enabling people in a faithful and effective movement between renewal and apostolate.



### A Cycle

The cycle is between a conscious and intentional attention to God and Christian formation and a subconscious reliance upon God as members of the Body of Christ, in the workplace, family, civic life and congregational life.

### In that Cycle:

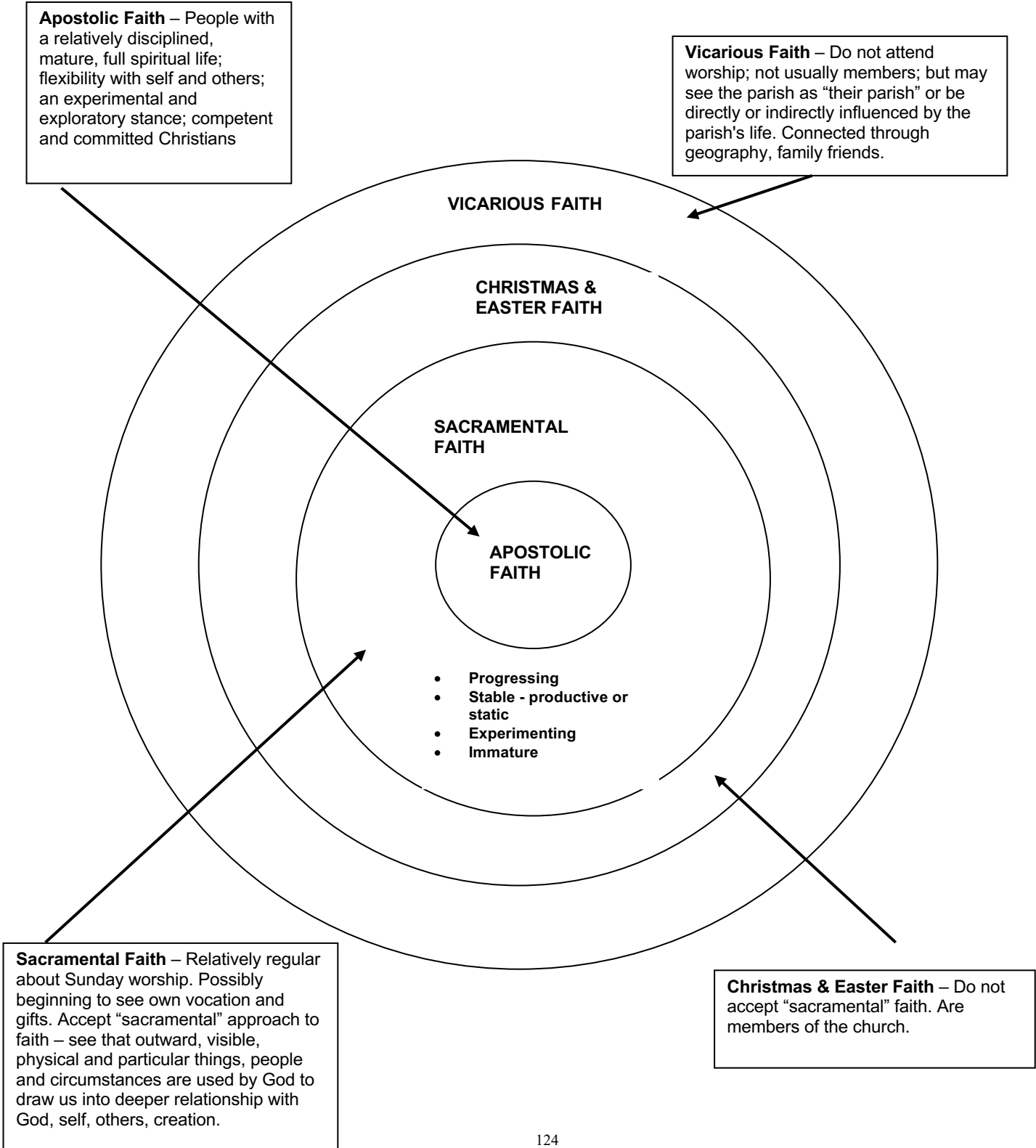
#### We Need:

- To accept our dependence on God
- To accept responsibility for ordering our spiritual life
- To accept our interdependence with others in the Church

#### Which is Helped By:

- - Openness to spiritual guidance
- - Establishing a rule of life
- - Life in Christian community, a congregation

## APPENDIX C: SHAPE OF THE PARISH



## APPENDIX D: CONGREGATIONAL REVITALIZATION AGREEMENTS

### *A congregation-priest-diocese expression of mutual support and accountability*

These agreements are made among the bishop, rector/vicar, and congregation's lay leaders. An agreement is intended to establish a direction that enables the congregation to take the next necessary step in its development.

The purpose of an agreement is to state the overall vision and primary objectives for revitalization and development over a specific period of time. The agreement focuses on and highlights those objectives or ministries that will receive the special attention of the congregation, priest, and bishop's office.

The agreement is created in a consultant-led process that includes:

- A study of standard development goals and methods.
- A review of the community's needs and trends.
- A self assessment of congregational life and ministry.
- Possibly a peer visit and report.
- And a consultant-led process of reflection, discernment and planning.

The priest and lay leaders work together to draft statements that are shared with the bishop, who responds with additional suggestions and any needed clarification of diocesan expectations. An agreement will usually go through two or three drafts in its development.

The following provides the general outline that is used in creating an agreement.

This contains a statement of the congregation's efforts toward development or revitalization and the process leading up to the agreement in the last few years. It states what external forces are impacting the congregation currently and what internal strengths and weaknesses the congregation has as they relate to the direction being taken.

This is a statement that lays out the broad vision of the revitalization ministry and a list of the primary objectives for the period of the agreement. The objectives should clearly fit the congregation's current place in its life cycle, stage of development, and community context. If there is a longer, more detailed vision statement it can be attached.

The agreement must have a finite time period. First time agreements or agreements involving seriously troubled congregations or untrained clergy are best made for one year, with frequent "check-ins," otherwise agreements might be for two to three years.

#### THE CONGREGATION WILL:

This states clearly what the congregation's lay leaders are willing to do over the period of the agreement in order to accomplish the vision and objectives. This might include the



equipping of people for the ministries, the use of workshops and a consultative relationship.

THE RECTOR/VICAR WILL:

This states clearly what the rector or vicar will do to provide leadership toward the vision and objectives. This might highlight parts of the priest's job description which need special attention.

THE BISHOP'S OFFICE WILL:

This states clearly what the Bishop's office will do including a general statement of support for the vision and objectives; commitment to any special funding of new ministries, new fellowship, or other evangelization ministry; and an understanding of how often the bishop or a representative will meet with the priest, development team and/or vestry.

Revisions of this agreement may be revised only by the mutual agreement of all the parties involved. Revisions will no doubt need to be made as new opportunities and challenges emerge during the life of the agreement.

**APPENDIX E: ASSESSMENT OF PARISH LIFE AND MINISTRY**

1. Overall satisfaction with Parish Life and Ministry

I am very dissatisfied

I am very satisfied

1	2	3	4	5	6

2. *Worship* (How well we worship as a community and equip people for participation in the Eucharist and the use of the Daily office and personal devotions. Climate: issues of style, beauty, flow; appropriate use of the Holy Eucharist and Daily Office; teaching and coaching the congregation for prayer life and participation in liturgy; functioning of guilds and individuals that play special roles; schedule; participation, etc.)

a. *Overall satisfaction*

I am very dissatisfied

I am very satisfied

1	2	3	4	5	6

b. *Weaknesses*

c. *Strengths*

3. *Doctrine* - The parish's awareness of what has authority in the Christian Life and how to relate those sources of authority to decision-making. People understand how to use Scripture – Tradition – Reason as they reflect on their life and as a backdrop in discernment and decision making.

a. *Overall satisfaction*

I am very dissatisfied

I am very satisfied

1	2	3	4	5	6

b. *Weaknesses*

c. *Strengths*

4. *Action* (Corporate action of service, evangelization, stewardship; lay members' awareness of their ministry in the workplace, family, civic life, church)

a. *Overall satisfaction*

I am very dissatisfied

1	2	3	4	5	6

I am very satisfied

b. *Weaknesses*

c. *Strengths*

5. *Oversight* (How competent and committed leaders - clergy and lay - are for leadership and management; building community; and deepening the congregation's spiritual life; leaders serving, guiding, leading and managing the parish into an appropriate and full living of the Christian Life: bringing and preserving a proper order/shape in the parish's life; methods for reflecting, discerning and planning in parish life; lay-clergy relationships; sense of direction, etc.)

a. *Overall satisfaction*

I am very dissatisfied

1	2	3	4	5	6

I am very satisfied

b. *Weaknesses*

c. *Strengths*

6. *Other Comments*

## CLERGY ASSESSMENT

### A. Steps

1. For use after an overall parish assessment based on the same model.
2. Members of vestry complete assessment form. Priest fills out form for self-assessment.
3. All forms are returned to the Rector or Vicar for review and reflection. (If desired by the priest, this could be done with the Wardens.)
4. Rector or Vicar makes a brief response to the Vestry, i.e., “You seem pleased with . . .”; “Some concern was expressed about. . .”; “I see myself giving special attention to. . .”

### B. Please write comments in each of the following areas

	Like about your ministry in this parish	Concerns I have	Things I wish you would consider doing differently
<b>Worship</b>			
<b>Doctrine</b>			
<b>Action</b>			
<b>Oversight</b>			

### C. Other Comments

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## Appendix F: Outline of an Adult Foundations Course in Faith & Practice

**The Objective:** Enfolding people into Christian Faith & Practice as lived in the Episcopal Church

**A few suggestions:**

1. Use a mix of experiential, group discussion, and presentation
2. Present the course at least once a year. More often in a large parish.
3. Allow people to do part of it one year and complete it the next
4. Acknowledge those who complete the whole course
5. See it as part of building the *Shape of the Parish*

Session 1:

**The Christian Life**

*Your relationship with God & the Church*

**The Story of the People of God**

*The People of Israel*

Session 2:

**The Christian Life**

*The development of Christian character*

**The Story of the People of God**

*Jesus Christ: His Life & Work*

Session 3:

**The Christian Life**

*Sharing the priesthood of Christ: Baptismal Life*

**The Story of the People of God**

*The Holy Catholic Church: the nature of the church*

Session 4:

**The Christian Life**

*The Christian Moral Vision*

**The Story of the People of God**

*The Church" Renewal & Reform*

Session 5:

**Spiritual Life & Development**

*The Threefold Rule of Prayer: The Eucharist*

**The Story of the People of God**

*The Mission of the Church: Holy Unity*

Session 6:

**Spiritual Life & Development**

*The Threefold Rule of Prayer: Personal Devotions & Daily Office*

**The Story of the People of God**

*The Anglican Communion & the Episcopal Church*

Session 7:

**Spiritual Life & Development**

*Sacrament of Reconciliation; Rule of Life*

**The Bible**

*How the Bible came to be; how to use and understand the Bible*

Session 8:

**Christian Action**

*Stewardship, Evangelization; Service*

**Christian Believing**

*Sources of authority; God & Humanity*

Session 9:

**Christian Action**

*Responsibility & Freedom: Choice & Faith*

**Christian Believing**

*Evil, sin and forgiveness; hope*

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