

# DIOCESAN CUSTOMARY

August 2022

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Diocese of the Central States  
of the Reformed Episcopal Church

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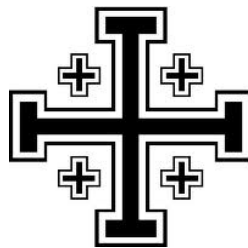
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## INTRODUCTION

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THIS Customary is offered to the Clergy and Parishes as a guideline for customs, policies, procedures, and appropriate behaviors in the Diocese of the Central States (DCS). The goal of this document is to gather into one resource answers to many of the questions that are often asked by Clergy and Laity alike. It serves as a “handbook” for the various issues of our common ministry.

A Customary helps with clarity and consistency. Processes involving multiple steps and forms are here streamlined and the forms provided. A Customary also helps new Clergy, enquirers about our Diocese, and Parish Vestry members learning about the larger church. What are the “right” vestments? What do vestries do? What’s a Deaconess? How does a Parish prepare when the Bishop is coming? We have answers here for all of that and more. Every Bishop, Rector, Vicar, Deacon, Deaconess, Warden, and Vestry member will benefit from a thorough diocesan customary.

This Customary covers some matters that are canonically required and others that are at the Bishop Ordinary’s discretion. It is not designed to replace existing governing documents such as the constitutions and canons of the Diocese or national church; in the case of unintended discrepancies between this document and those, the governing documents take precedence. In any case of doubt, consult the Bishop.

For Reformed Episcopalians, the unity of the Parishes together with their Bishop is a high scriptural and ecclesial priority. This Customary is intended to assist in that unity. This is the Bishop Ordinary’s document for everyone’s benefit and ought to be considered carefully and followed faithfully. It is offered in the spirit of godly, pastoral advice and counsel.

## SECTION I:

### Matters Pertaining to the Sacraments and Rites of the Church

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#### *HOLY COMMUNION*

Persons admitted to the Holy Communion should be Confirmed by a Bishop in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church or one who is deemed to be in the line of succession of the Historic Episcopate as understood by this Church. The following guidelines are provided to address various situations that may occur in the administration of the Holy Communion.

#### **Guest Communion:**

1. In the Reformed Episcopal Church any person (including, for example, a visitor) who has been baptized in the Name of the Holy Trinity and is in good standing in his/her own church may receive the Sacrament in our Church in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer.
2. The habitual reception of the Sacrament by persons who are not affiliated with the Reformed Episcopal Church is an indication for a pastoral invitation to Confirmation or Reception.
3. If a printed bulletin announcement is desired, the following words are recommended:

The following invitation is made to all those who are baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: "Our fellow Christians of other branches of Christ's Church, and all who love our Divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in sincerity, are affectionately invited to the Lord's Table."

#### **Paedo-Communion:**

The following pastoral guidelines should apply to baptized children regarding admission to the Holy Communion with the goal that through proper teaching and practice they may grow in appreciation of the grace they have received and in their ability to respond in faith, love, and thankful commitment of their lives to God. In all cases the Presbyter shall ensure that the administration of communion of young children shall be conducted with decency and propriety.

1. The reception of communion by young children should normally be in the context of their participation with their parents and other family members in the liturgy of the Church.
2. Pastoral sensitivity is always required in not forcing the sacrament on an unwilling child, in not rejecting a baptized child who is reaching out for communion with God in Christ, and in respecting the position of the parents in this regard.

3. The Bishop recommends that children under the age of five years should receive the cup by Intinction. The children should be taught to hold the bread in their hand until the server comes with the cup, at which time, it shall be dipped in the wine and placed in the child's mouth.

4. Whereas the Bishop strongly encourages paedocommunion (the reception of communion on the part of all baptized children), the practice of some Parishes which customarily give first communion only to those who have been Confirmed is acceptable, provided that children already admitted to the Holy Communion in another Parish or jurisdiction should not be denied the sacrament.

5. In all cases, Reformed Episcopalians visiting Parishes which are not their own should be willing to abide by the local Parish customs.

**Intinction:**

Intinction may be offered within this Diocese, but in all cases the cup must also be offered to both Clergy and Laity. Intinction is not the normative means of reception but is intended as a mode of communication to be used in cases of communicable diseases, infirmity, distribution to young children, etc. It is recommended that Parishes make known their policy regarding intinction (e.g., whether the communicant intincts the bread or whether the server intincts and places the bread on the tongue of the communicant) and that servers be trained to act consistently.

**The Material Sign of the Sacrament:**

The material signs of the Sacrament of Holy Communion are bread and wine. These are the elements sanctified for sacred use by our Lord, and thus we can know them to be efficacious as a means of grace when properly consecrated and received by faith. We do not have clear scriptural license to use grape juice or "bread" that does not contain wheat. As noted above, reception in both kinds is normative, and Presbyters ought always to make both elements available to those who come to receive. This principle and practice notwithstanding, accommodation is reasonably made to those who need to receive in only one kind.

Those recovering from alcohol addiction, for instance, may wish to receive only the bread. Those who have celiac disease or are otherwise gluten-sensitive may wish to receive only wine. Good hospitality toward the former might mean instructing such to receive the bread and either to cross their arms over their chests as the wine is distributed or, if needed, to rise before the chalice bearer approaches. Good hospitality toward the latter might mean offering a chalice that has not been "contaminated" by gluten (i.e., that has not been touched by bread or by the lips of those who have just received bread, as such even slight contamination can have serious medical effect). In no case should hospitality toward the saints be an excuse to change the material sign of the Sacrament in violation of the words of Christ and traditions of the Church.

### **Liturgical Orientation:**

It is the preferred practice of this Diocese that Presbyters preside at the altar *ad orientem*, that is, facing away from the people towards the (liturgical) east rather than *versus populum*, facing the people (liturgical west). Churches and chapels built in this diocese should accommodate the *ad orientem* position. In churches and chapels built previously and in non-consecrated spaces used for the divine liturgy (such as rented facilities), accommodation should be made for *ad orientem* celebration if at all possible.

### **BAPTISM**

Except in emergencies, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism should be administered at the chief service on a Sunday or other major feast day. Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day, and on the Feast of Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany).

### **Sponsors:**

Each person to be baptized is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons who are themselves practicing Christian believers who are active members of the Church. It is the required duty of the Clergy to provide adequate pre-baptismal instruction to all sponsors, parents, and mature candidates.

In the baptism of infants and children, it is the Bishop's expectation that at least one of the parents will be an active communicant member of the congregation where the baptism is to take place. In certain pastoral situations where this is not the case, the Bishop expects that the sponsors will be communicant members of the Parish, that the sponsors can fulfill the promises made in the baptismal office, and that the parents have given permission. As a norm, active participation in the life of the Christian community is expected of all parties involved, both before and after the baptism.

*(Note the rubrics on page 469 of the REC Book of Common Prayer (2005), and on page 273 of the 1928 BCP. Also note that Baptismal Certificates may be used as legal documents. They must include full name, date of birth, place of birth, both parents' full names as they appear on their birth certificates, sponsor's names, as well as the date and place of the baptism and signature of the officiant.)*

### **CONFIRMATION**

Confirmation is a significant event in the spiritual life of one making a public renewal and ratification of his or her baptismal vows. It is a time of empowerment and commissioning, when one receives the apostolic laying on of hands. Candidates for Confirmation must be properly instructed in the Christian faith and life, repentant of their sins, and duly prepared to make a mature, public commitment to following Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Though the minimum age for youth Confirmations may vary for certain pastoral situations, presentation for Confirmation of children younger than eleven years of age requires the prior approval of the Bishop.

Persons already confirmed, but not in a church with Anglican polity, may be received by the Bishop, following the appropriate instruction and preparation, using the form for “The Admission of a Communicant” found in the Book of Occasional Services (2011).

Any member of the Reformed Episcopal Church who has lapsed from active participation in the life of the Church, or who for some other appropriate reason wishes to do so, may make a public re-affirmation in the presence of the Bishop at the time of his visitation.

Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows are three different, distinct categories of persons to be presented to the Bishop at the time of his annual visitation. In this Diocese, we continue to use the three different categories as traditionally understood in the practice of classical Anglicanism. Confirmation is for those who have been baptized but have never received the laying on of hands by a Bishop in apostolic (historic) succession. Reception is for those who have been baptized and confirmed in another church of apostolic (historic) succession, (Episcopal, Roman Catholic, or Orthodox churches), and now wish to be received into the Reformed Episcopal Church/Anglican Church in North America. Reaffirmation is for Reformed Episcopalians who wish to reaffirm their vows previously made at baptism and confirmation. At Confirmation, the traditional laying on of hands by this Bishop is used. At reception and reaffirmation, it is not; a blessing is given instead. Only those confirmed or received are to be entered into your Parish register in the "Confirmation" and “Communicant” section. These distinctions are to be made clear as candidates are presented to the Bishop. It is the responsibility of the Rector or Presbyter-in-charge to submit the full names of Confirmands and/or candidates for Reception to the Diocesan office at least fourteen days prior to the Bishop’s visit so that the appropriate certificates may be prepared.

#### HOLY MATRIMONY

All marriages shall be conducted under the requirements of Reformed Episcopal Canon 34. The Church is not a business for marrying people, and only those who are part of the Christian community or those who are seeking to become part of it should be considered. Further, a clergyman of this Diocese is not to solemnize the marriage of any party not a member of the Parish he serves without the explicit permission of the Bishop. In all cases, the parties to be joined in marriage shall have first signed a Declaration in the following words:

*We, A. B. and C. D., 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 Book of Common Prayer. We believe it is for the purpose of the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their spiritual and physical nurture, for mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, 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.*

The form “Declaration of a Couple Desiring Holy Matrimony” is provided in the Appendix for this purpose.

The Presbyter is in charge not only of the marriage service but also of the decoration of the church and the choice of music. No wedding date may be set without the concurrence of the Presbyter in charge of the Parish in which the wedding is to be held. Marriages are expected to be celebrated in the church as a service of worship and not as private affairs or social spectacles. It is recommended that no marriage is to be celebrated during Advent or Lent, except for special or unusual reasons. In such cases, it is customary to consult with the Bishop before proceeding. The Clergy are required to provide careful preparation and instruction to the couple prior to the solemnization of any marriage. For this reason, the officiating Presbyter must be contacted at least sixty days prior to the anticipated date of the proposed wedding. Every congregation is expected to have clear and precise policies regarding marriages and the use of the Parish Hall for receptions. Matters to be addressed include the use of flowers, candles, photographers, videos, music, rehearsals, fees, etc.

It is the normal practice of this Diocese to celebrate all services of Holy Matrimony within the Parish church building. Any Marriage conducted outside the confines of the Parish building shall maintain and convey the worship and dignity of this sacramental rite always using the Book of Common Prayer as the standard for such unions.

Marriages of communicant members of the Church may be celebrated in the context of the Holy Communion. In such cases all communicants, or persons in good standing in their home church or denomination, are to be given opportunity to receive the Blessed Sacrament during the Communion of the people.

Ministers of this Diocese have freedom to act sacramentally in solemnizing Holy Matrimony while choosing not to act as agents of the state in signing marriage licenses. Ministers with such conviction should refrain consistently (not making exceptions by case) and should offer clear explanation to persons seeking Holy Matrimony of the difference between civil marriage and Holy Matrimony and the reason for differentiation of roles. When the Minister does not act as an agent of the state, it is recommended that couples have their civil licenses secured prior to the sacred service.

**Re-marriage in the Church:**

A petition to the Bishop is necessary when either or both parties have been previously married and when the former spouse is still living. A petition is something that seeks a decision, and certain information is necessary on which to base that decision. The pastoral relationship established between the Presbyter and those coming to him seeking permission to marry in the Church is essential. The findings of the Presbyter are the most important parts of the petition upon which the decision is based. Therefore, thorough counseling and teaching are expected.

The information presented to the Bishop, along with the completed “Petition for Marriage in the Church of Divorced Persons,” which is provided in the Appendix, must include:

1. A letter from the divorced person(s) indicating what went wrong in the previous marriage, whether counseling was sought, what positive insights or understandings were gained from the experience, why it is believed that the proposed marriage will be successful, what moral and financial responsibilities continue with respect to the former spouse and any children of that marriage, and the reason(s) the person wishes to be married in the Church.
2. A letter from the Presbyterian indicating his opinion in the matter and his willingness to officiate at the marriage.

In all requests for the Bishop's consent to the marriage of divorced persons, applications must be in the hands of the Bishop at least 60 days before the contemplated marriage date, and no announcement of the marriage may be made until the consent of the Bishop has been received. Such applications will normally be considered by the Bishop only when the divorce has been final for at least one year.

Note: It is the responsibility of Rectors and Vicars to act as spiritual fathers in their Parishes. Thus, when marriages are failing within their congregations, they must act to give spiritual counsel to the parties willing to receive such and correction to any who are not so willing (if they are parishioners). In cases where the Rector has examined the evidence, counseled the party or parties, and determined that a party is not at significant fault in the divorce and ought to be free to remarry in the future (e.g., when they are victims of abuse or adultery or abandonment), he may make a statement in writing to that effect and, after conferring with the Bishop, issue such to the divorced party. This writ may be submitted in the future to satisfy requirement 1 above should the divorced party seek to be remarried in the Church. This pastoral provision could save divorcees who were not at fault from having to prove such later and reopen old wounds.

#### *FUNERALS*

The Presbyterian is in charge not only of the funeral service but also of the decoration of the church and the choice of music. Due consideration to the desires of the bereaved should be given in a pastoral, sensitive way. Funerals for communicant members of the Church should be taken from the Book of Common Prayer. When requested, Holy Communion may be offered as part of the service. In such cases, the invitation is to be extended and persons eligible to receive in their own church are to be welcomed to receive the Blessed Sacrament during the Communion of the people.

Homilies by the Clergy are appropriate at funerals in the church, but eulogies are inappropriate. The focus of a funeral service should not be the departed but the Lord Jesus Christ, who has overcome death and the grave. Many of our parishioners have been exposed to evangelical or secular funerals that included eulogies and may wish for them. Care should be taken to explain to the bereaved, as needed, the difference between a eulogy and a funeral homily. Eulogies center either on the deceased (listing their admirable traits and accomplishments) or on the relationship between the deceased and the eulogizer. Such speeches might be quite appropriate

for a family dinner after the funeral or other gatherings in relation to the death of a loved one. The funeral homily, to be given by a Presbyter or Deacon, has a different purpose. They have a personal quality and might touch on aspects of the life and character of the departed but with the purpose of interpreting that life and character in light of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

#### *PRAYER BOOK POLICY*

The Book of Common Prayer of the Reformed Episcopal Church in North America (2005) is the Standard Prayer Book of the Diocese of the Central States. The Book of Common Prayer (1928) and certain other liturgies are permitted under provisions of the Constitution of the General Council or actions of the General Council. Liturgies for the principal Sunday worship service are to be taken from these books. Pastoral use of other previously approved prayer books or liturgies for alternative use is subject to the permission of the Bishop Ordinary within such guidelines and limitations as he may establish. When in doubt, consult with the Bishop.

No minister, Parish, or Mission of this Diocese will compose their own liturgy or use any liturgy not approved by the Reformed Episcopal Church in accordance with its Constitution and Canons.

The Lectionary and Calendar of the Church Year contained in the edition used is permitted for use.

The Book of Occasional Services of the Reformed Episcopal Church approved in 2011, as well as any such resources approved by the Reformed Episcopal Church or its sub-jurisdictions or agencies, may be used. Other supplement resources should be approved by the Bishop Ordinary.

#### *ANOINTING WITH OIL*

The anointing with oil in the Old Testament was a rite performed to consecrate priests and kings. Saint James instructs those sick in the church to call for the Presbyters to anoint them with oil and pray the prayer of faith for their healing and the forgiveness of their sins. The Church has reserved to Bishops the office of anointing the people of God at Confirmation and the prayer for the gift of the Holy Ghost. In each case, the oil represents and is a sacramental means for the presence and ministry of the Holy Ghost to sanctify a person for their office of ministry in the Church. This is as true of the Laity in the ministry of healing as it is of the Clergy at their ordination. The Creator Spirit comes to sanctify the one for whom the minister prays, cleansing and healing and equipping for the good works which God has prepared for them to walk in.

The Bishop Ordinary, as chief Presbyter of the Diocese calls upon the Presbyters under his charge to encourage their parishioners to request prayer when in need of healing. They may anoint the sick in ministry to them in their homes, in hospitals, in the setting of pastoral counsel and ministry of reconciliation, during the Offices of prayer in the church, and in the context of

the Holy Communion. The Bishop consecrates oil to be used for this purpose and makes this oil available to the Presbyters.

All Christians should pray for one another's healing and growth in grace. But not all Christians have the ministry to anoint with oil. In keeping with the traditions of the Church and in light of Holy Scripture, only Presbyters are permitted to anoint with oil in this Diocese, and they are to use the oil provided to them by the Bishop. The practice of anointing by Presbyters with episcopally consecrated oil illustrates and preserves the unity of the Body of Christ. Christ pours out the Holy Spirit upon the Church as he has received the Spirit from the Father. And so, the Presbytery who were ordained by the Bishop bring the oil as from him to apply to those in need as a function of their office and ministry.

## SECTION II: Matters Pertaining to the Clergy

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### **Prayer:**

Members of the Clergy are to be men of prayer not only in their public ministrations but in their private lives as well. Presbyters and Deacons alike should have as the normative standard for their prayer lives the Morning and Evening Offices of The Book of Common Prayer together with what devotional acts and prayers are edifying to them.

The practice of *Lectio Divina* is commended by the Bishop as a most fruitful exercise for Clergy, and he has encouraged the Clergy to teach the practice as well to the Laity.

Clergy should endeavor to see to their own spiritual growth and nurture through retreats and sabbaticals as needed and through regular use of godly counselors and confessors.

### **Clergy and Deaconess Information Forms:**

In the Bishop's role as Chief Pastor it is important that he have current personal and family information on all Clergy of the Diocese. Prior to ordination or upon transfer into the Diocese of the Central States, Clergy are required to complete the "Clergy and Deaconess Information" form provided in the Appendix and to periodically update this information as needed so that contact can be maintained and so that directories are accurate. Clergy should not wait until the Bishop sends out a Directory to "correct" the information there but should send a new form whenever their information has changed.

### **Letters Dimissory:**

Transfer of canonical residency by Letters Dimissory as required by Reformed Episcopal Title I, Canon 19, Sec. 6 should be requested to be sent to a new diocese by a clergyman who moves there immediately after taking up residence and being received by his new Bishop. Generally, we receive such letters under the same conditions. However, both the issuance and acceptance of Letters Dimissory may be delayed by the Bishop for a proper cause under the Canons.

### **License to Officiate:**

A license to officiate in the Diocese may be requested from the Bishop by Clergy living within this Diocese who are canonically resident in another Diocese either because they have received a call to affiliate as an assistant Presbyter at one of the congregations of the Diocese of the Central States or because they wish to be available as supply Clergy. Such licenses are to be reviewed annually by the Bishop, and an annual activity report must be submitted to the Bishop by any Clergy so licensed prior to having such license renewed. The "Application for a License to Officiate within the Diocese of the Central States" is provided in the Appendix.

Transient or visiting Clergy of the Reformed Episcopal Church may be invited to preach or Officiate as allowed under the provisions of the Canons, as defined by this policy, provided that no person shall be allowed so to preach or officiate who would be ineligible for admittance as a Postulant or Candidate for Holy Orders, or ineligible for ordination under the Constitution and Canons of the General Council or of this Diocese.

**Physical Examinations and Clergy Wellness:**

Clergy should practice good stewardship by setting the discipline of maintaining regular physical activity (exercise), by having physical examinations on a regular basis, and by seeking proper medical and dental care as needed. In taking responsibility for their physical, spiritual, and mental well-being, all Clergy are to take time to be with their spouse and children. All Clergy are to take at least one full day off from work each week, pursue healthy recreation or hobby interests, and take an annual vacation.

**Vacation Policy:**

It is the policy of this Diocese that full-time Clergy are entitled to a minimum of one month's vacation after their first calendar year's work and ministry. It is to be taken in consultation with the Vestry (or Bishop's Committee in the case of Vicars of Missions). Should a Presbyterian or Deacon leave their cure before completing a calendar year, usually they can expect only a pro-rata portion of their unused vacation to be paid.

**Clergy Retreats, Synod, and General Council:**

Participation in Clergy retreats and other opportunities for spiritual renewal and development are strongly encouraged. The Parish should make reasonable allowance for attendance of clerical retreats, which are not part of a Presbyterian's vacation.

Clergy are encouraged to attend any regional or Deanery-based convocations as opportunities to share vital concerns, develop ministerial relationships, and enhance collegiality.

Each congregation is encouraged to budget an annual amount for any travel to and from Synod, as well as the General Council for all stipendiary Presbyters, and to defray travel expenses as much as possible. Parishes may assist non-stipendiary Clergy at their option. All Presbyters are expected to be in attendance for Diocesan Synod, unless excused by the Bishop for reasonable cause. Clergy who are not able to attend Diocesan Synod are expected to communicate with the Bishop Ordinary at least thirty days before Synod their reason(s) for inability to attend.

All Clergy are encouraged to plan times for continuing education and to take sabbaticals when appropriate. Vestries are encouraged to plan for sabbaticals after seven years of service by a Rector or Vicar.

**Assistant Clergy:**

The Bishop deems it a serious pastoral responsibility of his ministry to consult with the Rector and Vestry in selecting assistants within a Parish since assistant Clergy become members of the diocesan family and are possibly eligible for a later move within the Diocese. No Presbyterian or

Deacon is permitted to affiliate with a congregation of the Diocese as an assisting member of the Clergy without the express permission of the Bishop.

Assistant Clergy called to serve and approved by the Bishop in a Parish serve at the sufferance of the Rector and are deemed as having offered their resignation to the Vestry upon the death, retirement, or resignation of the Rector.

**Professional Ethics:**

1. Whenever practical, diocesan Presbyters and Deacons planning to visit another Parish should communicate that fact to the Rector or Vicar by phone or email in advance of the visit. The purpose of this correspondence is simply to allow the Rector or Vicar to be able to discuss potential participation (if desired by both parties), share some aspect of ministry with the congregation, or to provide for the option of fellowship in conjunction with the visit. In cases where this is not practical, or where general invitations have been extended for gatherings such as Synod or other large-scale or area-wide programs or services, such communication is not expected. No visiting member of the Clergy shall ever be required to participate in a service of worship.

2. Clergy who have previously served in a Parish should be particularly circumspect in visiting or returning to their former Parish and should in every case contact the incumbent Rector or Vicar prior to such visit. Should a request be made by a parishioner to a former Rector/Vicar to perform a marriage, funeral, baptism, etc., permission must first be granted by the incumbent Rector/Vicar and such ministry is to be performed only at his invitation to do so. Such requests may be appropriate under certain pastoral circumstances but must be left up to the discretion of the current Rector/Vicar.

3. Former Clergy of a Parish should avoid continuing with counseling or other relationships that might undermine the authority of the incumbent. Ordinary, long-standing friendships may, of course, be continued, but the former clergyman should be aware of the potential for harm and generally avoid becoming involved in the current life of the Parish.

4. Clergy and Candidates for Holy Orders must generally maintain the highest level of morality and ethics in their personal and financial dealings not only with parishioners but in the community at large. This includes, but is not limited to, the avoidance of conflicts of interest or the appearance of the same, using one's status to further personal gain (e.g., selling a product or service, borrowing money, or engaging in business or business investments, where there is a pastoral relationship). Any exception to the foregoing requires prior approval by the Ordinary. No Clergy or Candidate shall engage in activities or have association with groups or pastimes incompatible with the gospel; this includes organizations which require secret initiations or which require oaths incompatible with the vows taken at Baptism and ordination.

5. The Clergy have a responsibility to the Bishop, as their chief pastor, to keep him apprised of serious financial or spiritual difficulties as they arise in their personal lives, or the Parish or

Mission in which they serve. This is notwithstanding any duty that the Wardens or Vestry might have to keep the Bishop informed of such situations.

6. Clergy, in their ordination vows, have sworn an oath before God to be “diligent in prayer, and in the reading of Holy Scripture, and in such studies as help the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh.” They should keep this in mind as they engage and spend their time on the internet. Over-participation in chat rooms and in activities on the internet or on social media not related to prayer and the study of Holy Scripture is unproductive in the fulfillment of this vow. Postulants, in particular, must see that their internet, social media, and gaming activities are monitored by their Clergy sponsor(s). They should be cultivating the discipline of devoting themselves to the study of Holy Scripture and to the development of sound relationships with God’s people.

#### **Standards of Sexual Morality:**

All members of the Clergy of this Diocese are under obligation to model in their own lives the received teaching of the Church that all its members are to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony. The viewing of pornography or participation in any other form of unwholesomeness is not a conduct becoming of a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. It is encouraged that all Clergy engage accountability partners in regard to their internet usage and temptation to consume pornography and to encourage the same among the men of their congregations. Filter software and accountability software such as are available at [covenanteyes.com](http://covenanteyes.com) is highly recommended.

All Clergy functioning within this Diocese should become familiar with the laws and receive training in the prevention of sexual harassment, adult sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse and to be familiar with the DCS “Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.” Copies are available from the Bishop’s Office or from the Canon to the Ordinary.

#### **Clergy and Divorce:**

It is to be understood that when a member of the Clergy is divorced under circumstances that are detrimental to the well-being of the congregation or are in violation of clerical behavioral standards articulated in the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, he must resign his cure and submit to the counsel and corrective discipline of the Bishop Ordinary. Determination of future clerical status shall be made by the Bishop with the concurrence of the Standing Committee.

Remarriage following divorce is not normally permitted for one who wishes to remain in active service in the Diocese of the Central States unless the Bishop Ordinary waives this rule.

It is expected that when Clergy experience marital difficulties, the Bishop Ordinary will not be the last to know but will have sufficient opportunity to work with and counsel the clergyman and spouse so that divorce will not be the only option.

### **Supply Clergy Policies and Procedures:**

Due to the wide geographic distribution of the Diocese of the Central States, Parishes may compile their own lists of supply Clergy subject to the following rules of eligibility:

1. Only male Clergy may preach, officiate, or celebrate at any time in the DCS. No exceptions.
2. Any REC Presbyter in good standing and canonically resident in the DCS may so preside.
3. Any other REC Presbyter in good standing, provided that he may only officiate or celebrate two Sundays in a six-month period without the permission of the Ordinary or an officer of the DCS appointed by him to give such approval.
4. Any Presbyter in good standing of the ACNA, or a church which is in communion with this church, subject to rule number 1, above, provided that he may only officiate or celebrate two Sundays in a six-month period without the permission of the Ordinary or an officer of the DCS appointed by him to give such approval.
5. A Presbyter in good standing of a church not in communion with this church (e.g., The Episcopal Church, etc.), but who meets rule number 1 above and has been specifically approved by the Ordinary or an officer of the DCS authorized to give such approval.
6. Any Bishop of the REC, provided, that no such Bishop shall perform any Episcopal act (e.g., confirmation or ordination) without the consent of the Bishop Ordinary, or if there is currently no Ordinary, without the consent of the Standing Committee of the DCS.
7. Any Bishop of the ACNA, or of a church in communion with the REC, provided, that no such Bishop shall perform any Episcopal act (e.g., confirmation or ordination) without the consent of the Bishop Ordinary, or if there is currently no Ordinary, without the consent of the Presiding Bishop of the REC.
8. Under ordinary circumstances, Deacons should not be used as supply if a Presbyter is available. Exceptions may be made by the Bishop due to issues of geographic isolation, or in the case of mission works, or for the purpose of diaconal training for transitional Deacons.

### **Compensation for Supply Clergy:**

The recommended minimum remuneration for supply Clergy is:

One principal Sunday Eucharist or Service - \$150.

Other Sunday Services (each) - \$75.

Weekday Services (each) - \$75.

Mileage is to be reimbursed at the standard rate per mile under current IRS rules, and any other agreed travel expenses should be borne by the Parish.

Supply Clergy are expected to be given general information as to Parish liturgical customs and shall respect the congregational customs and avoid innovations and deviations.

**Interim Clergy:**

When there is a vacancy in any Parish of the Diocese, the Bishop will assist the Vestry in engaging the services of interim Clergy, to serve until such time as a new Rector is called. Any interim Presbyterian-in-charge or interim Rector will serve with the understanding that he is not eligible for consideration as the new Rector unless the Bishop waives this rule. While it is the day-to-day responsibility of the Vestry to engage interim or supply Clergy, such Clergy are to refrain from making liturgical or policy changes and are answerable for their conduct to the Ordinary and other officers appointed by him for the purpose of diocesan administration.

*THE DRESS OF THE CLERGY*

**Clerical Garb outside of Divine Worship:**

Clergy must be ever mindful that their personal appearance while in the performance of official duties in public is not only a reflection upon themselves, but also upon their Parishes, the Diocese and the Reformed Episcopal Church. Appropriate clerical attire, clean and pressed, shoes shined, etc. is expected of all Clergy of the Diocese at all times for official Parish, DCS, and REC functions. Exceptions may be made for some administrative meetings, retreats, committee meetings, etc., or for events that are clearly casual in nature or that are primarily for sports and leisure time. Remember that clerical attire is an outward expression of a clergyman's vows and an indication that he is ever the minister of Christ and the servant of the Church.

The cassock, while not required outside of the services of the Church, is appropriate as the ordinary dress of Clergy while in the church.

It is the practice of some seminaries and Parishes to allow Postulants to wear clerical attire with a "Postulant's collar," which is a standard white clerical collar with a clear, black line drawn vertically across it to indicate one's status as Clergy-in-training. Such practice is allowable for a Postulant only with the explicit permission of the Dean of the seminary attended, or the Rector of the Parish within which a Postulant serves. (A Dean's permission extends only to seminary functions and a Rector's only to Parish functions.) When allowed, such a collar should be worn only in the carrying out of ministerial duties as is the manner of clerical attire on the part of Permanent Deacons (see Section IV).

**Vesture in Divine Worship:**

1. Non-Eucharistic Vestments

The surplice is the ordinary dress, worn over the cassock, for all services and ministrations, except in Parishes where Eucharistic vestments are customarily worn.

The stole is never properly worn by the Clergy over the surplice as a mere decoration. It is worn when some sacramental occasion requires it. The stole is, therefore, appropriately worn over the surplice in the following circumstances:

- ❖ For Morning or Evening Prayer if a Eucharistic service is to immediately follow without pause;
- ❖ At Baptisms and Weddings (white);
- ❖ While hearing a formal confession and when anointing the sick in the church (purple);
- ❖ By the Presbyters who assist the Bishop in laying on of hands in the ordination of Deacons and Presbyters as designated by the Bishop (red);
- ❖ In administering Communion from the Reserved Sacrament to the sick in the church (white);
- ❖ When conducting a funeral as an option to the tippet (purple or white).

Note: The stole is not by custom worn for Morning or Evening Prayer. Instead, the tippet is worn (together with the academic hood of any degree held by the clergyman if so desired) unless the Holy Communion follows. The academic hood is never properly worn with a seasonal or colored stole or during the service of Holy Communion. The tippet, as it has always been associated with the academic hood, may be adorned with the seal of the Reformed Episcopal Church, of the Diocese, or of the seminary of which the clergyman is a graduate.

It is recognized that there are long-standing traditions in a few Parishes of the Reformed Episcopal Church that do not conform to the above model (e.g., black gown or the custom of wearing the alb as a non-Eucharistic vestment). In such cases Parishes may continue previous practices but should consider greater uniformity with the other Parishes of this Diocese. Parishes without prior traditions recognized by the Ordinary should conform to this Customary. (*The Parson's Handbook* is a suggested resource.)

## 2. Eucharistic Vestments

In keeping with our denominational history, cassock, surplice, and stole of the season or occasion is the default standard of vesture for Holy Communion in this Diocese. With the mutual and general consent of the Rector/Vicar and Communicants of a Parish (as communicated through the Parish Council), Eucharistic vestments as here defined may be worn by the Clergy for services of Holy Communion. Such vesture is in keeping with our larger Anglican heritage. When Eucharistic vestments are worn in this Diocese for the celebration of the Holy Communion, the following options are appropriate, according to local custom:

- ❖ White alb, cincture, and Eucharistic stole.
- ❖ White alb, cincture, and chasuble (for Presbyters) or dalmatic and/or tunicle (for Deacons) over the appropriate stole and of the same seasonal color.

The amice and maniple may also be worn by Presbyters and Deacons.

Other Clergy assisting the celebrant at Holy Communion should wear cassock, surplice, and stole or alb and the stole appropriate to their Order, according to the custom of the Parish. A lector or reader so vested, not being in Orders, omits the stole.

When Morning Prayer immediately precedes the Eucharist, the colored stole may be worn over the alb. The chasuble should never be worn at Morning or Evening Prayer but should be donned either after the conclusion of Morning Prayer or at the offertory.

### 3. Other Vestments

The Cope is not, strictly speaking, a Eucharistic vestment and may be worn when appropriate on both Eucharistic and Non-Eucharistic occasions (e.g., solemn Evensong, etc.).

#### **Pectoral Crosses:**

Pectoral crosses/crucifixes are a sign of ministerial order or service. The pectoral cross indicates that the person who wears it “comes in the name of the Lord” and is operating within the service and ministry of Jesus. Pectoral crosses are larger than the typical crosses worn secularly and are worn lower on the chest. Their use by Clergy is more common in the East than in the West, where their use was not standardized until the late medieval period. In the Roman church, Bishops wear black clericals and are recognizable by the pectoral cross, which Priests do not wear. Some Anglican dioceses follow this custom and forbid the clerical cross at any rank below Bishop.

In this Diocese the pectoral cross/crucifix is permissible for all Clergy, including Deacons, Presbyters, and Bishops, both when vested and when in clericals. Deaconesses as well may wear the pectoral cross associated with their order when in habit or when vested. Choir and sacramental crosses are permissible to be worn by vested Lay persons during services of Holy Communion, at the discretion of the Rector/Vicar, where Parish custom allows for such and where such custom is uniform among all such vested Lay ministers.

Whereas the pectoral cross is not reserved to Bishops or even to Clergy in this Diocese, it is the custom of this Diocese to observe some distinctions based upon order:

- ❖ Only Bishops wear gold pectoral crosses, crosses jeweled with amethysts, or crosses bearing the symbols of the episcopal office (e.g., the Western mitre or Eastern crown, the crosier, etc.).
- ❖ Crosses designed as Clergy crosses are generally silver, are generally three or more inches in length, and are most often suspended on silver chains or chords designed for Clergy crosses.
- ❖ Choir or sacramental crosses worn by the Laity during liturgical service are designed in a variety of styles but are generally less than three inches in length and are less ornate than crosses designed for Clergy.

Anyone might humbly wear a cross ordinarily indicative of a “lower” order or authority than one’s own; all should avoid the appearance of presumption in wearing a cross indicative of a “higher” order or authority than one’s own.

## SECTION III: Matters Pertaining to Lay Ministry

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### *LICENSED LAY MINISTRIES*

A confirmed communicant in good standing may serve as a Lay Reader, Chalice Bearer, Lay Communion Visitor or Lay Evangelist if licensed by the Bishop. In rare circumstances, a Lay Reader may be issued a license to preach. Guidelines for training and selection of such persons are contained in the Canons of the General Council. Seminary Students and Candidates for Ministry do not need a license to function in any of these ministries, subject to the supervision of either the Rector/Vicar to which they are assigned or their seminary dean.

The Bishop will issue a license only at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the Rector or Vicar of the congregation in which the person will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable by the Bishop or upon request of the Rector or Vicar in charge of the congregation.

#### **Lay Readers:**

A Licensed Lay Reader is a person, age 21 or over, who regularly leads public worship in a congregation under the direction of a member of the Clergy. A Lay Reader may not preach sermons of his own composition unless he is licensed to do so by the Bishop. A Lay Reader may also be licensed to administer the chalice, when such is requested by the Rector or Vicar. When there are enough vested Clergy in the service, the Clergy will administer the chalice regardless of how many Readers are so licensed in the congregation.

Lay Readers should be licensed according to Reformed Episcopal Canon 24 and via such policies as are put in place by the Diocese of the Central States. Application may be made to the Bishop using the “Application for a Lay Reader’s License” in the Appendix.

In the performance of their duties, Readers should be vested in black cassock and surplice for all liturgical services. At the Daily Offices, Lay Readers may wear the hood of their degree subject to the approval of the Rector and local Parish custom.

At the Holy Communion, Readers may wear cassock and surplice, or they may wear an alb in lieu of the above if it is the custom of the Parish to have non-celebrant ministers and assistants so vested. When Eucharistic vestments are worn, a Reader may wear the Tunicle of the Sub-Deacon, but not a Deacon’s stole, if it is the custom of the Parish to use the Dalmatic and Tunicle.

Additionally, Lay Readers who are the officiant at a non-Eucharistic service may wear the “blue” lay reader’s tippet at the daily office. No Lay Reader may wear a clerical collar at any time.

A **Lay Preacher** is a Lay Reader, Seminary Student, or Candidate for Ministry who preaches sermons of his own composition on occasions of public worship, with the approval of the Rector or Vicar. Both ample training and approval by the Bishop are required.

A **Lay Communion Visitor** is a Lay Reader who is licensed to take the consecrated sacrament from the Holy Eucharist on Sunday to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, are unable to be present at the Celebration. Rectors who wish to use this ministry must carefully train such Visitors concerning this ministry.

**Lay Evangelists:**

A Lay Evangelist is a Lay person, Seminarian, or Candidate for orders, licensed by the Bishop Ordinary whose particular calling is to evangelism outside the church. Such Evangelists must be committed to the Worship, Doctrine, and Discipline of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The Lay Evangelist serves under the authority of the Ordinary or a clergyman appointed to such a role by the Ordinary. As part of his or her ministry, the Evangelist must, at each of the Ember Days of the Church Year, make a report of his or her activities to his or her ecclesiastical authority. The Bishop’s authority as overseer of the Evangelist’s activities must always be respected.

*LECTORS AND OTHER NON-LICENSED LAY MINISTRIES*

**Lectors:**

A Lector is a person who reads the lessons and may lead the prayers of Intercession at the direction of the Rector. This ministry does not require a Diocesan license. They should, however, be commissioned for this ministry by the Rector of the congregation in which they function. Lectors may be vested in the same manner as Acolytes.

**Acolytes:**

Acolytes are those persons who serve the celebrating Presbyter during the service of Holy Communion. Acolytes might serve in bringing offerings or vessels or elements to the Presbyter or Deacon in the preparation of the Table. They might serve as well as crucifers or torch bearers or incense bearers or in other similar roles in the service of divine worship. Activities of acolytes are to be determined and organized by the Parishes and Missions. Proper instruction and training of all acolytes is the responsibility of the Rector or Vicar. Acolytes should be vested in cassock and surplice/cotta, or in alb and cincture if it is the custom of the Parish to have non-celebrant ministers and assistants so vested.

**Guilds:**

Guilds and Committees may be commissioned for the furtherance of the ministries of the Parish at the discretion of and under the supervision of the Rector or Vicar.

**Choirs:**

There is a preference for surpliced choirs in this Diocese, meaning cassock and surplice/cotta. Parishes using other choir vestments as a matter of long-standing custom known to the Bishop may continue to do so but are urged to avoid “garish” or other “worldly” styles and colors that detract focus from the centrality of the altar and those who serve there.

## SECTION IV: Matters Pertaining to Diaconal Service

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Ordained Deacons and Set-apart Deaconesses are each engaged in special ministries of servanthood under the direct supervision of the Bishop. Thus, the life and ministry of a Deacon or Deaconess is oriented primarily towards active ministry in the world, seeking to serve all people, “particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.” Ordained Deacons have unique privilege to serve as well within the divine liturgy, proclaiming the Word of God in the Gospel, in preaching (when authorized by the Bishop to do so and so assigned), in serving at the altar in assistance of the Presbyter, and in bearing the chalice. They may read Holy Scripture and Homilies in the church and may catechize. In the absence of the Presbyter, a Deacon may baptize. A Deacon may also be authorized by the Bishop to preach.

The following guidelines are offered by the Bishop to assist in the discernment of vocations to diaconal ministry in this Diocese. All persons seeking postulancy or candidacy should familiarize themselves with these guidelines prior to applying to enter into the process of ordination or, in the case of Deaconesses, being set apart. They must thoroughly discuss them in advance with the Presbyter who is to sponsor their application.

### ORDAINED DEACONS

The academic course of study in preparation for diaconal ministry will be prescribed by the Bishop either through an in-house course of study for perpetual Deacons or a degree program for transitional Deacons. Details are found in the Canons of the General Council.

#### **Guidelines for Ordained Deacons:**

1. *The Diaconate is ordinarily a volunteer ministry.* Deacons are typically non-stipendiary, and persons seeking postulancy or candidacy should not expect to receive wages, benefits, or allowances in connection with diaconal duties. The Bishop may authorize compensation and allowances in certain circumstances, such as a Deacon being called as “Deacon-in-charge” pending ordination to the Presbyterate, or in the case of a Deacon being employed for full-time or for substantially full-time vocational ministries.

Whether stipendiary or not, however, Deacons are to be reimbursed for their reasonable expenses. The reimbursable expenses related to the performance of their duties should be described in the individual contracts negotiated with the Rector or institution to which they are assigned.

2. *Clerical Collars/Appropriate Attire.* Deacons may wear appropriate clerical attire when engaged in their ministry or in church-related activities. Deacons not engaged in full-time ministry wear ordinary street clothes when engaged in their secular occupations and pastimes unless an exception is approved by their Rector/Vicar or the Bishop.

3. *Deacons may serve in the liturgical services of the Church under the direction of the Presbyter to whom they are assigned.* When a Deacon is assisting in the service of Holy Communion, he is to read the Gospel. Deacons may officiate at public services of Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (so-called Deacon's Masses) whenever authorized to do so by the Bishop.

4. *A Deacon may preach at the discretion of the Rector or Vicar of the Parish to which he is assigned. The content of a Deacon's sermons should be cleared with the Rector/Vicar before being delivered.*

5. *Deacons are assigned and re-assigned at the will of the Bishop.* Accordingly, no Deacon may be "called" by a Rector, Vicar, or Parish to serve as a curate or interim Clergy without the prior approval of the Bishop.

6. *Deacons may have seat and voice at all meetings of the Vestry if the Parish by-laws allow, and they shall make a report to the annual Parish Meeting regarding their ministry.* They may not vote at any Vestry or Parish meeting.

7. *Deacons should have a clear understanding of the nature and amount of work to be performed by the Deacon.* Before assignment of a Deacon to a Parish or other institution, the Bishop, the Deacon, and the person who will supervise the Deacon on a regular basis should meet and confer concerning the nature and amount of work to be performed by the Deacon, expenses eligible for reimbursement, compensation and benefits (if applicable), and other issues that may be important to the specific ministry. Those supervising the work of non-stipendiary Deacons must keep in mind that such ministry is voluntary and must leave room for the Deacon's secular occupation and family responsibilities; as such, the hours expected for non-stipendiary Deacons should not exceed 10 - 12 hours per week without the consent of the Deacon and the Bishop. The mutual understanding on these points should be explicitly and clearly recorded in a document to be signed by all parties and reviewed annually.

8. *Deacons are entitled to seat and voice, but not vote in the annual Synod of the Diocese.*

9. *Deacons are expected to attend periodic conferences as required by the Bishop and should engage themselves in regular study as a way of improving and reflecting upon their individual ministries.*

## SET-APART DEACONESSES

*Much information on the Order of Deaconesses can be found in REC Canon 22 and at [recdss.org](http://recdss.org).*

While women are not ordained in the historic traditions and are not called to sacramental ministry or to roles of governance in the Church, they are called to lives of extraordinary ministry just as often as men are and need (and the Church needs) their callings to be discerned and promoted just as the callings of men are. Deaconesses serve in a variety of roles: administrative, counseling, teaching, healing, nurturing, organizing, evangelistic, benevolence, etc. When a Deaconess is set apart, it is in recognition of her life-long calling and commitment to ministerial training, theological formation, and skilled ministry far above the ordinary lay-person. Her ministry is to be understood along the same lines as that of the permanent male Deacon but without the same ministry near the altar or in the proclamation of the Word at Holy Communion. Though not Clergy, she is a Minister of honor and distinction among the Laity. See Section IV for the process of applying for the Order of Deaconesses.

The academic course of study in preparation for ministry as a Deaconess will be prescribed by the Bishop either through an in-house course of study or a degree program for Deaconesses such as that offered by Cranmer Theological House. Details are found in the “Handbook for the Order of Deaconesses.”

### Functions of Deaconesses:

- ❖ To care for the sick, the afflicted, and the poor.
- ❖ To give instruction in the Christian Faith.
- ❖ Under the Rector or Minister-in-charge, to prepare candidates for Baptism and for Confirmation.
- ❖ To assist at the administration of Holy Baptism; and, in the absence of the Presbyter or Deacon, to baptize infants.
- ❖ Under the Rector or Minister-in-charge to organize, superintend, and carry out the Church’s work among women and children.
- ❖ With the approval of the Bishop and the incumbent, to read Morning and Evening Prayer (except such portions as are reserved for the Presbyter) and the Litany in Church or Chapel in the absence of the Minister; and when licensed by the Bishop to give instruction or deliver addresses at such services.
- ❖ To organize and carry on social work; and in colleges and schools to have a responsible part in the education of women and children, and to promote the welfare of women and children.

### Guidelines for Deaconesses:

1. *The work of a Deaconess is ordinarily a volunteer ministry.* Deaconesses are typically non-stipendiary, and persons seeking postulancy of candidacy should not expect to receive wages, benefits, or allowances in connection with diaconal duties. The Bishop may authorize compensation and allowances in certain circumstances, such as in the case of a Deaconess being employed for full-time or for substantially full-time vocational ministries.

Whether stipendiary or not, however, Deaconesses are to be reimbursed for their reasonable expenses. The reimbursable expenses related to the performance of their duties should be described in the individual contracts negotiated with the Rector or institution to which they are assigned.

2. *Appropriate Attire.* Deaconesses may wear the attire/habit appropriate to their Order when engaged in their ministry or in church-related activities. Deaconesses not engaged in full-time ministry wear ordinary street clothes when engaged in their secular occupations and pastimes unless an exception is approved by their Rector/Vicar or the Bishop.

Deaconesses may wear the blue cassock associated with their order whenever in the church, including during services of divine worship. They may vest for services of worship in the blue cassock and surplice/cotta when their role in the service warrants such and other lay ministers such as Readers, Lectors, and Acolytes are vested in surplice/cotta. The academic hood may be worn, if desired, as part of “choir dress” but not during services of Holy Communion (see Section II, Non-Eucharistic Vestments).

3. *Deaconesses perform such liturgical functions as prescribed by Canon Law.*

4. *Deaconesses are assigned and re-assigned at the will of the Bishop.*

5. *Deaconesses may have seat and voice at all meetings of the Vestry if the Parish by-laws allow, and they shall make a report to the annual Parish Meeting regarding their ministry.* They may not vote at any Vestry or Parish meeting.

6. *Deaconesses should have a clear understanding of the nature and amount of work to be performed by the Deaconess.* Before assignment of a Deaconess to a Parish or other institution, the Bishop, the Deaconess, and the person who will supervise the Deaconess on a regular basis should meet and confer concerning the nature and amount of work to be performed by the Deaconess, expenses eligible for reimbursement, compensation and benefits (if applicable), and other issues that may be important to the specific ministry. Those supervising the work of non-stipendiary Deaconesses must keep in mind that such ministry is voluntary and must leave room for the Deaconess’s secular occupation and family responsibilities; as such, the hours expected for non-stipendiary Deaconesses should not exceed 10 – 12 hours per week without the consent of the Deaconess and the Bishop. The mutual understanding on these points should be explicitly and clearly recorded in a document to be signed by all parties and reviewed annually.

7. *Deaconesses are entitled to seat and voice, but not vote in the annual Synod of the Diocese.* However, because it is a lay office, Deaconesses may be elected by the Parish to serve as a lay delegate or deputy to Synod or General Council. In this capacity, they are permitted to vote at the annual Synod of the Diocese and at General Council.

8. *Deaconesses are expected to attend periodic conferences as required by the Bishop and should engage themselves in regular study as a way of improving and reflecting upon their individual ministries.*

**Applying for the Order of Deaconesses:**

In summary, a woman who is a communicant member of a Parish in the Reformed Episcopal Church and who has attained the age of twenty-three years, who desires reception as a Candidate for the office of Deaconess shall submit to the Bishop of the Diocese or Missionary Diocese the following:

1. The “Application for Candidacy in the Order of Deaconesses” (provided in the Appendix).
2. A letter of recommendation from the Rector or Minister-in-charge of the Parish she attends, to include a declaration that she is a communicant of the church in good standing.
3. Letters of recommendation from two women communicants of the Parish.
4. Evidence that she is a graduate of a four-year institution of higher learning. Any Candidate who does not meet this requirement shall have attained the age of thirty-five years and must provide evidence to the Board of Examining Chaplains that she possesses the intellectual ability to enter with advantage upon a course of study preparatory to being set apart.
5. Quarterly reporting to and supervision by the Bishop Ordinary.
6. Successful completion of the Deaconess Examination.

## SECTION V:

### Matters Pertaining to Postulancy and Discernment Regarding Orders

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#### **Discernment of a Calling to Holy Orders:**

Every Christian is called to ministry in the Church. We are careful in our tradition not to use the term “ministers” solely for Clergy because the Laity is an order of ministers too, each Confirmed Christian having been commissioned for Christian service and having received the Holy Spirit for that purpose. Bishops have in this sense even referred to Confirmation as “the ordination of the Laity.” Rectors and Vicars ought to encourage every member to become equipped for ministerial service within their Spirit-given gifts of hospitality, mercy, administration, evangelism, healing, teaching, etc. Vibrant lay ministry is crucial to a vibrant Parish.

Some of the Laity may find in their service within the Church that they are indeed called to ministries that require Holy Orders. It is quite important that the discernment of a ministerial calling happen in the context of service rather than abstract ideals. In this sense ordination is descriptive as well as prescriptive: we know that a man is called to Orders by what he is already doing in service of the Lord and his Church and what this indicates about what further ministry to which he is called.

Three elements of a person’s calling are important in our discernment. The first element is *his sense of inner calling*. Has the Lord by his Spirit placed a burden upon this man to serve in the Church? How has he come to this realization? What are his areas of particular concern and burden where he feels he is being called and empowered to serve? The second element is *the affirmation of the Parish concerning his calling*. Has he served well? Do parishioners turn to this man for leadership, insight, and service? Are his relationships holy and healthy? Does he have the respect and trust of those with whom and for whom he serves? The third element is *the shared sense among Parish, Rector, and Bishop of the man’s capacity for the work of ordained ministry*. Is he intellectually capable of graduate-level training? Is he consistent and reliable? Is his situation in life amenable to the rigors of training and ministry? All three elements must be sufficiently evident for a man to apply for Postulancy.

Note: Everything stated in the paragraph above about men called to Holy Orders is true as well of women called to the consecrated life of service. Change the pronouns and ask the same questions as above to see if a woman is called to the Order of Deaconesses.

#### **Applying for Postulancy:**

Postulancy is a period of preparation for ordained ministry coupled with further discernment as to the nature of one’s calling. Once it has been discerned at the level of the Parish that a man

might be called to Holy Orders, he may, in conference with his Rector and Vestry, make application to the Bishop using the “Application for Postulancy” provided in the Appendix.

The Rector should also have the Vestry sign the “Rector and Vestry Certification of an Applicant for Postulancy”, provided in the Appendix, and send this to the Bishop with a letter indicating his own endorsement.

A Rector’s endorsement of an applicant for postulancy need not be unmixed. Postulancy is a probationary period of discernment, and not all postulants will be ordained. The Bishop needs an honest view of the applicant that includes strengths as well as weaknesses and areas of growth that will need tending.

Once the Bishop has received the “Application for Postulancy,” the “Vestry Certification of an Applicant for Postulancy,” and the Rector’s endorsement, he may either accept or reject the postulant and apprise the Standing Committee of his decision. It is customary, though, for the Bishop to forward the materials concerning the applicant to the Standing Committee via their President and seek their counsel as to the applicant’s suitability for postulancy and eventual Orders.

Once an applicant’s provided references are checked and cleared, the applicant will be required to submit to a background check and background referencing by Oxford Document Management at the applicant’s expense. The office of the Ordinary will inform the applicant of the current cost and procedure. Applicants should prepare for a fee at or near \$200.

A Postulant may be stricken from the roll if he has not fulfilled his requirements and applied for Orders at the end of four years, at the Bishop’s discretion.

### **Seminary and Theological Formation:**

It is important that those who are ordained for Christian ministry be not only called but prepared. Rectors who endorse Postulants are responsible, in conference with the Bishop and the Examining Chaplains, to see to the mentorship of those Postulants and to help them in their preparation for the work of ministry and for ministerial examinations.

The Standing Committee of this Diocese has discussed at length the sort of training that ought to be required of a Candidate for ministerial orders. These are their determinations in conference with the Canons and the Bishop Ordinary:

1. Permanent Deacons may be trained either in a parish-based course of study under a qualified Rector or in a degree program designed to train Deacons such as are offered in Anglican seminaries. The program at Cranmer Theological House is commended. A postulant may apply near or at the end of his course of study.

Note: All ministerial Candidates must have earned an undergraduate degree (preferably in the Humanities) and their ministerial training is to be done at the graduate level. Exceptions for

persons of exceptional maturity and experience, aged thirty-five years or older, may be considered by the Ordinary after having been examined by the Examining Chaplains as to their ability to complete an adequate course of study.

2. Transitional Deacons must prepare toward the Presbyterate and are expected to spend their postulancy in formal theological training in an approved Master of Divinity program. It is acceptable for a postulant to apply for ordination to the diaconate during their second year of study so that he fulfills his required diaconal year concurrent with his third year of study.

Any Deacon ordained after having passed the examination under the standards of the transitional diaconate may need to be reexamined in order to change his status should he ever discern a calling to the Presbyterate.

3. In light of the standards set forth in REC Canon 3, the normative preparation for the Presbyterate in this Diocese is the three-year Master of Divinity from a properly accredited or approved seminary. The degree may be taken over more than three years in the case of a bi-vocational student. In cases in which a Candidate for Orders or reception has received the M.Div. from a seminary of a different tradition, more education may be warranted and required by the Bishop.

4. The Bishop Ordinary does have discretion to alter the requirements for formal theological education to accept, for instance an M.A. or M.A.R. on the part of an older Candidate for whom the disruption of life inherent to full-time M.Div. work is not possible and whose ministerial experience fills the remaining weight of the requirement. At least 60 hours of accredited seminary work is still expected. This discretion on the part of the Bishop ought not to be presumed upon and should never become normative.

5. There are exceedingly rare occasions when a Candidate may read for Orders under the guidance of a highly-qualified Presbyterian who himself holds at least an M.Div. Such allowance is at the sole discretion of the Ordinary and to be considered only under extraordinary circumstances. In any case, such a candidate must demonstrate to the Examining Chaplains' satisfaction that his training has been equivalent to the seminary M.Div.

6. Care must be taken that Candidates for Holy Orders are not only intellectually well-formed but spiritually sound. The spiritual health and practice of a Candidate is to be considered by the Ordinary, the Examining Chaplains, and the Standing Committee in consideration of his calling and ordination.

#### **Applying for the Diaconate:**

When a Postulant, in conference with his Rector, is satisfied that the terms of his postulancy have been fulfilled, the candidate should complete the following steps:

1. Apply to the Standing Committee for ordination to the diaconate, using the "Application for Holy Orders" in the Appendix;

2. Ask a Presbyter not his Rector or Vicar to send to the Standing Committee the “Presbyter Certification of an Applicant for the Order of Deacon” provided in the Appendix;
3. Ask his Parish’s Rector and Vestry to send to the Standing Committee the “Rector and Vestry Certification of an Applicant for the Order of Deacon,” also in the Appendix;
4. Request a letter from the theological seminary where he has been studying, or from the clergyman under whose direction he has been pursuing his studies, showing his scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving a judgment as to his personal qualifications for the Ministry of this Church.

The Board of Examining Chaplains will examine the candidate orally after consideration of his written exam (provided in the Appendix). Should the Chaplains certify that the candidate has passed the examination, they will inform the Bishop and Standing Committee. The Standing Committee will then vote whether to approve the postulant for ordination. See Section VI for information about the work of the Examining Chaplains.

#### **Applying for the Presbyterate:**

When a transitional Deacon, in conference with his Rector and the Bishop, is satisfied that the terms of his postulancy have been fulfilled, he should complete the following steps:

1. Apply to the Standing Committee for ordination to the Presbyterate, using the “Application for Holy Orders” in the Appendix;
2. Ask his Parish’s Rector and Vestry to send to the Standing Committee the “Certification of an Applicant for the Order of Presbyter,” also in the Appendix;

The Board of Examining Chaplains will examine the Deacon orally after consideration of his written exam (provided in the Appendix). Should the Chaplains certify that he has passed the examination, they will inform the Bishop and Standing Committee. The Standing Committee will then vote whether to approve the Deacon for ordination as a Presbyter.

#### **Ministers Ordained in Other Ecclesial Bodies:**

When a man who has been ordained in a Church not in communion with the REC seeks to be received into the ministry of this Church, he must proceed through the process detailed in REC Canon 10. This process includes:

- ❖ A written application to the Bishop containing the required elements,
- ❖ Evidence of sufficient theological education,
- ❖ Examination by the Board of Examining Chaplains,
- ❖ Certification from the Bishop and the Standing Committee,
- ❖ A six-month waiting period,
- ❖ A statement of submission to the Discipline of this Church.

A minister who has already been ordained within the historic succession may be received in the Order to which he has been previously ordained. If he has been ordained outside of the historic succession, he may either:

1. Be Confirmed and made a Deacon and then, in no sooner than four months, be ordained a Presbyter, or
2. Be received as a Minister of the Gospel and have his orders regularized with the laying on of hands and use of the service in the Ordinal.

## SECTION VI: Matters Pertaining to Ministerial Examination

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The Board of Examining Chaplains is composed of Presbyters who serve at the pleasure of the Bishop Ordinary in order to examine Candidates for the Diaconate, Candidates for the Presbyterate, Candidates for the Lay Order of Deaconesses, and the Clergy of bodies not in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church who wish to be received by us into the ministry of this Diocese. In the examination of Candidates to the Order of Deaconesses, one examiner should be a Deaconess. The typical form of examination consists of a written exam (in the case of Candidates for the Diaconate and Presbyterate) or questionnaire (in the case of Clergy from other traditions) followed by an oral exam conducted by two or more Chaplains. The results of such examinations are then reported to the Bishop and the Standing Committee by the Chair of the Board of Examining Chaplains.

There are four canonically prescribed “curricula” listed below for which the Chaplains are responsible to examine according to the canons. The standard exam questions on “The Written Examination for the Diaconate and Presbyterate” (see the Appendix) are helpful indicators of these curricula but are by no means exhaustive of them. The Chaplains may, at their discretion or at the direction of the Bishop, tailor their examinations to specific needs or augment them beyond the written questions to examine more fully for the curriculum indicated for any given Candidate. While the Canons do not specifically articulate a curriculum for the examination of Candidates to the Order of Deaconesses, one in line with their approved materials has been approved and included below.

### **The Curriculum for Permanent Deacons:**

1. Holy Scripture: A working knowledge of the Bible in English, its contents and historical background, with course work in both the Old and New Testaments.
2. Church History: a general outline with an emphasis in course work in Anglican History and the History of this Church.
3. Doctrine: The Church’s teaching as set forth in the Creeds and the Offices of Instruction with course work on the meaning of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
4. Liturgics: The Contents and Use of the Book of Common Prayer.
5. Practical Theology, which shall include:
  - (a) The Office and Work of a Deacon,
  - (b) The Conduct of Public Worship,
  - (c) Principles of Sermon Composition and Delivery,
  - (d) Principles and methods of Christian Education in the Parish,

- (e) Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and of the Diocese or Missionary Diocese to which the candidate belongs, and
- (f) The use of the voice in reading and speaking.

**The Curriculum for Transitional Deacons and Presbyters:**

1. Holy Scripture: The Old and New Testaments in English, their contents and historical background, a reading knowledge of the New Testament in Greek, and the Old Testament in Hebrew, together with special knowledge of one Synoptic Gospel and the Gospel according to Saint John, and of three Epistles, one of which shall be Romans or First Corinthians.
2. Church History: From the beginning to the present time, together with:
  - (a) Special Knowledge of a period or topic elected by the candidate with the approval of the Examining Chaplains;
  - (b) The history, extent, and methods of Christian Missions;
  - (c) Ecclesiastical Polity;
3. Theology: Historical, philosophical, and systematic;
4. Christian Ethics and Moral Theology;
5. Liturgics: The Principles and History of Christian Worship; the Contents of the Book of Common Prayer;
6. Practical Theology:
  - (a) The use of the Book of Common Prayer, the Administration of the Sacraments, and the Conduct of Public Worship;
  - (b) Homiletics: Principles of Sermon Composition and Delivery. In connection with the examination in this subject the candidate shall present three sermons, composed by himself, on texts of Holy Scripture assigned by the Bishop or the Examining Chaplains;
  - (c) Pastoral Care; (d) Parish Organization and Administration, including the keeping of records;
  - (e) Principles and methods of Christian Education in the Parish;
  - (f) Canon Law, including the Constitution and Canons of the General Council and of the Diocese or Missionary Diocese to which the candidate belongs; and
  - (g) The use of the voice in reading and speaking.

The Board of Examining Chaplains may, in lieu of examination, accept satisfactory evidence of the fulfillment of the above requirements in any of the above-mentioned subjects. The standard examination is typically divided, with the diaconal candidate choosing a number of the questions for his first examination and answering the remaining questions for his presbyteral examination.

**The Curriculum for Transferring Ministers:**

1. Church History: The History of the Church of England and this Church.
2. Doctrine: The Church's teaching as set forth in the Creeds and the Offices of Instruction.
3. Liturgics: The Principles and History of Christian Worship; the Contents and Use of the Book of Common Prayer.
4. Practical Theology:
  - (a) The Office and Work of a Deacon and of a Presbyter,
  - (b) The Conduct of Public Worship,
  - (c) The Constitution and Canons of General Council, and of the Diocese in which he is Canonically resident,
  - (d) The use of the voice in reading and speaking.
5. The points of Doctrine, Discipline, Polity, and worship in which the Communion from which he has come differs from this Church. This portion of the examination shall be conducted, in part at least, by written questions and answers, and the replies kept on file for at least three years.

**The Curriculum for Deaconesses:**

1. Holy Scripture: The Bible in English; introduction to and contents of the various books; special knowledge of at least one Gospel and one Epistle.
2. Church History: A general outline, including the History of the Church in the United States, and special knowledge of the first five centuries, and to include the history of Deaconesses both ancient and modern.
3. Christian Missions: History; present extent and methods; at least one missionary biography.
4. Doctrine: Contents and teaching of the Book of Common Prayer, including preparation for the Sacraments.
5. Christian Ethics and Moral Theology: Particular emphasis on matters pertaining to the counseling of women and children.
6. Ministration: The office and work of a Deaconess; Parish Work and Organization.

*See the "Study Guide for the Deaconess Examination" in the Appendix.*

## SECTION VII: Matters Pertaining to Parishes and Missions

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*Please see the helpful resource from the Reformed Episcopal Church website, “How Does the Government of an REC Parish Work?” which is included in the Appendix.*

### **Vestries:**

The Vestry of each Parish is elected, a determined number of members each year, at the annual Parish Meeting. The men and women of the Vestry serve as the governing body of the Parish both in terms of its financial welfare and stability and in terms of its relationship to its Clergy. The Vestry ought also to model for the Parish the lifestyle of holiness and righteousness to which all Christians are called.

We are not congregationalists, though. The Vestry is responsible for the financial matters of the Parish and for maintaining its corporate life, but it is the Rector who is responsible for the divine worship (including music), the teaching of doctrine, and the use of Parish property. The Vestry sets livings and salaries; the Rector hires employees. This division of responsibilities and authority in the Parish necessitates that vestries and Clergy work together humbly as a team.

In the selecting of Vestry members, it is important that Parishes work in a context of consultation, outgoing members, parishioners, and the Clergy all having voice and working together to choose new leaders who will work well with old ones and who will live up to their responsibilities in terms of time, energy, and motivation. Various nomination methods are used in Parishes to choose vestry members depending on Parish bylaws. It is quite within the rights of the Parish Clergy to make suggestions to nominating committees and to express his previous relations with the nominees, and possible difficulties or problems which could be encountered if they were elected to vestry membership.

### **Vestry Qualifications:**

Nominees for the Vestry should meet the basic criteria demonstrated in these questions:

1. Does the nominee meet or exceed the canonical requirements of Communicant status in this Church?
2. Is the nominee a consistent, concerned steward? Does he or she tithe and demonstrate support of the Parish with his or her talents, time, and treasure?
3. Does the lifestyle of the nominee conform to Christian expectations, and is it consistent with his or her evaluation by the community and Parish?

4. What lay ministry has the nominee performed?
5. Is the nominee hopeful about the life of the Parish, the Christian faith, and life in general?
6. Can the Rector and other vestry members work productively with the nominee?

**Vestry Education:**

It is the duty of every Rector to provide every person elected to the Vestry in his Parish the following at the first regular meeting of the Vestry after their election:

1. The Parish By-laws.
2. The Constitution and Canons of the General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church.
3. The Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of the Central States.
4. The Customary of the Diocese of the Central States.
5. The DCS “Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry.”

It is his additional duty to see that the Vestry operates in conformity with the above. Generally, when there are disagreements as to the proper interpretation of the By-Laws, Constitution and Canons, or financial oversight, the Rector/Vicar and Wardens should consult the Bishop Ordinary or such persons as he shall designate for clarification.

**When There Is a Vacancy in a Parish:**

Whenever a Rector resigns or retires and a Parish is left vacant in the Diocese of the Central States, the following steps are to be taken:

1. Notification of Vacancy: The Senior Warden is to notify the Bishop in writing that the Parish is vacant. The Bishop appreciates a telephone call as well.
2. Special Vestry Meeting: The Bishop will call a meeting of the Vestry in which either he or another officer of the Diocese appointed by him will present a comprehensive search process which will lead to the calling of a new Presbyter
3. Formation of a Search Committee by the Vestry: It is expected that the Vestry will either serve as the Search Committee or appoint a Search Committee. In most cases, the Search Committee is composed of a few Vestry members plus additional parishioners who possess abilities and skills that will help the Search Committee with its task. (Note: at the end of this process, when the Vestry elects the new Rector, those who have served on the Search Committee who are not members of the Vestry will not be allowed a vote.) The Vestry alone is authorized to make the final decision, in consultation with the Bishop, and to issue the call.

4. The Search Process and Calling of a new Rector: The process for the search committee and calling of the new Rector should be done in consultation with the Bishop Ordinary in accordance with the guidelines established by the Bishop.

*A fuller treatment of this issue can be found in the resource from the Reformed Episcopal Church website, "Diocesan Policies for the Pastoral Search Process" provided in the Appendix.*

## EPISCOPAL VISITATIONS

### **The Record of an Episcopal Visit:**

Over time, a Parish may receive oversight from a number of Bishops. The availability of the records of previous episcopal visits is thus invaluable to the continuity of the work and ministry of the local church.

The Bishop's visit is usually a cause for celebration, which is appropriate. Advice and counsel among the Bishop, Vestry, and Rector need to take place, but time limitations often make this difficult. The "Report of an Episcopal Visitation" (provided in the Appendix) helps Parish records to be properly reviewed and potential challenges to the success of the Parish to be discussed. The material in the Report should assist both the leadership of the Parish or Mission and the Diocese to better fulfill their respective duties.

The Parish is responsible for preparing the requested information in advance of the Bishop's visit, and it should be given to him upon his arrival. Ordinarily the Bishop will meet with the Vestry (and chair the meeting) to discuss their comments and/or concerns. He will also meet with the Rector or Vicar and review his ministry. Where warranted, the Bishop will follow up his visit with a letter which may be addressed to the Rector and Vestry, or if the situation warrants, to the congregation as a whole.

### **Parish Preparation for Episcopal Visitation:**

In every Parish or Mission, before the Bishop's arrival:

1. The wardens and members of the Vestry should each complete the Parish Evaluation Form\*
2. The Rector should complete the Rector's Report Form\* and complete and attach a copy of the Clergy Review Form\* for every assisting member of the Clergy serving in the Parish.
3. The following items should be provided for the Bishop:
  - a) A current list of Communicants and Baptized members with addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses.
  - b) A current near financial statement (less than forty-five days old) which shall include a balance sheet and an income statement. This should be signed by a Certified Public Accountant or, if internally prepared, by the Senior Warden and Treasurer.

- c) A year-end financial statement of the previous calendar or financial year. Signed by a Certified Public Accountant, or by the Treasurer and Sr. Warden.
- d) A current copy of the Parish By-Laws, clearly noting any changes made since the last Episcopal visit. Signed by the Sr. Warden and Secretary as true and authentic
- e) A current copy of the Articles of Incorporation or Articles of Association, if applicable.
- f) A list of Parish officers with addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses. Signed by the Senior Warden and Secretary as true and authentic.
- g) The minutes of the most recent Annual Parish Meeting and any Special Meetings which have occurred since the last episcopal visit. Signed by the Sr. Warden and Secretary as true and authentic.
- h) A copy of the contract or other agreement between the Parish/Mission and its Rector/Vicar.
- i) A list of confirmands or baptismal candidates for the Bishop's visit should be provided at least fourteen days prior to the scheduled visit.
- j) A list of all bank or investment accounts maintained by the Parish and the current balances.
- k) The Parish Register should be available for inspection

\* These documents are parts of the "Report of an Episcopal Visitation" provided in the Appendix.

#### **Other Considerations:**

In certain cases where there are no Confirmations, the Ordinary may designate a retired Bishop, the Archdeacon, or a Canon to represent him. In such cases the same form shall be used. The Bishop or Bishop's designee shall retain a copy of the visit report for his own records and shall forward the original report to the Diocese for its official records. In every case the Bishop Ordinary's role is that of chief pastor.

Normally, the Bishop's visitation schedule is established at least six months to a year in advance. This requires the Clergy to make known any special requests for visitation or local needs far in advance, (i.e. anniversaries, special celebrations, etc.).

During a visitation of the Bishop, the services are under his direction. If there are to be Confirmations or an Ordination, the color "red" is to be used. Otherwise, the liturgical color and Propers of the day are to be used.

On the occasion of the episcopal visitation, a special offering or contribution for the Bishop's Discretionary Fund may be taken. A check should be sent to the Treasurer with this designation noted on the memo line.

Parishes are expected to pay all expenses related to an episcopal visitation including travel, lodging, and meals for the Bishop. Expenses incurred by the Bishop during an episcopal visitation (e.g., his airfare) are reported to the Treasurer and, when necessary, invoiced to the Parish. Mission Parishes are exempt from this requirement.

## **SECTION VIII: Matters Pertaining to Finance and Reporting**

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The following guidelines and resources are provided for this Customary by the Diocesan Treasurer.

### *BEST PRACTICES FOR PARISH FINANCES*

#### **1. Segregation of Duties Is Essential**

Individuals handling money coming into the Parish before it is ready to be deposited in the bank should never be persons who handle disbursements and financial records. Thus, a Treasurer should not be a counter, and individuals who complete the summary report of incoming checks should not reconcile the bank statement. Without segregation of duties, a person could manipulate information and cover up discrepancies (whether intentional or through sloppy recordkeeping). Fraud might occur with little chance of detection.

#### **2. Two or More Unrelated Counters Always Present**

No fewer than two unrelated individuals should be present when handling and counting Parish offerings until the deposit is ready to be carried to the bank by the designated depositor. Until that deposit is prepared, one individual should never be alone with the Parish's money. Counters should be rotated periodically.

#### **3. Make All Disbursements by Check or Electronic Service Provider**

All disbursements should be made by check (manually prepared or through a bill payment service) or electronic debit card for the full amount of the purchase. No cash transactions should be made from the Parish bank account(s). There should be no "less cash" deposits. There should be no "cash back" debit card transactions. If a Parish allows the use of a debit card for certain point-of-sale transactions, use of that debit card should be limited to one or two people and closely monitored. Personal identification numbers (PINs) should never be written down.

#### **4. No Blank Checks or Checks Payable to Cash**

Avoid giving anyone a blank check. And no check should ever be written payable to cash. It is essential always to be able to identify the use of all funds. (All blank checks should be numbered and kept in a locked place.)

#### **5. Use Original Invoices to Make Payments**

Payments should be based on original invoices and supporting documentation. Mark all supporting documents paid. Otherwise, there is increased opportunity for use of "doctored" invoices or duplicate use of invoices.

## **6. Limit Authorized Check Signers**

The number of authorized check signers should be limited; however, there should be at least two people authorized to sign checks. Appropriate check signers would include: Clergy; Wardens; Treasurer, and Vestry members. Office staff should never be authorized to sign checks. (Note: Parishes may want to require two signatures on checks over a specific large dollar amount determined by the Vestry. However, this is a control that you must manually monitor. If you make this a requirement at your bank, every check you write will require two signatures. Such action may become a burden to your volunteers and slow your payment process dramatically.)

## **7. Bank Statement Review by Someone Who Does Not Handle Deposits or Disbursements**

Ideally, bank statements would be reconciled by someone other than the Treasurer who writes checks. When such practice is not feasible (e.g., in smaller Parishes), at a minimum, someone other than the check writer should receive and review the bank statements before giving them to the Treasurer for reconciliation.

## **8. Use a Parish Budget Efficiently**

All expenditures should be consistent with a planned budget and should be authorized by the appropriate person. Ideally, the person approving purchases should not be the person who prepares checks for payment (e.g., approval for checks to pay for altar supplies should be approved by the individual responsible for the Altar Guild supplies). Unexpected expenses (i.e., unbudgeted items or purchases that will cause an overage on a budgeted expense line item) should be approved by the Vestry.

## **9. Cash Handling and Payment Procedures Should Be in Writing**

Having written policies, guidelines, or procedures reduces the chance of abuse and misunderstandings about Parish finances. These policies should be comprehensive and updated regularly. All individuals handling money need to be aware of all the policies. If only one person understands how everything works, that is a potential vulnerability.

## **10. Computer Controls**

If using computers for recordkeeping, safeguard the computer data. Save data frequently and make regular backups. Change passwords every 90 days and restrict access to a limited number of appropriate people to protect information maintained on the computer.

## **11. Acknowledge All Contributions**

It is a kind and wise thing to acknowledge all contributions from contributors. The receipt can be a letter, a postcard, an e-mail message, or a form created for the purpose. The Receipt for a Donor's Charitable Contribution in the Appendix is commended for use.

An acknowledgment to a Parish's contributors may help prevent a Parish from making an error in its recordkeeping. An acknowledgement may also give opportunity to inform the donor how the Parish is doing and how their gift is being used in God's work.

Parishes typically send written acknowledgments to contributors no later than January 31 of the year following the donation. For the written acknowledgment to be considered contemporaneous with the contribution, a donor must receive the acknowledgment by the earlier of: the date on which the donor actually files his or her individual federal income tax return for the year of the contribution; or the due date (including extensions) of the return.

IRS Publication 1771 (*Charitable Contributions- Substantiation and Disclosure Requirements*) explains the federal tax law for 1) organizations like churches that receive tax-deductible charitable contributions and 2) taxpayers who make contributions. The IRS stipulates many things; below are three key items:

- ❖ A donor must have a bank record or written communication from a charity for any monetary contribution before the donor can claim a charitable contribution on his/her federal income tax return.
- ❖ A donor is responsible for obtaining a written acknowledgment from a charity for any single contribution of \$250 or more before a donor can claim a charitable contribution on his/her federal income tax return.
- ❖ A charitable organization is required to provide a written disclosure to a donor who receives goods or services in exchange for a single payment in excess of \$75.

One form of a receipt is in the Appendix. The IRS has not created a standard format for contribution receipts, but the following information must be included:

- ❖ The donor's name.
- ❖ The amount of money or a description of the item or items donated.
- ❖ A statement indicating whether or not any goods or services were provided in return for the gift; receipts from religious organizations must include a statement indicating that "intangible religious benefits" were provided but they have no monetary value for tax purposes
- ❖ A good-faith estimate of the value of goods or services provided; insubstantial values need not be recorded.

The donations made to a Parish throughout the year can be deducted from a donor's personal income taxes only if he or she itemizes expenses on Schedule A when he or she files his or her personal tax return. To use Schedule A, a donor's total itemized deductions must exceed the standard deduction for his or her filing status. For tax year 2018, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (TCJA), increased the standard deduction from \$6,350 to \$12,000 for single filers and from \$12,700 to \$24,000 for married couples filing jointly. This means certain taxpayers who itemized in the past will take the standard deduction in lieu of itemizing and therefore, no longer receive the tax benefit from charitable giving. One way to analyze the potential impact of the change to the standard deduction on charitable giving is to categorize donors into three groups:

- 1) Donors who have never itemized deductions and never will itemize deductions on their tax return.
- 2) Donors who have always itemized deductions and will continue to itemize deductions under the new law.
- 3) Donors who have itemized deductions in past years but, under the new legislation, may take the standard deduction.

Most researchers believe that Groups 1 and 2 are unlikely to change charitable giving behavior based on the TCJA. Group 3 is more likely to change giving patterns, due to the increased standard deduction, and should seek opportunities to maximize tax benefits. Several tax savings opportunities are available for both Group 3 and high net worth donors who plan accordingly.

#### *THE BISHOP'S DISCRETIONARY FUND*

This Fund is intended to provide the Bishop Ordinary with resources for expenses “related to the exercise of ministry not otherwise provided in the diocesan budget” including funds to be used for the poor and for other charitable and pious purposes. The Fund may or may not be appropriated in the DCS budget annually. This Fund may be used by the Bishop to supplement existing and available budgeted funds. The Fund may also be used to fund any qualified diocesan expenditure by the Bishop Ordinary except as noted in Article III below. Such expenditures, while not necessarily integral to functional activities of the Diocese, support the overall ministry of the Bishop Ordinary.

The Bishop’s Discretionary Fund operates under the following guidelines:

##### **Article I. Balances:**

Section 1.01 The Funds are structured as an individual restricted account in the year designated. Remaining (unused) balances carry forward to the next fiscal year.

Section 1.02 The balances in this Fund remain with the Diocese when the Bishop Ordinary departs.

Section 1.03 Annually, the Trustees determine that an amount no greater than 02.5% of the undesignated gifts to the unrestricted General Fund remaining after that month’s obligations have been met will be transferred to this account by the Treasurer, one time each month, until \$4,000 has been appropriated. Once \$4,000 has been appropriated, no additional appropriations can be made in that calendar year. The Trustees may or may not support additional or similar funding in future years.

Section 1.04 Individuals or Parishes may designate special gifts to this fund at any time. Such gifts will not be considered part of any designated appropriation made by the Trustees.

Section 1.05 This Fund cannot operate with a deficit balance. The Treasurer must immediately work with the Trustees to resolve any overdrafts. The only exception to this rule pertains to “temporary” deficits. Temporary deficit positions must be approved in advance by the Treasurer and the President of the Trustees.

**Article II. Expenditures:**

Section 1.06 The Bishop Ordinary has sole discretion over these funds.

Section 1.07 The Bishop Ordinary and Treasurer must ensure that charges to the fund are for legitimate business purposes as defined under IRS regulations and Diocesan guidelines.

Section 1.08 Examples of legitimate expenditures are:

- a. Gifts to the poor and needy
- b. Charitable contributions in the name of the Diocese
- c. Travel to meetings of professional associations or for theological research activities
- d. Subscriptions to professional periodicals
- e. Memberships in professional organizations
- f. Reference books
- g. Journal submission fees
- h. Specialized software for research
- i. Computer peripherals
- j. Church-related meals or hosted professional functions
- k. Professional license or certification fees.

**Article III. Expenses Not Eligible:**

Section 3.01 Personal expenses of the Bishop Ordinary of any kind are not eligible for reimbursement through this discretionary account.

Section 3.02 Examples of items not allowable include:

- a. Home office costs, such as furniture and equipment, and maintenance expenses
- b. Charitable contributions made in the Bishop Ordinary’s name
- c. Political contributions under any circumstances
- d. Postage for personal (non-diocesan related) correspondence
- e. Memberships in social clubs or airline travel clubs unless approved by the Trustees as necessary for job performance
- f. Wages paid to the Bishop.

**Article IV. Reporting:**

Section 4.01 Quarterly, the balance of this Fund is reported to the Trustees.

Section 4.02 Disbursements from the Fund are included in the financial reports, following standard accounting procedures.

Section 4.03 If discretionary funds are used to provide a benefit to an individual, the value of the gift may need to be reported to the IRS.

#### *CLERGY RELIEF FUND*

This fund is intended to provide the Bishop Ordinary with resources to assist the ordained Clergy in this Diocese when they face extraordinary personal financial needs (i.e., “hardships”). This Fund may be appropriated in the DCS budget annually. Such expenditures, while not necessarily integral to functional activities of the Diocese, support the overall ministry of the Bishop Ordinary.

Since many of the clergymen in this Diocese are bi-vocational and are usually compensated by their Parish at rates significantly below the standards established by the ACNA, they and their families may encounter emergency needs which are beyond the ability of their personal finances and the means of the Parishes they serve. The Clergy Relief Fund may be utilized by the Bishop Ordinary to help meet a temporary need.

Grants or loans may be authorized by the Bishop Ordinary after consultation and approval of the Trustees. The Bishop receives requests, determines how he might help, and consults with the Trustees.

The Bishop and the Trustees authorize the Treasurer to prepare checks appropriately. Checks are usually written directly to a service provider, not to the clergyman, so as not to cause them to be considered wages and subject to taxation.

The situations prompting disbursements from this Fund and the names of the clergymen are held in strict confidence among the beneficiary, the Bishop Ordinary, the Trustees, and the Treasurer.

**The Clergy Relief Fund operates under the following guidelines:**

#### **Article II. Balances**

Section 2.01 The Funds are structured as an individual restricted account in the year designated. Remaining (unused) balances carry forward to the next fiscal year.

Section 2.02 The Trustees determine whether or not to support additional funding through the annual budgeting process.

Section 2.03 Individuals or Parishes may designate special gifts to this Fund at any time. Such gifts will not be considered part of any designated appropriation made by the Trustees.

Section 2.04 This Fund cannot operate with a deficit balance. The Treasurer must immediately work with the Trustees to resolve any overdrafts. The only exception to this rule

pertains to “temporary” deficits. Temporary deficit positions must be approved in advance by the Treasurer and the President of the Trustees.

Section 2.05 No loans to the General Fund may be made from this Fund.

## **Article II. Expenditures**

Section 2.06 The Bishop Ordinary and the Trustees jointly oversee this Fund.

Section 2.07 The Bishop Ordinary and Treasurer must ensure that charges to the Fund are for legitimate needs.

Section 2.08 Examples of legitimate expenditures:

- a. Medical expenses, for an ordained clergyman or a member of his immediate family not covered by insurance.
- b. Hardship situations related to food, clothing, and shelter for the clergyman and his immediate family.
- c. Transportation required in order for the clergyman to perform the duties of his position description in his Parish or his “second” job.

## **Article III. Expenses Not Eligible**

Section 3.01 Personal expenses of the Bishop Ordinary of any kind are not eligible for reimbursement through this discretionary account.

Section 3.02 Examples of items not allowable:

- a. Medical expenses of an individual outside the clergyman’s nuclear family. (Nuclear family is a *family* group consisting of two parents and their children [one or more].)
- b. Expenses related to repairs to a facility where a Parish meets including those resulting from catastrophic events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, hail, floods, or fire. (Such needs will be handled as unique situations and will require more than this fund can provide.)

## **Article IV. Reporting**

Section 4.02 Disbursements from the Fund are included in the financial reports, following standard accounting procedures; however, to the extent possible the name of the clergyman for whom expenditures are made will be held in confidence by the Trustees, Treasurer, and the Bishop Ordinary.

Section 4.03 If Clergy relief funds are used to provide a benefit directly to an individual, the value of the gift may need to be reported to the IRS.

## ONLINE PARISH REPORTING

Following the end of each Lord's Day, each Parish, Mission, and Extension Work will report basic elements from its Parish Register to the Bishop(s) and the Treasurer. To enable this reporting an electronic spreadsheet is available for each Parish on the internet. Additionally, no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> business day following the end of each month, each Parish, Mission, and extension work will submit its diocesan support to the DCS Treasurer.

The objective of online reporting of financial support and attendance is to give the Bishop the ability easily and in a timely manner to track and analyze some fundamental information about life in the Diocese and the gifts entrusted to God. This report is used by the Treasurer to help monitor incoming diocesan support. This information helps the Treasurer and Trustees to be good stewards of diocesan resources.

There are three main goals of online reporting:

1. *Provide information to the diocesan leadership.*

The Bishop(s), Treasurer, and Trustees want to know how many people are worshipping each week. Timely attendance and financial reporting help trustees decide how to support the Bishop Ordinary and ministries of the Church.

2. *Track incoming cash.*

Where is our Diocese's monetary support coming from? Does our Diocese have adequate surplus funds available for necessary reserves or new ministries? Answers to these questions are important to know: they show God's provisions; how well the diocese is covering its financial obligations; and, how quickly the diocese may act upon future growth opportunities or emergency expenses.

3. *Analyze support.*

By monitoring the source of the monetary support, and any changes to it, the leadership can test its expectations for the future and prepare appropriately.

### **Guidelines:**

1. On a weekly basis a Parish will report for a given date four numbers related to support and attendance using the online spreadsheet named "DCS REGION # DATA INPUT". (The "#" indicates a regional number; either I, II, or III. This is detailed later in the document.)

2. The four numbers input regularly are: 1.) **Total Support**; 2.) **Designated Support**; 3) **Total Souls in Attendance**; and, 4) **Total First Time Visitors**.

3. If a Parish holds services and receives contributions more than one day a week, a Parish may report more frequently than weekly.

4. Once, at the end of the month, a Parish will calculate and report the amount of support it will submit to the Diocese's general fund.

5. The transmittal of funds may be accomplished by mailing a check payable to "DCS-REC" at PO Box 2584, Midlothian, VA 23113, by directing a bill payment service to make the remittance, or by electronic funds transfer. *(Electronic funds transfer is expected to be available by 3Q2019.)*

6. The DCS Online Parish Reporting is administered by the DCS Treasurer. Access to edit the file is generally granted to Parish treasurers only. Read-only access is granted to the Bishop(s).

**Instructions:**

1. Log in to your internet browser.

2. Go to your Google account. *(A "gmail" address or email address that is linked to Google Drive is required. If you need assistance in setting up a free gmail account or linking your current account, please contact the DCS Treasurer.)*

3. Click on "Google Drive."

4. On the left-hand side, select "Shared With Me".

5. Open the folder named "NEW DCS-REC PARISH DATA REPORTING".

6. Open the file named "DCS REGION # DATA INPUT". *(There are 3 regions; each Parish only has access to the spreadsheet that is appropriate for its data input. (This is a means of preventing erroneous data input to another Parish with a similar name.)*

7. On the first empty row below the column headers (listed in Row 3), make the appropriate entries. *(For help, use the column definitions shown below, or on the Definitions Tab in the spreadsheet, or contact the DCS Treasurer.)*

8. The spreadsheet automatically saves all entries. *(Every edit made in Google Drive is automatically saved and shared with all who have access to the spreadsheet file.)*

9. Review your entries.

10. Close the tab. *(Point to the tab at the top of your browser and click "X" to close.)*

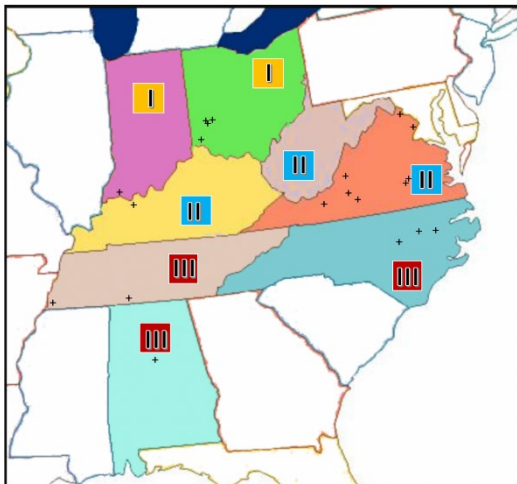
### DCS Data Input Column Definition:

Columns A through K

- A. **Reporting Parish / Name** (Text): This is a drop-down list. Click on the arrow and choose your Parish. (*The structure of each Parish name is: STATE-Name-City-%Support.*)
- B. **Year** (Numeric, 4-digit): (Full date is YYYY|MM|DD in 3-columns)
- C. **Month** (Numeric, 2-digit)
- D. **Day** (Numeric, 2-digit)
- E. **Check box** (Indicator): A checked box indicates that this row is the final entry for the given month listed in Column C. (*Simply click the box to insert checkmark.*)
- F. **Total Support** (Numeric, 8-digit, 2 decimal places): This is the amount of all support received since the last date of entry from all sources: collection plates; mail; internet; other support sources.
- G. **Designated Support** (Numeric, 8-digit, 2 decimal places): This is a subset of the entry in Column F. If any of the support reported in column F is restricted to a specific purpose, report the total of designated support received since the last date of entry.
- H. **Net Support** = (F less G) (Numeric, 8-digit, 2 decimal places) (*Auto Calculated Amount*): This is the total amount of unrestricted gifts that the Parish uses to calculate its tithe to the DCS-REC.
- I. **Calculated Tithe to DCS** (Numeric, 8-digit, 2 decimal places) (*Manually Calculated*): If **Column E** is checked for this row, then follow these steps: 1) Determine the sum for all entries in Column H for the year & month shown in Columns B & C of this row; 2) Multiply the resulting sum by the percentage used by your Parish; generally, this is 10 per cent.
- J. **Attendance Total** (Numeric, 4-digit): Enter the total number of all souls attending the Primary Service linked to the date on this row.
- K. **Visitors Total** (Numeric, 4-digit): Enter the total number of *first time* visitors attending the Primary Service linked to the date on this row.

### Parish Data Input by Region:

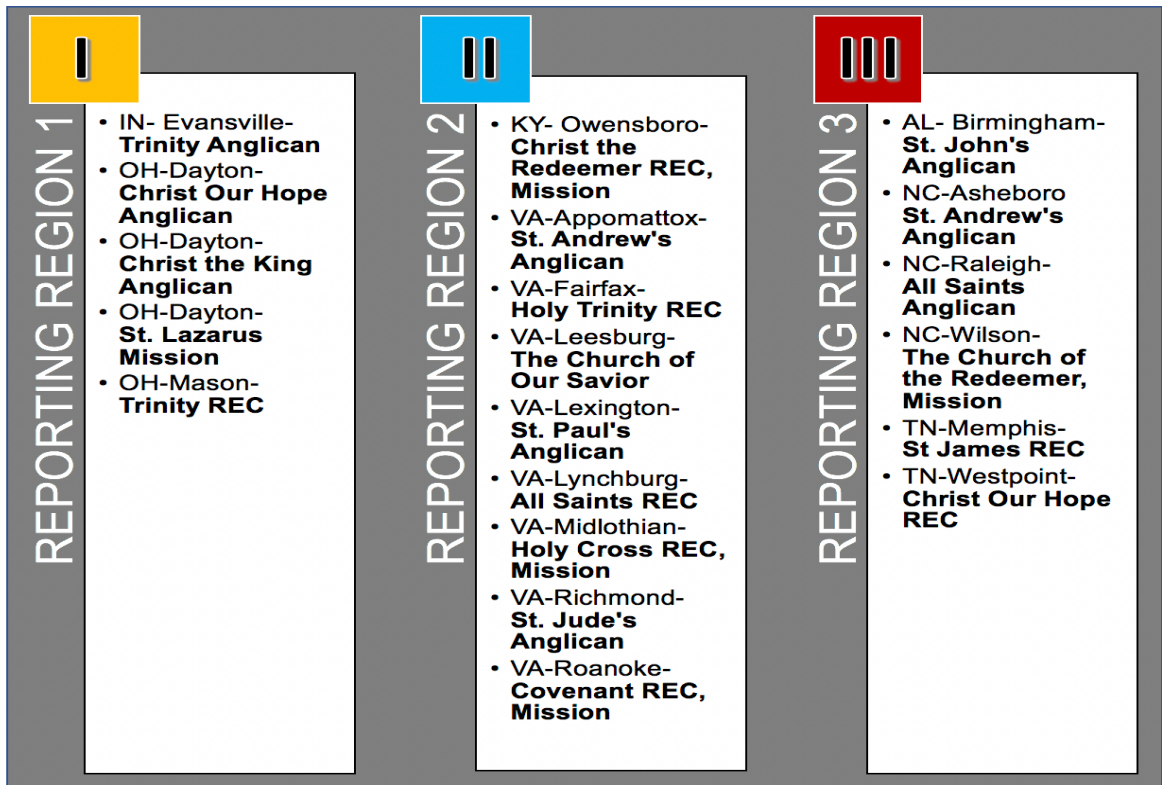
Each Parish is assigned to a region for data input purposes only. These regional assignments correspond to states. When looking at the map Region I includes the northern most states in the Diocese: Indiana and Ohio. Region II includes the two commonwealths which cross the center of the Diocese: Kentucky and Virginia; plus, the state of West Virginia. The states in the southern part of the Diocese comprise Region III: Alabama; Tennessee; and North Carolina. The only reason for this regional assignment is to help avoid data input errors for Parishes with similar names.



The states in the southern part of the Diocese comprise Region III: Alabama; Tennessee; and North Carolina. The only reason for this regional assignment is to help avoid data input errors for Parishes with similar names.

The table below shows the regional assignment for data reporting. This listing

corresponds with the spreadsheet available for each Parish treasurer. The input data for all three regions will be consolidated to prepare reports for the Bishops and Trustees.



*EXAMPLE PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING COLLECTIONS FOLLOWING A SERVICE*

1. All individuals involved in the handling and recording of support/gifts to the Parish should understand that this weekly task is a confidential matter and such records are available on a limited basis only.
2. Immediately following the service, two unrelated persons carry the contents of the collection basins to a room for counting. If the contributions cannot be counted immediately, the contents should be placed inside an adequate safe for counting the following day. Parish funds/offerings should never be taken to a private home for counting. The persons handling this process (“the counters”) should be rotated on a regular basis.
3. A report accounting for the individual contributions and summarizing them is prepared and initialed by at least two persons. (See *Example in the Appendix: Weekly Financial Worksheet*)

4. Any envelopes are segregated from the loose cash in the collection basins. If envelopes are not used, proceed to step 8. If envelopes are used, they are opened promptly by at least two unrelated individuals.
5. Envelopes are marked after opening by printing the date, indicating whether check or cash, recording the total amount, and noting the intent and purpose if the donor has indicated that the gift in the envelope is for anything other than undesignated offerings. Checks removed from the envelopes should be endorsed “For Deposit Only to the Account of <Name of Parish> <Account Number>” as soon as they are removed from the envelopes.
6. The amount of the contribution actually in the envelope and the amount shown on the outside of the envelope should match. Whenever the amounts do not match, record the variance (over/short) on the envelope; make the same notation on the summary report; and inform the Treasurer promptly.
7. Prepare a list of the envelopes and summarize the total. The sum of totals on the outside of the envelopes and the total of coins, currency, and checks removed from the envelopes are reconciled.
8. Loose coins and currency in the offering basins are totaled and recorded on the summary report.
9. Loose checks in the offering basins are endorsed as instructed in line 5 above and are recorded on the summary report. (*Endorsement stamps may be used.*)
10. A bank deposit ticket is prepared and given to the Parish treasurer or his/her agent along with the checks, cash, and all empty envelopes, if envelopes are used. Deposits should be made as soon as possible after the deposit ticket is prepared. (*Note: Cash should not be stored at the church unless it is locked in a safe.*)
11. Copies of all checks and the deposit slips are made prior to making the deposit at the bank. (*Digital copies or photocopies are allowed. These copies are used to prepare contribution reports for donors.*)
12. A copy of the deposit receipt is attached to the original summary report and retained by the Treasurer.
13. Retain the weekly financial worksheets and the copies of the deposit contents for 7 years.

#### RECEIPT FOR A DONOR’S CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION

A Receipt for a Donor’s Charitable Contribution is provided in the Appendix. While use of the diocesan form is not mandatory, it is encouraged as the larger church’s status as a non-profit organization is the basis for that of its Parish agents that are not independently incorporated as

501(c)3 organizations. If a Parish uses its own receipt, the items marked as required on the diocesan form and the text of the Notice *must* be included.

As a general rule, a Parish should *not* place a value on what is donated (which is the responsibility of the donor). Rather, a Parish should make sure it has described on the receipt what has been donated. Also, a Parish should never state that a contribution is tax deductible. Contributions *may be* deductible, depending on the donor's particular tax situation.

## **SECTION IX:**

### **Miscellaneous Diocesan Policies**

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#### **Policy regarding Alcoholic Beverages:**

It is the policy of the Bishop that no congregation will engage in the sale of alcoholic beverages or mixed drinks at any function of the congregation or any of its organizations. The sale of any alcoholic beverage or mixed drinks is also contrary to the laws of the various states without proper license.

The serving of alcoholic beverages (without charge) at wedding receptions, suppers, picnics, etc., either on or off the church property, is left to the discretion of the Presbyter and the Vestry. Where alcoholic beverages are served, alternative drinks (non-alcoholic) must be provided and attractively displayed for those who desire them.

#### **Policy regarding Gambling:**

It is the Bishop's policy to allow congregations or organizations within a congregation to host, sponsor, or participate in raffles and games of chance (i.e., Bingo) provided they are conducted with discretion and have no connection with an outside commercial organization. He does not condone Parishes, Missions, or other agencies of the Diocese going into the gambling business (sponsoring Bingo halls, etc.).

#### **Senior Diocesan Staff:**

The Bishop Ordinary, pursuant to Reformed Episcopal Canon 55, may appoint an Archdeacon or Canons to assist in the administration of the Diocese, as he deems fit. When such persons are engaged in their official duties as the Bishop's representative, they are to be accorded the courtesy and respect which is commensurate with their office.

Upon the death, resignation, or retirement of a Bishop Ordinary, the resignation of all Deans, Canons, and the Archdeacon are considered as having been tendered to the Standing Committee. The Incoming Ordinary shall have privilege to appoint senior staff as he deems fit. Outgoing Canons, while having surrendered their positions, retain the title Canon for life.

#### **Deans and Deaneries:**

The Diocese may be divided into geographical groupings of congregations called Deaneries. The purpose of the Deanery is to enable Clergy and Laity to share common interests and concerns and to work together with more strength than is sometimes available to single congregations. The Bishop appoints the Dean of each Deanery who serves at the Bishop's pleasure. Every Dean is expected to maintain regular contact with the Clergy under his charge and to provide pastoral and leadership support under the authority of the Bishop as requested. Deaneries are

encouraged to work together for common life and ministry and to have opportunities for Clergy and lay fellowship on an ongoing basis.

**Missions:**

Missions and Mission Works within the Diocese of the Central States are primarily the responsibility of the Bishop as part of his apostolic office and of the Diocese of which he is the constitutional head.

According Diocesan Title III, Canon I, “The Bishop Ordinary and the Standing Committee shall appoint the Vicar of a Mission Parish or of an extension work. A Presbyter shall have the right to accept or reject such an appointment without prejudice. A Deacon shall be required to accept such an appointment and serve diligently at the pleasure of the Bishop Ordinary.”

The Bishop may appoint or allow the Vicar to appoint lay persons to serve as wardens in the Missions of the Diocese and to sit in Bishop’s Committees. The Bishop’s Committees of Missions will have the same duties as Vestries of Parishes. The Bishop may delegate certain authority to an Archdeacon or a Canon Missioner or Dean of the Deanery.

**Title to Property:**

As stated in the Constitution of the Reformed Episcopal Church, all Parishes and Missions hold deed and title to their own real property.

Such title ultimately rests in the congregation as a whole. Accordingly, no real property may be bought, sold, mortgaged or encumbered without approval of the congregation at a duly called Annual or Special Parish Meeting.

In accordance with IRS regulations, all Parish by-laws should specify that in the event of the dissolution of the Parish or Mission, all property and assets must be given to another 501 (c) 3. The final vestry has the responsibility to comply with the law in this regard. Options can include the diocesan mission fund, or distribution to other ministries deemed compatible with the perceived wishes of the Parish. In no case may an individual or for-profit entity receive benefit from the dissolution.

**Insurance and Other Matters:**

Every Parish Vestry is expected to maintain Fire and Casualty Insurance in amounts equal to the replacement value of their property. It is recommended that Liability Insurance of at least one million dollars should be maintained.

Every Parish is required by law to obtain its own Federal Tax ID Number and shall report all wages and salaries as required by federal and state law.

Every Parish shall be responsible for compliance with the policies of the General Council in matters pertaining to Sexual Harassment, Child Abuse. The Bishop should be notified immediately of any allegations of such behavior.

## **Rules of Order for General Councils and Diocesan Synods of the Reformed Episcopal Church:**

*Adapted from the Journal of the Twenty-sixth General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church and delivered to the General Council in 2017.*

1. The business of every meeting shall be introduced with prayer.
2. The Minutes of the sessions of the preceding day shall be read every morning at the opening of business, unless the house shall otherwise determine.
3. The President shall appoint the several committees, unless the Canons of the church shall otherwise specify.
4. When the President takes the chair, no member of the house shall continue standing, or shall afterward stand up, except to address the chair.
5. No member shall absent himself from the sessions of the house unless he have leave, or be unable to attend.
6. When any member is about to speak in debate, or deliver any matter to the house, he shall with due respect address himself to the President, concerning himself strictly to the point in debate.
7. No member shall speak more than twice in the same debate without specific leave, by vote of the house.
8. A question being once determined shall stand as the judgment of the house, and shall not again be drawn into debate during the same session, unless with the consent of two-thirds of the house.
9. While the President is putting any question, the members shall continue in their seats, and shall not hold any private discourse.
10. No motion shall be considered as before the house unless it be seconded.
11. Reports made by the various Boards and Committees to any Council (or Synod) of the church are officially received upon presentation to the house, and are the subject of its action only insofar as they embody recommendations which require specific authorization or approval under the canons of this church.
12. When any question is before the house, it shall be decided upon before any new subject is introduced, except for the question of adjournment.

13. All questions of order shall be decided in the first instance by the Chair, without debate. An appeal, however, may be made from the decision of the Chair by any member of the house; said appeal requiring a two-thirds majority vote to be sustained.

14. The question on motion of adjournment shall be taken before any other, and without debate.

15. When the house is about to rise, every member shall keep his seat, until the President shall leave the Chair.

16. A call to prayer shall always be in order, when made by a member entitled to the floor; and in such case the Chair shall designate the person(s) whom he desires to lead in that service.

17. These Rules of Order shall remain in force until altered or suspended by the Council, two-thirds of the members present voting for such alteration or suspension.

## APPENDIX:

### Diocesan Forms and Documents

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HERE are offered the forms called for in this Customary and the Canons in a format that identifies them as our own. The forms even tell the users who to send them to. They can be printed, filled out, and either mailed or scanned as PDFs and sent as email attachments.

In addition to forms, there are documents included here that will be helpful for various situations, from the search process for Parish vacancies to study guides for ministerial examinations. We want to do everything we can to make pertinent information clear and our processes smooth and consistent for the people of the Diocese.

We will adapt and expand this trove as need arises. Feel free to let the Bishop or the Diocesan Staff know if there is anything else you need.

#### Contents:

- ❖ How Does the Government of an REC Parish Work?
- ❖ Policy for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults
- ❖ Diocesan Policies for the Pastoral Search Process
- ❖ Clergy and Deaconess Information
- ❖ Application for a Lay Reader's License
- ❖ Declaration of a Couple Desiring Holy Matrimony
- ❖ Petition for Marriage in the Church of Divorced Persons
- ❖ Application for a License to Officiate within the Diocese of the Central States
- ❖ Application for Candidacy in the Order of Deaconesses
- ❖ Application for Postulancy
- ❖ Rector and Vestry Certification of an Applicant for Postulancy
- ❖ Application for Holy Orders
- ❖ Presbyterian Certification of an Applicant for the Order of Deacon
- ❖ Rector and Vestry Certification of an Applicant for the Order of Deacon
- ❖ Rector and Vestry Certification of an Applicant for the Order of Presbyterian
- ❖ Article of Association and Conformity of a New Mission or Parish
- ❖ Application for the Reception of Clergy
- ❖ Study Guide for the Deaconess Examination
- ❖ The Written Examination for the Order of Deaconesses
- ❖ The Written Examination for the Diaconate and Presbyterate
- ❖ Record of an Episcopal Visitation
- ❖ Receipt for a Donor's Charitable Contribution
- ❖ Weekly Financial Worksheet for Offering Counters

## HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT OF AN REC PARISH WORK?

*From the REC website.*

In a local Parish there are certain responsibilities that belong solely to the Rector and there are other functions which belong to the Vestry.

The Rector is solely in charge of the Worship in the life of the Parish. This also includes the Music. What services, when, and the kind of services, the music sung at those services all fall under the authority of the Rector along with the teaching ministry of the Parish and the administration of the sacraments. This also includes the administration of any Church discipline. All of these areas belong to the Rector. These matters are not put to votes by the Vestry or the Parish Council.

The Rector is never a member of the Parish. His Church membership is held by the Diocese. On that level the Bishop Ordinary is the highest authority. He exercises discipline and authority over the Rectors. If problems between a Rector and a Parish arise, the Bishop Ordinary or one of his assistant Bishops mediates and makes the decisions concerning relationship and appropriate actions to be taken. Especially in disciplinary matters, any action of A Rector, or Bishop, can be appealed all the way up to the General Council, so there is a "Check and Balance" that is very consistent with the Reformation. It should be noted that the "Check and Balance" in the Churches established at the time of the Reformation, whether Geneva, Lutheranism or Anglicanism, **never** made the laity the final determining authority in matters of Worship, Teaching and Discipline. It was always the eldership (Priesthood) and hierarchy.

The Vestry is responsible for the Care of the corporate affairs of the Parish. The Vestry calls the Rector in a full parish setting. In a Mission Parish situation, the Bishop of the Diocese appoints the Vicar (Minister in charge). The Vestry of a Parish administers the financial affairs. (In a Mission this is handled by a Bishop's Committee which is appointed by the Bishop Ordinary or his appointee.) It can make decisions as to whether or not to rent the building to some group or other. It takes care of the Building and Grounds. It can decide what to spend money on. The Rector chairs the Vestry, but the Vestry has the responsibility in these areas. Often times the Vestry is utilized by the Rector to organize a variety of committees in the Parish such as Christian Education, Outreach, Evangelism, etc. These committees are not cast in stone. They can be appointed by the Rector in order to facilitate the growth and organization of the Parish. The Parish Meeting is the "Check and Balance" on the Vestry Decisions.

The Parish Council, made up of the Senior or Rector's Warden and the Junior or People's Warden, is a committee of advice to the Rector. He can discuss parish problems with the Wardens at a Parish Council meeting. He can also consult with them over any Church discipline matters. The Parish council does not vote on matters, they simply advise. It follows the biblical admonition that in the council of many there is wisdom. Ultimately though, the Rector has to weigh that advice in those areas and then make his best decision.

The Parish Council works best when the Wardens and Rector (Vicar) meet frequently. Together they lay the plans for Parish life. The Wardens can be most helpful to the Rector (Vicar) when they remove from the Rector unnecessary duties and oversee their discharge by others. In other words, the Wardens implement the smooth running of the Parish. Prayer for each family of the Parish should be a part of the regular meetings of the Wardens with the Rector (Vicar). Then follows honest talk about Parish life and solutions to whatever issues are important to the welfare of the Parish. Because the Wardens are trusted advisors to the Rector (Vicar), they may hear things relating to church discipline and order. They will be expected to give advice to the Rector (Vicar) about those matters. It is imperative that the Wardens understand that what is discussed in the Parish Council is privileged information and **may not be shared with anyone else** including their wives.

The Sr. Warden also has a special responsibility on the Vestry. In addition to being the principal Lay Officer of the Parish, He is to be the advocate of the Rector concerning his needs to the Vestry. This is to help the Rector so that he doesn't have to be constantly asking on his own behalf for matters that concern his welfare and that of his family. In the absence of the Rector (Vicar) the Sr. Warden has the responsibility to chair the Vestry meetings. Also, in the event of the Parish having no pastor, the Sr. Warden consults with the Bishop about plans for filling the Pulpit and conducting of services, etc.

The Jr. Warden also has a function on the Vestry. He is to represent the concerns of the Parish family to the Rector first and then, if determined by the Parish Council, to the Vestry. He also watches over the accounting of the finances of the Parish. This is why the Jr. Warden is responsible to have the Parish financial books examined each year. He also oversees the care of property and insures that necessary repairs are made.

Both of these men in this capacity are not supposed to vent their opinions or likes but to represent faithfully the facts and concerns of all they represent. Neither Warden is to be adversarial to the other or to the Rector or to the Vestry. There is never to be the attitude of party factions or an "us vs. "them" mentality.

This system works extremely well and happily when everyone sticks to their designated area of responsibility, but what sometimes happens is that the lines get blurred. When that happens, conflict arises.

Where problems seem to most frequently arise in Parishes is over the authority question. Does the Rector really have his assigned authority or can Wardens or the Vestry impose their authority over his? Do Wardens have the right to contend with the Rector in areas of his assigned responsibility? Can they be disrespectful to the Rector if they don't like what he decided? The answer to these is of course, no! It would be equally wrong for a Rector to impose his office of Pastor and try to dictate all the financial and corporate decisions to the Vestry.

What seems to often occur in Parishes is that there have been those who feel very strongly that their opinions about worship and the function of Pastoral Ministry are the ones that the Rector should follow. These have been at times, very strongly put to their Pastor. The result of such conflicts often results in either the Rector or some of the parishioners leaving the Church.

The solution to preventing this problem from arising is for the Clergy, Vestry and Congregation to understand the various duties and functions of the Officers of the Church. When and if conflict arises, it should be lovingly dealt with from the beginning. Furthermore, the Bishop should be appraised at the beginning of trouble. Far too often, Clergy and or Wardens try to deal with these conflicts on their own until it becomes unmanageable, and then the Bishop is made aware of the situation. It is always appropriate for the Clergy and or the Wardens to contact the Bishop Ordinary about concerns in the life of the Parish.

# DIOCESAN POLICIES FOR THE PASTORAL SEARCH PROCESS

*From the REC website.*

## I. Notification of the Ecclesiastical Authority

The initial responsibility of the Wardens of any Parish whose rectorship has become vacant for any reason is to provide written notification of the vacancy to the Bishop in jurisdiction.

## II. Organization of Search Committee

The Parish Council, in consultation with the Bishop, is to organize a Search Committee, whose membership should represent a broad cross-section of the congregation, The Search Committee may include some number of vestry members, but should not be composed exclusively of vestrymen.

## III. Parish Evaluation

The first function of the Search Committee will be to oversee the process of a Parish self-study. This process will involve the development, distribution, review and analysis of a Parish Evaluation Survey to be completed by every member of the congregation. The purpose of this self-study is to help to identify areas of both strength and weakness in the life and ministry of the Parish; to analyze its needs; to ascertain the mind of the people with regard to all significant aspects of Parish life; to work toward the establishment of clear priorities and goals for the future of the church's ministry; and to begin to develop a profile of the congregation and its needs, as a means of forming a profile of the man needed to fill the pastoral vacancy. The tabulated survey results will be an important component in enabling the Search Committee to determine the level of experience, as well as the strengths, assets, and gifts which are necessary in the man to be chosen to carry on the pastoral ministry of the congregation.

## IV Functions in Transition: A Summary of the Search Process

### A. Turning the Apparent Negative into a Positive

From the standpoint of a congregation in transition, the negative aspect of things will obviously be the recent loss of a pastor. The *positive gains* to come out of the situation should be:

1. The pastoral vacancy can provide much-needed opportunity for *Reflection, Evaluation, Focus and Redirection*.

a.) The tabulated results of the Parish self-study need to be carefully analyzed and appropriate conclusions drawn. *Specifically: in what ways has this study enabled the Parish to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges of its particular ministry?* (It is important to avoid the assumption that everyone already *knows* what the Parish's strengths and weaknesses are, or that the congregation already clearly understands and agrees upon what ought to be their goals and priorities for the future. Vestries and congregations are often surprised by the results of this evaluation process!)

*What, then, do the survey conclusions tell the Search Committee about the appropriate gifts, abilities and strengths necessary in our next rector?* That finding will lead to the next major necessity for an effective pastoral search process, namely:

b.) The Parish needs to have a clearly defined, well-articulated, widely owned *Mission Statement*. Is this in place? If so, does it need refinement? If not, when will it be in place? (If necessary, a special committee needs to be organized in order to frame the Mission Statement, with a specific target date set for its completion.)

This priority is absolutely necessary for the good of the Parish, as well as for the next pastor. ***Where does this Parish want to be in the next five years? In the next ten? The next twenty years?*** The church needs to have clear goals set for itself. A Parish without a clearly focused, sharply defined, well articulated statement of its mission and purpose will inevitably drift instead of moving decisively forward and growing. The Parish also owes this much to the incoming pastor who will be expected to guide it toward that future. (Any pastoral candidate worth considering will expect such a well-defined, widely owned statement of mission to be in place, and may well decline to consider the pulpit vacancy if it is not.)

2. A further positive outcome to the pastoral vacancy and search process can be a heightened level of *Commitment* and a deepened level of *Involvement* on the part of a wider segment of the congregation in every aspect of Parish ministry.

The absence of the rector will be noted particularly in the things which he used to care for himself (which others may have, perhaps, taken for granted or not even noticed) which will now have to be taken up by others. Reaction to the pastoral "vacuum" by some congregations (and vestries) is often panic, followed by an ill-advised haste to fill the vacancy as soon as possible. The pastoral interim should rather be seen as an opportunity for constructive cultivation of leadership and service by all the members of the Body of Christ.

3. The pastoral vacancy can provide opportunity for *Growth in Spirituality*: St. Paul's testimony was, "When I am weak, then I am strong." The paramount activity of this transition period should be fervent prayer: organized, focused, disciplined, and regular -for the Parish, the wardens and vestry, the Search Committee, the church staff, the potential candidates, the Bishop and Standing Committee.

#### B. Understanding the Transition Process: *The Search Committee as Pastoral Nominating Committee.*

##### 1. Specific Responsibilities and Functions of the Search Committee

a.) Acceptance of a position on the pastoral Search Committee must begin with an acknowledgment of *the demands of the task*, and unqualified acceptance of *the priority of the commitment*. Search Committee membership, if discharged conscientiously, is an energy-intensive, time-consuming process. Search Committees that have functioned most effectively have often met weekly. And, as the search process unfolds, there is significant work to be done between meetings. Committee members should be aware of the demands of this important responsibility and commit unreservedly to its requirements at the outset. Those unable or unwilling to assume this level of commitment should conscientiously decline to serve.

b.) From the beginning of the process, there must be *clear assignment of responsibilities and equitable distribution of the load*. (For example: Who will record the proceedings of the committee? Who will conduct correspondence? How will review of resumes be handled? Who will conduct interviews?, etc.) In anticipation of these functions, the Search Committee should: i) Develop an initial letter which will be sent to prospective candidates. (What will it say about the church? About the search process? What will it ask of the potential candidate? e.g., If the person is interested in being considered, should he submit a resume with his initial reply? What else should be submitted at that time?) ii) Develop a questionnaire that will be sent to candidates who submit an initial affirmative reply. iii) Decide on the means by which the committee will communicate with references. iv) Determine how the committee will hear the candidate preach and conduct public worship. (How many sermon tapes should be submitted for committee review? How will they be duplicated so that committee members can listen to them? Will a sub-committee eventually visit his current local church?)

**NOTE: There should be *NO* thought of parading potential candidates through the pulpit of the Parish on Sunday mornings! The "beauty-pageant" method of pulpit candidacy is totally inappropriate, completely inadequate, and blatantly superficial as a means of pastoral selection. Moreover, it is a sure and certain procedure for polarizing the congregation and creating lasting injuries. The Search Committee, not the congregation, is to do the job of candidate selection and analysis. Only after a candidate has been**

selected and voted upon by the Search Committee and called by the Vestry should he be introduced to the congregation.

c.) Following upon the tabulation of the Parish self-study and the adoption of a clear statement of mission, *the Search Committee will develop a preliminary list of potential candidates in consultation with the Bishop*, utilizing the digested results of the congregational self-study and the materials of the Parish Mission Statement. The Parish should see itself **in partnership with the Diocese** in the search process. If Clergy currently serving other Parishes are to be considered as possible candidates, that will have a potential impact on those Parishes, and on the Diocese as a whole. The Bishop and Standing Committee, having the responsibility for oversight of Clergy and Parishes, may be in a position to provide information and counsel concerning men and their record of pastoral service not readily available from other sources. In particular, it must be noted that, should the Search Committee have interest in pursuing the possible candidacy of any clergyman outside the Reformed Episcopal Church, the consultation and participation of the Bishop and Standing Committee should be sought immediately.

It is not possible for a local congregation to call a minister and have him installed as rector unless he can qualify according to the canonical requirements for Clergy in the Reformed Episcopal Church, including the sustaining of an examination. It can be exceedingly injurious, both to the Parish and to a minister and his family to cultivate and nurture a relationship which, ultimately, cannot be finalized because the candidate is not someone whom the Bishop and Standing Committee can approve. Cooperative participation from the outset helps to avoid the possibility of difficulty and injury later on.

Candidates should be identified on the basis of objective criteria, not subjective considerations. Above all, the search process is not a popularity contest. Candidates are not to be chosen because some people know them; or because certain people like them; or because they have made a good personal or public impression. Search Committee members should read and study the biblical qualifications set down in I St. Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9; and the like. These criteria, together with a man's demonstrated gifts and qualifications as evidenced in his previous pastoral service, the materials assembled in the process carried on by the Search Committee, and the counsel provided by the Bishop and Standing Committee, should be the factors used to identify candidates, and ultimately to nominate a rector.

d.) In the exercise of all of these functions, *the Search Committee should maintain the utmost confidentiality*, both within the local congregation, and also in their contacts with potential candidates, references, and the like. Significant injuries are likely to result if confidentiality and discretion are not strictly maintained. Men and their ministries can be compromised; false and unfulfillable expectations can be raised; and significant injuries done by "leaks" of information from a Search Committee while its efforts are still in process.

e.) Having proceeded thus far, the Search Committee will now be engaged in conducting interviews; reviewing resumes, references and sermon tapes; discussing the ongoing process openly and candidly with one another; and in working toward the eventual outcome of voting on one optimum candidate to present to the vestry for the issuance of a call. It is the vestry which is canonically empowered to issue a pastoral call (Title IV, Canon IX). Therefore, the Search Committee will function as a Pastoral Nominating Committee, to present their chosen candidate to the vestry. The vestry must issue the call.

## 2. The Vestry in Relation to the Search Committee

a.) Early on in the process the Search Committee should obtain from the vestry clear parameters of a salary and benefits package for the new rector, together with any necessary information regarding housing/rectory provision, etc. The Search Committee cannot proceed intelligently without this information.

b.) A liaison person should be designated to maintain communication with the vestry throughout the process, *without breaching confidences*. (Also: the congregation needs to know that the Search Committee is active, and that the process is moving forward, *without knowing the details*.)

c.) The Search Committee should inform the vestry of the necessary expenses of its operation and ascertain whether or not there are specific fiscal limitations. (What kind of "budget" will there be for travel and related expenses, for committee members, and for potential candidates and their families? What will be the arrangements for hospitality ~ accommodations and meals, etc. ~ for men coming to be interviewed? Is the Search Committee at liberty to consider candidates from a great distance where airfare and accommodations may involve significant expense?) These subjects should be broached and considered early in the process so that everyone is of the same understanding and there are no surprises.

### C. The Wisdom of an Interim Rector

1. Many denominations *mandate* that an Interim Rector must serve for a period of time before a new, permanent replacement can be called to fill the pastoral vacancy. The period of time for an Interim Rector to serve can vary; but generally speaking, the longer the outgoing rector's tenure was, the longer the Interim Rectorship should be. One good rule of thumb is to plan that an Interim Rector will serve at least one month for each year of the outgoing rector's tenure (i.e., if the rector served for twelve years, there should be at least a twelve-month interim before a permanent replacement is called). Our current operating policy in the Diocese calls for an Interim Rector to serve before the pastoral vacancy can be permanently filled. In particular, when the previous pastoral tenure has been lengthy; when the outgoing rector has had a commanding presence; there *must* be a transitional figure. Both the wisdom, and the necessity for this, can be clearly seen in relation to the following:

a.) *The wellbeing of the local church.* A parish pastor is the spiritual father to his people. When he leaves the church, and is gone from the scene, there is a bereavement which is very real. It is as foolhardy for a Parish that has lost its pastor to immediately pursue a new pastoral relationship as it would be for a recently widowed person to plunge immediately into a new romance. To think otherwise is radically to misunderstand human nature. To proceed otherwise is a proven recipe for disaster.

b.) *The wellbeing of the next pastor.* In the history of this Denomination, as it is known to current memory, there has never been a situation where a church has called a full-time replacement rector immediately following a long-tenured pastorate where there has not been tremendous upheaval, disturbance and injury. Frequently there has been lasting loss to the church, and often permanent injury to the man. The Bishop and Standing Committee are charged with the pastoral oversight and care of both the Parishes and the Clergy of the Diocese. The faithful exercise of that stewardship, for the wellbeing of Parishes and ministers alike, precludes the possibility that the Bishop and Standing Committee can approve any process of immediately proceeding to engage a permanent pastoral replacement without there being a pastoral interim. It is both unfair and irresponsible to risk the possibility of making casualties, either of churches, or of ministers and their families.

It should be noted further that the presence of additional Clergy as members of the pastoral staff does not materially alter the necessity for an Interim Rector ~ particularly if those persons are to be considered as potential candidates. Any clergyman who occupies the position of "Interim Rector" can only be considered as a candidate, if it has been judged by the Bishop that such consideration is in the best interest of the Parish.

### D. The Availability of the Bishop in this Process

Because of the responsibility entrusted to the Bishop for pastoral care and oversight of your Parish, like all the Parishes of the Diocese~and particularly in time of pastoral vacancy when the Bishop is charged to

fulfill the canonical responsibility of Rector (Title III, Canon VIII); and in his capacity as "pastor of pastors" to all the Clergy; the Bishop is committed to close involvement with each Parish in the transition process. In that regard he will:

1. Maintain continuing contact with the chairperson of the Search Committee, and will be available to meet with the full committee membership, or with any sub-committee, as frequently as is deemed advisable or necessary.

2. Offer continuing availability to the Wardens, Parish Council, and Vestry throughout the process, in order to supply whatever needs, direction and support may be required. (Note: Although it is the Bishop's prerogative, canonically, to attend and chair all meetings of the vestry when the Parish rectorship is vacant, in most cases Episcopal involvement to that degree is neither necessary nor feasible. The Bishop will be available to support, assist, and counsel as fully as is needed or desired.)

3. Covenant with you to maintain deep and prayerful interest in this vital process of calling the man of God's choosing to the rectorship of your Parish. You are important to us as brothers and sisters in Christ, as fellow Reformed Episcopalians, and as partners in the life, ministry and mission of the entire church. As we work together, it should be with the confidence that God will direct and enable us, through a mutual process, which will lead to a bright, strong, productive future in the ongoing life of this Parish, and in all of the work which we share together in the Kingdom of Christ.



# POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS & VULNERABLE ADULTS

Effective May 2022

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## 1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1. **The Policy.** The Diocese of the Central States of the Reformed Episcopal Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for those participating in all our ministry activities—especially Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults. We also seek to minimize the likelihood of unwarranted accusations of improper behavior that our organization, volunteers, and employees may experience as they fulfill their ministerial duties. To fulfill these commitments as fully as possible, the leadership of the Diocese of the Central States (“the Diocese”) has adopted the following procedures to be used, unless exception is granted by the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, by all Workers when supervising Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults and selecting ministry volunteers and new employees. Violation of this policy or non-compliance with the procedures set forth below may be the basis for adverse employment action, termination of volunteer service, or discipline under the applicable canons.

### 1.2. **The Purpose and Biblical Basis for the Policy**

- 1.2.1. The purpose of this document is to give instruction to the clergy, laity, and churches of the Diocese that will inform our decisions and methods regarding safeguarding the Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults entrusted to us, and instruct us, providing minimum standards of care and vigilance.
- 1.2.2. The Diocese accepts with deep gratitude and seriousness the trust given us by God to nurture and care for his people, especially those who are most vulnerable and in need of protection. This is never more true than when caring for our Children and Youth.
- 1.2.3. Current statistics regarding child abuse are alarming and indicate that many boys and girls are sexually abused before age eighteen. Physical and emotional abuses continue to be serious problems in our society. The effects of such abuse can damage Children at the core of who they are, and often follow them into adulthood. Abused Children are children at risk. They often become adults who suffer from low self-esteem, who are unable to form and keep healthy relationships, and who struggle to maintain healthy boundaries. As the Church, we declare that we will work together to see that proper love and care are extended to the Children entrusted to us.
- 1.2.4. Jesus teaches explicitly that Children are of much value in Kingdom terms, and

that to cause one to sin has the gravest of consequences. Caring for our Children and Youth is a sacred trust.

- 1.2.5. At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of the and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like Children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:1-6 ESV)
- 1.2.6. Mark, in his Gospel account, adds the dimension of Jesus taking the children in his arms and blessing them (Mark 10:16).
- 1.2.7. As Christian adults we are called to establish a secure environment where the perfect love of God works to cast out all fear (1 John 4:18) and the nurture and love of God are made known to all, especially to our Children and Youth. In this way we can fulfill the biblical mandate to train up our children in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6).
- 1.2.8. May God be glorified in all we do.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Child or Children**—Any minor under 13 years of age.
- 2.2. **Ecclesiastical Authority**—As defined by Article IV of the Constitution of the Diocese, ordinarily the Standing Committee and the Bishop Ordinary together.
- 2.3. **Employee**— A paid staff member of any diocesan or parish Ministry Activity.
- 2.4. **Ministry Activity**—Any activity undertaken within the diocese by a properly- designated ministry supervisor in furtherance of the diocesan mission and in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Central States. This includes activities at the diocesan, parish, and mission level.
- 2.5. **Ministry Supervisor**—A Bishop, Rector, Minister-in-Charge, or any other person or body designated by the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese to oversee any diocesan or parish Ministry Activity.
- 2.6. **Minor**—Any person under 18 years of age or any 18-year-old still enrolled in secondary school.
- 2.7. **Private Area**—The genitalia, anus, buttocks, or areola or nipple.
- 2.8. **Sexual Activity**—Includes but is not limited to the following Worker activities:
  - 2.8.1. Intentional exposure of a Worker’s unclothed Private Area to a

Specially Protected Person;

- 2.8.2. Photographing or recording by any means the unclothed or underwear-clad Private Area of a Specially Protected Person;
- 2.8.3. Intentionally communicating indecent language to a Specially Protected Person by any means, including via any communication technology; or
- 2.8.4. Any indecent conduct, intentionally done with or in the presence of a Specially Protected Person, including via any communication technology, that amounts to a form of immorality relating to sexual impurity which is grossly vulgar, obscene, and repugnant to common propriety. This includes showing pornographic images or recordings to a Specially Protected Person or viewing pornographic images or recordings in the presence of a Specially Protected Person, whether or not the Specially Protected Person is aware of the viewing.

- 2.9. **Specially Protected Persons**—Children, Youth, or vulnerable adults, as defined by this policy.
- 2.10. **Volunteer**—A non-child performing services or donating time or effort without compensation who is authorized by the Ministry Supervisor to work with Specially Protected Persons.
- 2.11. **Vulnerable Adult**—Any person 18 years of age or older who is unable to control or understand one's actions in an age-appropriate fashion or is otherwise susceptible to coercion or abuse in a way that is apparent to the reasonable observer. This may include individuals who are mentally or physically disabled as well as the elderly.
- 2.12. **Worker**—A non-child volunteer or employee of any organization within or affiliated with the Diocese who works with a Specially Protected Person.
- 2.13. **Youth**—Any minor 13 years of age or older. An 18-year-old who is still enrolled in secondary school is considered a Youth for the purposes of this policy.

### 3. PREVENTION

#### 3.1. Screening

- 3.1.1. No prospective Worker may begin service in any diocesan ministry that involves direct contact with Specially Protected Persons unless the appropriate Ministry Supervisor or a designee certifies that the prospective Worker is qualified and suitable for ministry with Specially Protected Persons.
- 3.1.2. The Ministry Supervisor or designee making the certification must consider the following:
  - 3.1.2.1. The prospective Worker's resume or application.
  - 3.1.2.2. The recommendations of at least two individuals with knowledge of

the character and experience of the prospective Worker.

- 3.1.2.3. A criminal background and sexual offender registry check on the prospective Worker completed no more than 90 days prior to employment. When appropriate in light of local circumstances and the nature and extent of anticipated contact with Specially Protected Persons, Ministry Activities should consider fingerprint-based background checks that search for applicants in various criminal databases to create a more complete criminal history profile of an applicant than is typically provided through a conventional "name-check" investigation.
- 3.1.2.4. A face-to-face interview conducted by the Ministry Supervisor or a designee, which will specifically include the question as to whether the candidate has committed, been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving physical or sexual abuse or child neglect, accused of physical or sexual abuse in a civil proceeding, or have been diagnosed with any paraphiliac psychological condition, including, but not limited to, pedophilia, voyeurism, or exhibitionism.
- 3.1.2.5. Recommendations rendered verbally and interviews not otherwise recorded will be summarized by a person with knowledge of the interaction and the summary document will be retained in accordance with the records retention requirements prescribed by this policy.
- 3.1.3. When screening procedures indicate that the candidate is a potential or actual threat to any Specially Protected Person or such persons generally, the candidate will not be further considered for any ministry position involving Specially Protected Persons.
- 3.1.4. In addition to these requirements, no person may be considered for service as a volunteer in a diocesan ministry or activity that involves Specially Protected Persons unless the person has been regularly involved for at least six consecutive months in the Ministry Activity in which the person intends to volunteer.
- 3.1.5. Ministry Supervisors will ensure that criminal background and sexual offender registry checks are conducted biannually on all Workers after completion of the first two years of service or employment.
- 3.1.6. A Ministry Supervisor or Worker must inform the appropriate supervisor and withdraw from any ministry with Specially Protected Persons when the Ministry Supervisor or Worker has committed, been arrested for, or convicted of, any crime involving physical or sexual abuse or child neglect, accused of physical or sexual abuse in a civil proceeding, or have been diagnosed with any paraphiliac psychological condition, as defined by the American Psychiatric Association, including, but not limited to, pedophilia, voyeurism, or exhibitionism. Failure to inform the appropriate supervisor of the occurrence of any of these events will

constitute a violation of this policy and be the subject of adverse personnel actions or other discipline.

3.1.7. A prospective Ministry Supervisor or Worker who is determined or admits to have knowingly made a false statement during the screening process may be terminated or have an offer of employment withdrawn without further process, except as otherwise required by the Constitution or Canons of the Church or the diocese, or by federal, state, or local law.

3.1.8. A Ministry Activity may supplement the screening procedures outlined above in accordance with section 5.1 of this policy as necessary to reflect local governance practices and to ensure notice and involvement of governing bodies, e.g., a parish vestry or a school board, when appropriate.

## 3.2. Active Protection

### 3.2.1. *Basic Rules.*

3.2.1.1. Two-Adult Rule. Except as noted below, at least two screened adult Workers must be present at every function or program involving Specially Protected Persons. This includes each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area. One or more of these adults must be 21 years of age or older. An additional adult should be present when the number of Specially Protected Persons exceeds 12.

3.2.1.2. Rule of Three. In limited circumstances when the Two-Adult Rule cannot be implemented, at least three individuals must be present, with at least one being a screened adult employee or volunteer. The Rule of Three may not be implemented without the approval of the Ministry Supervisor and may not be used in lieu of the Two-Adult Rule when any of the Specially Protected Persons under supervision are under six years of age.

### 3.2.1.3. Prohibited Activities for Ministry Supervisors and Workers.

3.2.1.3.1. Sexual activity or contact of any sort with one or more Specially Protected Persons.

3.2.1.3.2. Corporal punishment or other physical discipline of a Specially Protected Person, except as expressly authorized by a parent or responsible custodian of a Specially Protected Person, applicable state law, and any local policy for disciplinary purposes in educational settings.

3.2.1.3.3. Use of language or conduct toward or in the vicinity of Specially Protected Persons in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer to be profane, lewd, lascivious, indecent, vulgar, harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.

- 3.2.1.3.4. Use, possession, or being under the influence of tobacco products, mind-altering medication or substances, alcohol, or any illegal drugs while traveling with or in the presence of Specially Protected Persons or their parents, during church or school sponsored activities, or while working with or supervising one or more Specially Protected Persons. Use or possession of prescription medication, tobacco products, or alcohol may be authorized by a ministry supervisor in appropriate circumstances.
- 3.2.1.3.5. Distribution or sharing of tobacco products, mind-altering medication or substances, alcohol, or any illegal drugs with any Specially Protected Person.
- 3.2.1.3.6. Disclosure of observations or allegations of abuse, neglect, or non-compliance with the procedural requirements of this policy by means other than those authorized in this policy or to persons not expressly authorized by the policy to receive reports of policy violation.
- 3.2.1.3.7. Obstruction of any investigation stemming from alleged violation of this policy, including making knowingly false statements or concealing evidence of policy violation.

#### 3.2.2. *Check-In/Check-Out Procedures*

- 3.2.2.1. Workers should arrive at least 10 minutes before a scheduled activity and must remain at the location of the activity until all Specially Protected Persons in their care have been picked up by an authorized person as described in section 3.2.2.2 of this policy. No Children may be released to find their parents or allowed to wait unattended for transportation.
- 3.2.2.2. Workers may release Children in their care only to parents, guardians, or persons specifically and previously authorized to pick up the child.

#### 3.2.3. *Discipline and Physical Contact of Specially Protected Persons*

- 3.2.3.1. Physical restraint should only be used in a situation where it is reasonably necessary to protect an individual from imminent physical harm.
- 3.2.3.2. A Worker should also avoid the appearance of any impropriety—such as sitting a minor over six years of age on one’s lap, or inappropriately kissing, hugging, or embracing any Specially Protected Person.
- 3.2.3.3. A Worker must report any disciplinary problems concerning a Specially Protected Person to the Ministry Supervisor and to the appropriate parent or guardian.

#### 3.2.4. *Illness or Injuries*

- 3.2.4.1. Persons who are ill (with a fever, or a communicable disease that can be

transmitted by cough or by touch) may not participate in any Ministry Activity.

3.2.4.2. Only a suitable Worker—one who has been previously approved through our ministry screening process—may take the place of a Worker who is ill.

3.2.4.3. Specially Protected Persons who are discovered to be ill should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as practicable. If immediate return is not possible, then the person who is ill should be isolated in a manner that allows a Worker to monitor the Specially Protected Person until s/he can be returned to a parent or guardian.

3.2.4.4. A Worker will take reasonable steps to avoid contact with blood, saliva, or other bodily fluids.

3.2.4.5. A Worker or Ministry Supervisor who becomes aware of an injury to a Worker or Specially Protected Person will take steps to ensure that proper medical attention is given to the injured person and provide for continued monitoring of the remaining activity participants. The Ministry Supervisor will ensure that notice of an injury to a Specially Protected Person is provided as soon as practicable and in a manner consistent with this policy.

3.2.4.6. A Worker may assist a Specially Protected Person who has an injury that is obviously minor. In any event, the Worker with responsibility for an injured Specially Protected Person will inform the individual's parents or guardians of the injury when they pick up the injured person.

### 3.2.5. *Internet and Social Media*

3.2.5.1. Ministry Activities must employ an Internet filter that blocks access to pornographic and other “adult” websites, e-mail, chat, or other Internet-based communications. Filters may be installed on the servers of an Internet Service Provider or proxy service, as part of a local area network, or on individual computers, based on local needs and the services available.

3.2.5.2. Social Media such as Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, What's App, and other social media avenues can be effective ways for youth ministry staff and volunteer leaders to connect with students. Having personal interactions in this venue allows adults to model appropriate behavior in social media, and it forms valuable connections with students. Any Ministry Activity using Social Media in connection with Specially Protected Persons will have a proactive policy for social media and other forms of electronic communication in the context of ministry with Specially Protected Persons.

### 3.2.6. *Restroom Procedures*

3.2.6.1. For Children age 6 or older, at least one Worker should accompany

the child to the restroom. The Worker should check to make sure the facility is safe and then wait outside the restroom for the Children. If assistance is required during transit, the presence of a second adult escort is also recommended. If assistance is required in the restroom itself, the Two-Adult Rule always applies.

3.2.6.2. For Children age 5 or younger (boys and girls), the Two-Adult Rule always applies. Children should be assisted as needed in the restroom by an adult female, with the bathroom door ajar with a second screened Worker nearby for additional accountability.

3.2.6.3. Workers may not touch the private areas of a Specially Protected Person except when necessary for safety or hygiene, as in the case of changing a diaper.

3.2.7. *Secluded Areas.* Ministry Supervisors must ensure that access to secluded areas, such as unused rooms, closets, and outdoor structures, and other areas that are difficult to properly supervise, is limited and that those areas are kept locked with limited key access whenever practicable.

3.2.8. *Travel.* A Worker should avoid traveling in a vehicle one-on-one with a minor unless there is an emergency that requires such travel and the Worker informs the parents/guardians or supervisors when leaving and arriving.

3.2.9. *Youth Counseling.* A Ministry Supervisor may authorize a Worker to have one-on-one interaction with a Youth for the purposes of spiritual counsel and mentoring. Any one-on-one interaction must take place in a location where the Worker and the Youth are both visible to others. Any planned one-on-one meetings must also have the prior written approval from parents/guardians. The duration and frequency of approved one-on-one meetings may not exceed three occasions for no more than 30 minutes at a time.

## 4. RESPONSE

### 4.1. Reporting

4.1.1. Any Worker who learns of or observes a possible violation of this policy or non-compliance with the procedures prescribed above must report the suspected violation or non-compliance to the Ministry Supervisor as soon as practicable except as follows: if a Ministry Supervisor is suspected of violation or non-compliance with this policy, the Worker will directly inform the Ecclesiastical Authority as soon as practicable. The Worker should collect and assemble the following information about the violation or non-compliance: who is involved; what is alleged to have happened; where it allegedly happened; when it allegedly happened; and how it came to the attention of the Worker. Ministry Activities

may use a standardized reporting form developed locally if desired.

- 4.1.2. A Ministry Supervisor who learns of or observes a possible violation of this policy or non-compliance with the procedures prescribed above, either of which involves the neglect or physical, sexual, or verbal abuse of a Specially Protected Person, will notify the Ecclesiastical Authority as soon as practicable. The Ministry Supervisor reporting the allegations to the Ecclesiastical Authority will provide any information received or collected by the Ministry Supervisor from Workers or other persons with knowledge, and in any event will include the information specified in paragraph 1 above. Technical or harmless violations or non-compliance need not be reported to the Ecclesiastical Authority but should be noted in the personnel or employment records of the Worker determined to be responsible for the violation or non-compliance.
- 4.1.3. Failure of a Worker or Ministry Leader to report a possible violation of this policy or non-compliance with the procedures prescribed above is itself a violation of this policy and may be the subject of adverse personnel action or other discipline.
- 4.1.4. The Ministry Supervisor will also notify the parent or guardian of the person who is the object of the neglect or abuse unless the parent or guardian is the suspected perpetrator, in which case the Ministry Supervisor will defer to local law enforcement authorities or social work services as to whether to notify the parent or guardian.
- 4.1.5. Ministry Supervisors and Workers will also comply with any applicable state or local reporting requirements concerning the suspected neglect or abuse of Specially Protected Persons except as otherwise limited by applicable canon law or evidentiary privilege in the jurisdiction in which the Ministry Activity is located.
- 4.1.6. In a situation involving suspected neglect or abuse of a Specially Protected Person that is not subject to a state or local reporting requirement, a Ministry Supervisor may not report the suspected activity to law enforcement or social work services until the following conditions are satisfied:
  - 4.1.6.1. The Ministry Supervisor notifies the Ecclesiastical Authority of the intention to report the neglect or abuse to the authorities.
  - 4.1.6.2. The Ecclesiastical Authority consults with the Chancellor, if one be appointed, or otherwise obtains legal advice concerning the allegations and the propriety of discretionary reporting under the circumstances. If practicable, this consultation will be completed within 72 hours of receiving notice of the allegations.
  - 4.1.6.3. The Ecclesiastical Authority authorizes the Ministry Supervisor to report the allegations to law enforcement authorities or social work services,

as appropriate. In the alternative, the Ecclesiastical Authority may direct the Chancellor or another legal representative to report the suspected abuse or neglect.

4.1.7. Ministry Supervisors and the Ecclesiastical Authority must promptly notify or cause to be notified the Ministry Activity's insurance carrier (general and/or professional liability insurance) upon notice of neglect or abuse proscribed by this policy.

4.1.8. Ministry Supervisors should refrain from publicly identifying or confirming the identity of the victims and subjects of any allegation or investigation or the nature of the allegations at issue. Media inquiries should be directed to the Ecclesiastical Authority.

4.1.9. A Ministry Activity may supplement the reporting procedures outlined above in accordance with section 5.1 of this policy as necessary to reflect local governance practices and to ensure notice and involvement of governing bodies, e.g., a parish vestry or a school board, when appropriate.

#### **4.2. Investigation**

4.2.1. The Diocese considers any allegation of abuse or neglect a serious matter, and each allegation will be fully investigated.

4.2.2. Any Ministry Supervisor or Worker who is suspected of abuse or neglect will be suspended from ministry with Specially Protected Persons during the pendency of any investigations being conducted by civil authorities or the diocese and will be instructed to avoid contact with the alleged victim(s) while suspended.

4.2.3. Allegations reported to civil authorities will be investigated by the responsible law enforcement organization or social work services. Ministry Supervisors and Workers are expected to cooperate with the investigating authorities.

4.2.4. Upon completion of the investigation of allegations of abuse or neglect of a Specially Protected Person by civil authorities or, if there is no investigation by civil authorities, the Ecclesiastical Authority will, as soon as practicable, appoint a Board of Inquiry constituted as provided under the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church ("the Church"). The Board will inquire into the content, cause, and validity of the allegations at issue and report its findings to the Ecclesiastical Authority within the period allotted by canon. The Board may rely upon previously conducted investigation by the civil authorities or the Ministry Activity, independently collect statements and evidence, hire an outside investigator, or some combination of these investigatory options. The Ecclesiastical Authority may also direct additional investigation into matters not addressed by the civil authorities in their investigation. Upon receipt of the report of the Board, the Chancellor or other legal

counsel will review it to ensure that the Board's findings are supported by a preponderance of the evidence in the record and will forward the result of the legal review to the Ecclesiastical Authority as soon as practicable.

- 4.2.5. A Ministry Supervisor or Worker who admits to abuse or neglect of a Specially Protected Person will ordinarily be terminated from employment or volunteer service immediately unless entitled to other due process under the Canons of the Church or the Diocese. The Ecclesiastical Authority will, after consultation with the Chancellor or other legal counsel, determine whether further investigation or additional proceedings are necessary considering the nature of the allegations and content of any admission.
- 4.2.6. A Ministry Supervisor or Worker who has been found by a Diocesan Board of Inquiry to have abused or neglected a Specially Protected Person will be terminated from employment or volunteer service immediately upon completion of the legal review of the report unless entitled to other due process under the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church or the Diocese, or if the Ecclesiastical Authority determines otherwise.
- 4.2.7. Upon receipt of a report of substantiated allegations of abuse or neglect from a Board of Inquiry or a presentment alleging abuse or neglect of a Specially Protected Person, the Ecclesiastical Authority will proceed as provided in Title II of the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church.
- 4.2.8. Substantiated non-compliance with this policy that does not amount to abuse or neglect may nevertheless be the basis for adverse personnel action or other discipline as determined to be appropriate by the Ministry Supervisor (in the case of a Worker) or the Ecclesiastical Authority (in the case of a Ministry Supervisor).
- 4.2.9. If the Board of Inquiry determines that allegations of abuse or neglect are unsubstantiated and the Chancellor or other legal counsel concurs with that determination, the record of the review and determination will be retained by the Ecclesiastical Authority in accordance with the retention requirements prescribed in this policy. In the case of unsubstantiated allegations of abuse or neglect, the Ecclesiastical Authority will inform or cause to be informed any Ministry Supervisor or Worker that was the subject of unsubstantiated allegations and inquiry. The Ecclesiastical Authority will confer with the Ministry Supervisor of the entity in which the allegations arose as to the most appropriate means of informing the affected community of the results of the investigation.

### **4.3. Pastoral Care**

- 4.3.1. The Ecclesiastical Authority will ensure that all parties to the allegations receive any necessary pastoral care and assistance.
- 4.3.2. If necessary due to the nature or breadth of the allegations, the Ecclesiastical

Authority may authorize clergy from other ministry activities to provide pastoral care to affected persons.

- 4.3.3. Neither the Bishop nor any Ministry Supervisor who is the Presbyter to the affected community should hear confession or engage in any rite of reconciliation of a penitent with an individual who has been accused of abuse or neglect of a Specially Protected Person; in that circumstance, the Ecclesiastical Authority will designate another Presbyter to provide appropriate pastoral care to the affected individual.

## 5. ADMINISTRATION

### 5.1. Supplementation

- 5.1.1. Ministry Activities may supplement sections 3, 4, and 5 of this policy as necessary to reflect local conditions, governance structures, personnel, and programs.
- 5.1.2. Any supplementary provisions must be consistent with this policy and may not purport to rescind any requirement established by the policy.
- 5.1.3. Any supplement must be approved by the governing authority of the Ministry Activity to which the supplement will apply, and the approved supplement will be provided to the Ecclesiastical Authority as soon as practicable after enactment.

### 5.2. Exceptions

- 5.2.1. The Ecclesiastical Authority may grant a partial exception to this policy upon the request of a Ministry Activity covered by this policy.
- 5.2.2. Any request for an exception to this policy must include the following:
  - 5.2.2.1. Reference to the specific provision(s) of this policy from which relief is sought;
  - 5.2.2.2. A description of the specific circumstances of the Ministry Activity that necessitate the exception to policy;
  - 5.2.2.3. An explanation of the alternative means by which the Ministry Activity will adequately safeguard Specially Protected Persons if the exception is granted;
- 5.2.3. The exception request may extend to multiple provisions of this policy, but should also be narrowly tailored and consistent with the protective framework established by this policy.
- 5.2.4. The Ecclesiastical Authority may grant the request in whole or in part, or entirely deny the request.

### **5.3. Publication.**

- 5.3.1. Each Ministry Supervisor will ensure that this policy and any local supplementation is readily available to all persons who participate in or are otherwise involved in each Ministry Activity under their supervision and is provided to each new Worker covered by this policy.
- 5.3.2. Toward this end, a copy of this policy and any local supplementation will be posted and readily accessible on any website or social media platforms maintained by the ministry activities within the diocese.

### **5.4. Training**

- 5.4.1. All Ministry Supervisors and Workers will review this policy before engaging for the first time in any activity with Specially Protected Persons in a particular Ministry Activity and biannually thereafter.
  - 5.4.1.1. The Ecclesiastical Authority may direct a Ministry Supervisor or Worker to review the policy or complete other training, when necessary and appropriate.
  - 5.4.1.2. Ministry Supervisors may also direct a Worker to review the policy or complete other training, when necessary and appropriate under the circumstances.
- 5.4.2. Ministry Supervisors will ensure that they and all Workers and other Ministry Supervisors are aware of any state or local mandatory reporting requirements that are applicable to the Ministry Activity. Ministry Supervisors may obtain assistance in interpreting state or local reporting requirements by consultation with the Ecclesiastical Authority or legal counsel
- 5.4.3. Ministry Supervisors may obtain or conduct additional training relevant to the protection of Specially Protected Persons as necessary and appropriate. Examples include, but are not limited to, the National Children's Advocacy Center's "Child Sexual Abuse 101" or "Recognizing & Responding to Suspicions of Child Maltreatment" from Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina at [preventchildabusenc-lms.org](http://preventchildabusenc-lms.org).
- 5.4.4. Upon completion of the required review of this policy, each Ministry Supervisor and Worker will certify in writing completion of the review as provided by the policy of the specific Ministry Activity.

### **5.5. Records**

- 5.5.1. Each Ministry Supervisor will store any application materials received— application form, background checks, reference check, notes from interviews, etc.— in a secure location for at least five years after receipt or the termination of employment or volunteer services for a particular person, whichever is later.

5.5.2. Each Ministry Supervisor will maintain or cause to be maintained the necessary certification records of initial, annual, or ad hoc review of this policy as completed by each Worker and other Ministry Supervisor for at least 30 years after the termination of employment or volunteer services for a particular person.

5.5.3. The Ecclesiastical Authority will maintain or cause to be maintained the records and determinations relating to any Board of Inquiry appointed and convened under this policy for at least 30 years after the inquiry is completed.

## **5.6. Revision**

5.6.1. The Ecclesiastical Authority, with the assistance of the Chancellor or other counsel, if necessary, will regularly review this policy and the procedures established within it. If necessary, the policies and procedures may be modified in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Church and the diocese. When changes are made, Ministry Supervisors will communicate them to all Workers affected by the policy changes.

5.6.2. The Ecclesiastical Authority may appoint an ad hoc committee to assist in its review of this policy and its implementation within the Diocese. The committee should be composed of spiritually mature persons, lay and ordained, with expertise in matters concerning Specially Protected Persons, education, administration, training, and the law.

## **5.7. Interpretation**

5.7.1. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to be in conflict with or to eliminate or limit in any way the constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and canonical responsibilities and obligations of the Ecclesiastical Authority in whole or in part, a Rector or Minister-in-Charge, or a parish Vestry or equivalent body.

5.7.2. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to be in conflict with or to eliminate or limit in any way the statutory and regulatory responsibilities and obligations under federal or state law of the governing bodies of any non-parochial Ministry Activities covered by this policy.



# CLERGY AND DEACONESS INFORMATION

Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary.

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Name with Honorific: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Order of Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_ Retired: Yes  No:

Date(s) Ordained or Set Apart: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Parish and Position: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminary/Other Education: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# APPLICATION FOR A LAY MINISTER'S LICENSE

Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary.

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Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Rector/Vicar: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been a member of this Parish? \_\_\_\_\_ And of the REC? \_\_\_\_\_

Baptism Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Confirmation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Church and Location \_\_\_\_\_

License(s) Desired: Lay Reader  Lay Reader/Preacher  Lay Reader/Communion Visitor   
Lay Evangelist

Training Received from: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Training Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Seeking a Lay Reader's License: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Endorsing Signature of Rector/Vicar of Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments of Endorsing Rector/Vicar: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Bishop's Use Only Below Line*

*The Bishop may return a signed copy as sufficient evidence of License or of disapproval.*

APPROVED  DATE LICENSE EXPIRES \_\_\_\_\_ DISAPPROVED

Bishop's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# DECLARATION OF A COUPLE DESIRING HOLY MATRIMONY

This declaration is required to be signed by any couple desirous to be joined in Holy Matrimony by any Reformed Episcopal minister before they be so joined. A copy should be retained by the Parish.

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To all present in the Church Catholic,

In accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, the below signed do declare the following:

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 Holy Scripture and in the book of Common Prayer. We believe it is for the purpose of the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their spiritual and physical nurture, for mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, 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.

Signed and witnessed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_.

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Witness Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



# PETITION FOR MARRIAGE IN THE CHURCH OF DIVORCED PERSONS

A separate form is to be filled out for each party of the proposed marriage to whom this circumstance applies.  
Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary.

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Petitioner's Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Legal Name of Intended Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner's Present Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Age of Intended Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Intended Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Petitioner's Present Status in the Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of ALL Previous Marriages: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates and States of ALL Divorce Decrees: \_\_\_\_\_

In an accompanying letter, explain the causes for the failure of the previous marriage(s), as determined through your counseling, and your assessment of the probability of these problems occurring again. Such letter is also required from each Petitioner.

Was the Petitioner previously married in the Church and instructed in the Church's teachings on marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

Have all obligations to former spouses and children been satisfied? \_\_\_\_\_ Are both parties willing to continue any ongoing obligations? \_\_\_\_\_

Have both parties been instructed in the Church's teaching concerning marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

Do both parties freely and knowingly consent to this marriage without Fraud, Coercion, Mistake of Partner's Identity, or Mental Reservation? \_\_\_\_\_ Have all other canonical and civil obligations been met? \_\_\_\_\_

As a summation of your feelings, would you:

NOT CARE TO OFFICIATE AT THIS PROPOSED MARRIAGE?

GLADLY OFFICIATE AT THIS PROPOSED MARRIAGE?

OFFICIATE WITHOUT FEELINGS EITHER WAY?

OFFICIATE WILLINGLY BUT WITH SOME RESERVATION?

Presbyter's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Church: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Bishop's Use Only Below Line*

*The Bishop may return a signed copy as sufficient evidence of approval or disapproval.*

PETITION APPROVED       PETITION DISAPPROVED

Bishop's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY IN THE ORDER OF DEACONESSSES

Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary.

Once an applicant's provided references are checked and cleared, the applicant will be required to submit to a background check and background referencing by Oxford Document Management at the applicant's expense. The office of the Ordinary will inform the applicant of the current cost and procedure.

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Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Employment/Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Rector/Vicar: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been a member of this Parish? \_\_\_\_\_ And of the REC? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been resident in this Diocese? \_\_\_\_\_

Baptized: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Church and Location \_\_\_\_\_

By whom? \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach certificate or other verification.)

Confirmed: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Church and Location \_\_\_\_\_

By Bishop \_\_\_\_\_ Of (jurisdiction) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Attach certificate or other verification.)

Admitted to the Holy Communion: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever applied for admission as a candidate for the Order of Deaconesses in any other Diocese, Missionary District, or any other jurisdiction, denomination, or church? If so, please indicate below where and when such application was made:

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the disposition of that request? \_\_\_\_\_

What Lay positions have you held? (Check all that apply.)

Lay Reader  Acolyte  Lector  Teacher  Vestry  Warden  Parish Council   
Choir  Catechist  Youth Ministry  Short-term Missions  Campus Ministry   
Other (Explain)

What do you think are your gifts for ministry as a Deaconess?

❖ On separate page(s), please indicate the grounds on which you are moved to seek the Sacred Ministry? Be as specific as you can.

#### FAMILY INFORMATION

Married  Single  Widow  Divorced

Husband's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Husband's Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

When and Where Baptized: \_\_\_\_\_ Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_

When and Where Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_ By whom: \_\_\_\_\_

Children at Home (List below.)

Name	Date of Birth	Baptized	Confirmed
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Is your husband supportive of your desire to seek this office? \_\_\_\_\_

Is he a member of the Reformed Episcopal Church, active in a local Parish? \_\_\_\_\_

Husband's Educational Background (Check highest level attained.)

High School  Undergraduate College  Bachelor's Degree  Advanced Degree

Field of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

What gifts for ministry do you think your husband possesses?

*Note that at the request of the Bishop, a meeting with both the applicant and her husband may be requested as part of the discernment process.*

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

List every institution of higher learning in the spaces below, beginning with the most recent and working backwards to the oldest. Attach Copies of Transcripts.

Institution Attended	Dates (from/to)	Field of Study	GPA	Degree Awarded

*Use additional sheets if needed.*

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

List every employer in the spaces below, beginning with the most recent and working backwards to the oldest.

Employer	Dates	Position	Duties	Telephone

*Use additional sheets if needed.*

## BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

*Please answer truthfully. No answer will automatically disqualify an applicant. Failure to disclose negative information will result in disciplinary action or dismissal. Use additional sheets if necessary.*

1. Excluding minor traffic violations, have you ever been arrested for a felony or misdemeanor?  
Yes  No  Date \_\_\_\_\_ What was the result of this arrest?
  
2. Have you ever been terminated from employment for theft, moral turpitude, or other wrongful behavior? Yes  No  What were the circumstances?
  
3. Have you ever been under the care of a Psychologist or Psychiatrist? Yes  No  What were the dates and circumstances?
  
4. Have you ever been treated for drug and/or alcohol abuse? Yes  No  If yes, please give details and dates.
  
5. Have you been diagnosed with any serious or debilitating illness which might prevent you from fulfilling your duties in ministry? Yes  No
  
6. Would financial compensation be necessary for your well-being in order to serve in this office?  
Yes  No

## REFERENCES

*List the names of your Rector and a minimum of two women communicants of the Church who have known you for at least three years and can attest to your character and Christian walk in testimonial letters concerning your fitness for the duties of a Deaconess. The letter of recommendation from your Rector must include a declaration that you are a communicant in good standing. Attach testimonials.*

Name	Address	Telephone



## APPLICATION FOR POSTULANCY

Mail or scan as PDF and email to both the Bishop Ordinary and the Archdeacon.  
Once an applicant's provided references are checked and cleared, the applicant will be required to submit to a background check and background referencing by Oxford Document Management at the applicant's expense. The office of the Ordinary will inform the applicant of the current cost and procedure.

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Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Employment/Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Rector/Vicar: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been a member of this Parish? \_\_\_\_\_ And of the REC? \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been resident in this Diocese? \_\_\_\_\_

Baptized: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Church and Location \_\_\_\_\_

By whom? \_\_\_\_\_ (Attach certificate or other verification.)

Confirmed: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Church and Location \_\_\_\_\_

By Bishop \_\_\_\_\_ Of (jurisdiction) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Attach certificate or other verification.)

Admitted to the Holy Communion: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever applied for admission as a Postulant or candidate for the ordained ministry in any other Diocese, Missionary District, or any other jurisdiction, denomination, or church? If so, please indicate below where and when such application was made:

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the disposition of that request? \_\_\_\_\_

What Lay positions have you held? (Check all that apply.)

Lay Reader  Acolyte  Lector  Teacher  Vestry  Warden  Parish Council   
Choir  Catechist  Youth Ministry  Short-term Missions  Campus Ministry   
Other (Explain)

What do you think are your gifts for ministry?

❖ On separate pages, please discuss:

- 1) The grounds on which you are moved to seek the Sacred Ministry and how your sense of calling has been experienced both internally and externally and
- 2) Your plans for formal theological training in preparation for Orders.

#### FAMILY INFORMATION

Married  Single  Widower  Divorced

Wife's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

When and Where Baptized: \_\_\_\_\_ Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_

When and Where Confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_ By whom: \_\_\_\_\_

Children at Home (List below.)

Name	Date of Birth	Baptized	Confirmed
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Is your wife supportive of your desire to seek Ordination? \_\_\_\_\_

Is she a member of the Reformed Episcopal Church, active in a local Parish? \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's Educational Background (Check highest level attained.)

High School  Undergraduate College  Bachelor's Degree  Advanced Degree

Field of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

What gifts for ministry do you think your wife possesses?

*Note that at the request of the Bishop, a meeting with both the applicant and his wife may be requested as part of the discernment process.*

### EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

List every institution of higher learning in the spaces below, beginning with the most recent and working backwards to the oldest. Attach Copies of Transcripts.

Institution Attended	Dates (from/to)	Field of Study	GPA	Degree Awarded

*Use additional sheets if needed.*

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

List every employer in the spaces below, beginning with the most recent and working backwards to the oldest.

Employer	Dates	Position	Duties	Telephone

Use additional sheets if needed.

### BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer truthfully. No answer will automatically disqualify an applicant. Failure to disclose negative information will result in disciplinary action or dismissal. Use additional sheets if necessary.

1. Excluding minor traffic violations, have you ever been arrested for a felony or misdemeanor? Yes  No  Date \_\_\_\_\_ What was the result of this arrest?
  
2. Have you ever been terminated from employment for theft, moral turpitude, or other wrongful behavior? Yes  No  What were the circumstances?
  
3. Have you ever been under the care of a Psychologist or Psychiatrist? Yes  No  What were the dates and circumstances?
  
4. Have you ever been treated for drug and/or alcohol abuse? Yes  No  If yes, please give details and dates.
  
5. Have you been diagnosed with any serious or debilitating illness which might prevent you from fulfilling your duties in ministry? Yes  No
  
6. If you have been previously married, are there children from that marriage who are covered by a child support agreement? Yes  No

What monthly support is required? \_\_\_\_\_ Are these payments current? Yes  No

### REFERENCES

Other than your Rector/Vicar and Vestry, list three individuals who have known you for at least three years and who can attest to your basic character and Christian walk.

Name	Address	Telephone



# APPLICATION FOR LICENSE TO OFFICIATE WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF THE CENTRAL STATES

Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary.

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Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese and Jurisdiction in which you are canonically resident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Bishop: \_\_\_\_\_

Order: Bishop  Presbyter  Deacon  In good standing? \_\_\_\_\_

Is your Bishop amenable to your officiating within this Diocese? \_\_\_\_\_

## Type of License Sought:

Supply Clergy

Assistant Clergy within a Parish  Which Parish? \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of work to be done as an Assistant: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Rector's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I affirm that the above information is accurate, and I affirm as well that I will abide within the Discipline, Doctrine, and Worship of this Church so long as I function ministerially within it.

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Bishop's Use Only Below Line*

*The Bishop may return a signed copy as sufficient evidence of License or of disapproval.*

APPROVED  DATE LICENSE EXPIRES \_\_\_\_\_

DISAPPROVED

Bishop's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# RECTOR AND VESTRY CERTIFICATION OF AN APPLICANT FOR POSTULANCY

As per the requirement of Canon 1 of the Reformed Episcopal Church.  
Mail or email PDF to both the Bishop Ordinary and the Archdeacon.

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To the Right Reverend Peter Manto, Bishop of the Central States.

We, whose names are hereunder written, testify to our belief (based on personal knowledge or

on evidence satisfactory to us) that \_\_\_\_\_  
is sober, honest, and godly, and that he is a communicant of this Church in good standing. We do  
furthermore declare that, in our opinion, he possesses such qualifications as fit him to be admitted  
a Postulant for Holy Orders.

Signatures:

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

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*Further comments may be made below if desired.*

*Rector/Vicar: In support of the above certification, please attach a brief statement of your disposition as to the applicant's postulancy. Include, for examples: What are his strengths and observed gifts for ministry? How has he been serving to this point in the Parish? In what areas does he possibly need to grow as he is formed for ordination? Do you hold any reservations as to his postulancy?*



## APPLICATION FOR HOLY ORDERS

As per the requirement of Canon 5 of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

Mail or email PDF to the President of the Standing Committee.

If not completed during postulancy, the candidate may be required to submit to a background check and background referencing by Oxford Document Management at the applicant's expense. The office of the Ordinary will inform the Candidate of the current cost and procedure if required.

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Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Rector or Vicar: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Order for Which You Are Applying:

Diaconate (Transitional)

Diaconate (Permanent)

Presbyterate

*Further comments may be made below if desired.*

*Applicant, please refer to the appropriate section of the Customary and the pertinent Canons to be sure that the proper documentation has been requested and sent to the Standing Committee. Should you have questions, feel free to contact the Standing Committee President.*



# PRESBYTER CERTIFICATION OF AN APPLICANT FOR THE ORDER OF DEACON

As per the requirement of Canon 5 and Canon 6 of the Reformed Episcopal Church.  
Mail or email PDF to the President of the Standing Committee.

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To the Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Central States.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a Presbyter of the Reformed Episcopal Church,

hereby certify that I am personally acquainted with \_\_\_\_\_

and that I believe him to be well qualified to Minister in the Office of Deacon, to the glory of God  
and the edification of His Church.

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

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

*Further comments may be made below if desired.*



# RECTOR AND VESTRY CERTIFICATION OF AN APPLICANT FOR THE ORDER OF DEACON

As per the requirement of Canon 5 of the Reformed Episcopal Church.  
Mail or email PDF to the President of the Standing Committee.

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To the Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Central States.

We do certify that, after due inquiry, we are well assured and believe that

\_\_\_\_\_, for the space of three years last past, hath lived a sober, honest, and godly life, and that he is loyal to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church, and does not hold anything contrary thereto. And, moreover, we think him a person worthy to be admitted to the sacred Order of Deacons.

Signatures:

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

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\_\_\_\_\_

*This certificate must be attested by the Minister of the Parish, or by the Clerk or Secretary of the Vestry, as follows:*

I hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is a member of Parish in \_\_\_\_\_ and a communicant of the same; that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry duly convened at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ and that the names attached are those of all (or a majority of all) the members of the Vestry.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed) The Minister of the above Parish or Clerk or Secretary of Vestry.



# RECTOR AND VESTRY CERTIFICATION OF AN APPLICANT FOR THE ORDER OF PRESBYTER

As per the requirement of Canon 6 of the Reformed Episcopal Church.  
Mail email PDF to the President of the Standing Committee.

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To the Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Central States.

We do certify that, after due inquiry, we are well assured and believe that

The Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, Deacon since the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

in the year \_\_\_\_\_ being the date of his ordination to the Diaconate (or for the space of three years last past), hath lived a sober, honest, and godly life, and hath not written, taught, or held anything contrary to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church. And, moreover, we think him a person worthy to be admitted to the sacred Order of Presbyters.

Signatures:

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

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*This certificate must be attested by the Minister of the Parish, or by the Clerk, or Secretary of the Vestry, as follows:*

I hereby certify that The Reverend \_\_\_\_\_ is a resident of \_\_\_\_\_

Parish in \_\_\_\_\_; that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry

duly convened at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ and that the names attached are those of all (or a majority of all) the members of the Vestry.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signed) The Minister of the above Parish or Clerk or Secretary of Vestry.



# ARTICLE OF ASSOCIATION AND CONFORMITY OF A NEW MISSION OR PARISH

As per the requirement of Diocesan Title II, Canon I.  
Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary and the President of the Standing Committee.

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To the Right Reverend Peter Manto, Bishop of the Central States,  
and to the Standing Committee of the same.

We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves for the purpose of maintaining the worship of  
God and the preaching of the Gospel according to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the  
Reformed Episcopal Church, under the name of

\_\_\_\_\_ in the city of \_\_\_\_\_ in the

State of \_\_\_\_\_, and we promise conformity to the Constitution and  
Canons of The Reformed Episcopal Church and to the Diocese of the Central States. We do  
hereby authorize the Chairman and Secretary of this meeting to certify this action, in writing, to  
both the Bishop of the Diocese of the Central States and to the standing Committee of the  
Diocese of the Central States.

Signatures:

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

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*Attach more sheets as needed.*



# APPLICATION FOR THE RECEPTION OF CLERGY

Mail or email PDF to the Bishop Ordinary.

Please print clearly. While all statements on this application will be treated with confidentiality, copies will be made for each examiner. Answer all questions, using additional sheets of paper where necessary.

Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application Fee:** Before sending this application, please consult the Bishop to the Ordinary regarding the current application fee (for background check and administrative expense), which is due before the application can be considered.

Full Legal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Status Sought: Postulant for Holy Orders  Reception as Deacon  Reception as Presbyter

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hometown (city and state): \_\_\_\_\_

## EDUCATION

High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Attended: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Minor \_\_\_\_\_

College Honors: \_\_\_\_\_

Extracurriculars: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminary: \_\_\_\_\_ Years attended: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Graduated: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ Honors/Special Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Advanced Degrees (what degrees and where): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MILITARY SERVICE**

Branch: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank or Rating at Separation: \_\_\_\_\_

Discharge Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Discharge: \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME AND FAMILY**

Married  Single  Widower  Divorced  Wife's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's Education: \_\_\_\_\_ Wife's Vocation: \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's Avocation, Interests, Activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Have you ever been legally separated? \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names (ages in parentheses): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Children's Education or Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Children's Interests and/or Activities: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH**

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Health Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Physical: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician and Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been or are you now being treated for any of the following?

Hypertension \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment \_\_\_\_\_ Completed/Ongoing? \_\_\_\_\_

Heart Disease \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment \_\_\_\_\_ Completed/Ongoing? \_\_\_\_\_

Sexually Trans. Disease \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment \_\_\_\_\_ Completed/Ongoing? \_\_\_\_\_

Drug Addiction \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment \_\_\_\_\_ Completed/Ongoing? \_\_\_\_\_

Alcoholism \_\_\_\_\_ Treatment \_\_\_\_\_ Completed/Ongoing? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been diagnosed as suffering depression or a nervous disorder? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the diagnosis? \_\_\_\_\_

When was it made? \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Source and Outcome of Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever seriously entertained suicidal desires or intent? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been counseled for spousal abuse? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any physical or mental conditions that might challenge you in carrying out ordained ministry?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### COMMUNITY INTEREST

Are you a member of a service or social organization (describe)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you politically active? \_\_\_\_\_ For whom and how? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been arrested? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

On what charge? \_\_\_\_\_ Convicted? \_\_\_\_\_ Jail/Prison Time? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you active in your community? If yes, how so? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### PROFESSIONAL

In what professions did you labor before seeking ordained ministry? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you presently employed? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Phone or Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

**ECCLESIASTICAL** *(Please, include dates where possible.)*

Baptized? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed? \_\_\_\_\_ By Whom? \_\_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_

Current Parish Membership (church name, address, phone): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been under church discipline or excommunicated? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever attempted to enter into Holy Orders through another Anglican jurisdiction or otherwise? If so, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PROFESSIONAL** *(Only for those who are ordained.)*

Date Ordained Deacon: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Ordained Presbyter: \_\_\_\_\_

Ordained by Whom and in What Denomination or Jurisdiction: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

❖ On a separate sheet, please detail the process of preparation and examination for your ordination.

Current Parish and Denomination

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title or Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Member in Lay Leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving? On good terms? \_\_\_\_\_

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

Previous Parish or Denomination

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title or Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Member in Lay Leadership during Your Incumbency: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving? On good terms? \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Incumbency: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Parish and Denomination

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title or Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Member in Lay Leadership during Your Incumbency: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving? On good terms? \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Incumbency: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Parish and Denomination

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title or Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Member in Lay Leadership during Your Incumbency: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving? On good terms? \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Incumbency: \_\_\_\_\_

DOCTRINAL (Only for those who are ordained.)

*Please answer all questions on a separate sheet, as completely as possible. Please type your answers.*

1. Distinguish the orders of ministry. In the course of your discussion, note the number and functions of the orders.
2. What brought you to the Reformed Episcopal Church?
3. What is your position on liturgical worship? Which of the following Prayer Books best expresses your ideas on liturgical worship and why (1662, 1785/1786, 1928, 1933, ASB, AAPB)?
4. Articulate your views on the Lord's Supper.
5. Articulate your position on the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Do you believe in infant Baptism? Are your own children baptized?
6. What are your views on the inerrancy and infallibility of Holy Scripture? What is your position on verbal inspiration? What is the authority of the Church regarding the Scriptures?
7. How do you understand the Creation account in Genesis chapters one and two?
8. How would you assess your familiarity with the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion? Do you embrace the Articles? Are there areas of reservation or disagreement and, if so, where and why?
9. Summarize your position on the Doctrine of the Church. Compare and contrast episcopacy with other forms of church polity.
10. What are your views on clerical attire? Include a discussion of both the use of the clerical collar and liturgical vestments. What is your present practice?
11. What is your position on the gifts of the Spirit?
12. Are you willing to conform yourself to the traditions and customs of the Reformed Episcopal Church so long as they are not contrary to Holy Scripture



# STUDY GUIDE FOR THE DEACONESS EXAMINATION

Prepared by the Examining Chaplains of the Reformed Episcopal Diocese of Mid-America and approved for use by the Examining Chaplains of the Diocese of the Central States.

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## Introduction

### *Areas of Study*

The Deaconess examination, which consists of written responses to a series of questions and an oral defense, will focus on the main areas of study identified in the *Handbook for the Order of Deaconesses*, specifically the following:

1. **Holy Scripture:** The Bible in English; introduction to and contents of the various books; special knowledge of at least one Gospel and one Epistle.
2. **Church History:** A general outline, including the History of the Church in the United States, and special knowledge of the first five centuries, and to include the history of Deaconesses both ancient and modern.
3. **Christian Missions:** History; present extent and methods; at least one missionary biography.
4. **Doctrine:** Contents and teaching of the Book of Common Prayer, including preparation for the Sacraments.
5. **Christian Ethics and Moral Theology:** Particular emphasis on matters pertaining to the counseling of women and children.
6. **Ministration:** The office and work of a Deaconess; Parish Work and Organization.

### *Purpose and Rationale*

The two-fold purpose of this study guide is 1) to provide reliable resources on the topics covered in the Deaconess exam and 2) to assist the Deaconess candidate in recognizing the areas of focus within those topics that are relevant to her calling. Neither the exam nor the study guide can be comprehensive on any one of these topics; for example, Scripture, the first topic, would in itself require a lifetime of study only to scratch the surface. Therefore, the study guide covers a basic body of knowledge about Holy Scripture that is expected of a woman who is preparing to be set apart.

Diligent study in the matters covered by this guide, and subsequently by the examination, will prepare the Deaconess candidate to begin her pursuit of the work she is assigned; continued study will enrich the life of the Deaconess and enhance her ministry to an even greater extent. In particular, the Deaconess should develop a thorough knowledge of matters concerning the Church's ministry to women and children, for that is the specific area in which she is called to assist her spiritual fathers in carrying out the Great Commission mandate to spread the Gospel and to disciple the people of God.

In that regard, an additional advantage of the study guide and examination is that they equip the Candidate to educate others on the benefits of the Office of Deaconess to the life of the Church. Further, an awareness of the Scriptural basis and historical background of the Office is necessary to the development of a clear stance on the issue of women's ordination. A Deaconess should be able to defend the Office against charges on the one hand that it is irrelevant and on the other hand that it leads inevitably to women's ordination. The Office of Deaconess is neither an empty honor

nor a stepping stone, and it is certainly not a slippery slope. It is a high calling that rests upon the firm foundation of Scripture and tradition. Deaconesses serve an important function in the ongoing life of the Anglican Church.

***Notes on completing this study:***

1. Wherever the Book of Common Prayer or BCP is mentioned, the intended reference is *The Reformed Episcopal Church Book of Common Prayer*, available in hard-cover format from Reformed Episcopal Publication Society or online in PDF format (see Appendix).
2. Many of the other recommended resources are also available free online in PDF or HTML format. An online resource will be maintained at [www.recdss.org/dssresources.html](http://www.recdss.org/dssresources.html), with links to available resources.
3. Within the lists of recommended resources for each topic, resources that cover similar topics are marked with an asterisk.
4. The Candidate may expect the examining chaplain who assists with her preparation to suggest additional resources, especially books or other materials that will assist her in the study of her chosen epistle and Gospel.

## **Holy Scripture**

The section of the exam covering Holy Scripture has two main areas of focus. The first area comprises the scholarship surrounding the very idea of scripture itself—its divine Author and the contribution of human authors, its historical and cultural context, and what sets it apart from other writings. The second area is the actual content of the Bible, its overall message of redemption and the major themes of the individual books of the canon.

***Recommended Resources***

1. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, R. K. Harrison
2. *Introduction to the New Testament*, Donald Guthrie
3. *That You May Prosper*, Ray Sutton
4. *Revelation and the Bible*, Carl F. H. Henry \*
5. *Biblical Interpretation Past and Present*, Gerald Bray \*
6. *A High View of Scripture? The Authority of the Bible and the Formation of New Testament Canon*, Craig D. Allert \*
7. *God Has Spoken: Revelation and the Bible*, J.I. Packer \*
8. *Four Gospels, One Jesus: A Symbolic Reading*, Richard A. Burridge
9. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, F.F. Bruce
10. Applicable Cranmer Theological House courses, particularly the following:
  - a. *Scripture and Hermeneutics*
  - b. *Old Testament Introduction*
  - c. *New Testament Introduction*
  - d. *Bible Studies Method*
  - e. *English Bible Survey*
  - f. Content courses in the Old Testament and New Testament

***Concepts to Study***

1. The inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture, including the difference between the two concepts and the implications of each
2. What it means for the Scriptures to be inspired, including the nature of the contribution of human authors in the writing process

3. The relationship between the written Word and the Living Word, Jesus Christ, and why this is important
4. The development of the Gospel message from Genesis 3:15 throughout the Scriptures, including the major types of Christ in the Old Testament
5. The major theme(s) and characters in the following books:
  - a. Genesis
  - b. Exodus (be sure to include the role of Miriam both as a child and as an adult serving under the authority of Aaron and Moses)
6. The Old Testament sacrificial system
  - a. How it relates to the covenant
  - b. How the intent of each sacrifice is related to the life, work and ministry of Jesus Christ
  - c. How the forms of Old Testament worship relate to the Anglican liturgy
7. The main message of each of the Major and Minor Prophets
  - a. The Christological implications of their message
  - b. The prophecies of Isaiah that are referenced in the New Testament
8. The Gospels
  - a. An overview of each Gospel
  - b. An in-depth look at the Life of Christ in one Gospel of your choice
  - c. Christ's fulfillment of the Old Testament Covenant
9. St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans
  - a. His theme
  - b. Outline of the letter
10. What the epistles teach about the role of women in God's authority structure
  - a. Boundaries
  - b. Responsibilities
  - c. The Biblical foundations for the office of Deaconess
11. The significance of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2)
  - a. The relationship of this event to Joel 2:27-29
  - b. A critique of the modern interpretation of this event as opening the door to acceptance of women's ordination
12. The Anglican view of spiritual gifts, particularly those that a Deaconess might be expected to exercise

## Doctrine

Doctrine, from a Greek word that means "teaching," consists of the theological principles derived from a systematic analysis of the content of Scripture. The Book of Common Prayer serves both as a concise statement and a demonstration of Anglican doctrine, and is therefore emphasized in this portion of the exam. The lectionary presents the historical narrative, law, proverbs, prophecy, poetry, and epistles thematically, combining them with collects appropriate for the Church Year. In addition, the structure and progression of the various liturgies (most especially the Order for Holy Communion) teach us about the Triune God, about our relationship to Him, and about the mission of the Church, His Kingdom.

### *Recommended Resources*

1. *An Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion*, Edward H. Browne
2. *Theology of the English Reformers*, Philip Edgcumbe Hughes
3. *The Principles of Theology*, W.H. Griffith Thomas
4. *Against the Protestant Gnostics*, Phillip J. Lee
5. *The Holy Trinity: In History, Theology, and Worship*, Robert Letham
6. "On the Holy Spirit," St. Basil

7. *The Doctrine of God*, Gerald Bray
8. *The Person of Christ*, Donald MacLeod
9. *The Cross of Christ*, John R.W. Stott
10. Applicable Cranmer Theological House courses, particularly the following:
  - a. *Doctrine: God and Christ*
  - b. *Doctrine: Man, Sin, and Salvation*
  - c. *Doctrine: Church, Sacraments, and Eschatology*
  - d. *The Thirty-Nine Articles*

### ***Concepts to Study***

1. How the 39 Articles of Religion address the following issues, either implicitly or explicitly, and how the teachings in the Articles are reflected in the Scriptures and the BCP
  - a. The doctrine of creation
  - b. Original sin
  - c. The authority of Scripture
  - d. The proper view of the Sacraments
  - e. Regeneration and Justification
  - f. Invoking the prayers of departed saints
  - g. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit
  - h. Purgatory
  - i. The authority of the Church
  - j. Eschatology
2. How the 39 Articles compare with other major confessions or statements of faith on the matters listed in item 1
3. The Reformed Episcopal Declaration of Principles and how they relate to the 39 Articles
4. The theology of the Holy Trinity
  - a. What is taught by the creeds
  - b. Three ancient heresies against the Trinity and their connection with any modern day movements

### **Christian Ethics and Moral Theology**

The area of Christian Ethics and Moral Theology derives from St. James' exhortation to be "doers of the Word and not hearers only." To assist the Deaconess with obeying this command and to prepare her to counsel others in this area, she should be familiar with tenets of practical theology, particularly as they apply to the lives of women and children.

### ***Recommended Resources***

1. *Approaching Moral Decisions*, Arthur F. Holmes
2. *Great Traditions In Ethics*, Theodore Denise, Nicholas White, Sheldon P. Peterfreund
3. *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology*, David Atkison et al. (Eds.)
4. *Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart*, Kenneth C. Haugk
5. *Speaking the Truth in Love*, Ruth N. Koch and Kenneth C. Haugk
6. *Quick Reference Guide to Counseling Women*, Diane Langberg
7. Applicable Cranmer Theological House courses, particularly the following:
  - a. *Introduction to Moral Theology*
  - b. *Marriage and Family*
  - c. *Spirituality*

### ***Concepts to Study***

1. The Scriptural principles on which the counseling of women and children should be based
2. The relationship between the Rector and a Deaconess with regard to pastoring the women and children in a parish setting
3. The REC position on
  - a. The sanctity of life
  - b. Divorce, including remarriage of divorced persons
4. Principles of Christian education and the responsibility of the Church in the spiritual formation of children and youth
5. Guidelines for parish outreach
  - a. Establishing parish-based ministries, including criteria for evaluating the viability of a proposed ministry
  - b. Supporting other organizations (through monetary gifts or parishioner time and talents), including criteria for determining which groups should/should not be supported

### **Church History**

It is vital for anyone in a Church leadership position to have a basic understanding of the history and progression of the Church's mission through the ages and throughout the world. A study of evangelism methods in light of biblical principles, as well as a general knowledge of the work of missionaries, will equip the Deaconess candidate to assess the needs of her own community and assist her Rector in planning biblically based efforts to build God's Kingdom.

### ***Recommended Resources***

1. *A New Eusebius*, J. Stevenson, Ed.
2. *The Story of Christianity*, Justo L. González \*
3. *History of the Christian Church*, Philip Schaff (reference work - 8 volumes) \*
4. *Deaconesses: An Historical Study*, Aime G. Martimort
5. Applicable Cranmer Theological House courses, particularly the following:
  - a. *Patristic Church History*
  - b. *Anglicanism*
  - c. *Medieval Church History*
  - d. *Reformation and Modern Church History*
  - e. *Evangelism and Missions*

### ***Concepts to Study***

1. The major events in Church History, with a focus on the Church in the United States.
2. The dates and major focus of each Ecumenical Council of the undivided Church, including any pronouncements on the office of Deaconess
3. The history of the Office of Deaconess
  - a. In the Eastern Church
  - b. In the Western Church
4. The history of missions, with emphasis on the contribution and involvement of Anglicans, both as senders and as missionaries.
5. Three missionaries who profoundly affected the direction of Christian missions
6. Evaluation of modern missions, including the Church Growth movement and its relationship to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)

## Church Government and Parish Administration

One area in which the Deaconess must be well versed is that of the authority structure of the Church, both the historical development of ecclesiastical order and the specific principles governing the Reformed Episcopal Church.

### *Recommended Resources*

1. *Captains and Courts: A Biblical Defense of Episcopal Government*, by Ray Sutton
2. The Reformed Episcopal Church Constitutions and Canons (available at [www.recus.org](http://www.recus.org))
3. *Handbook for the Order of Deaconesses* (available at [www.recdss.org](http://www.recdss.org))
4. *A Working Manual for Altar Guilds*, Dorothy Diggs (either the 1957 or 1968 editions)
5. *Serving Basics*, The International Order of St. Vincent
6. Applicable Cranmer Theological House courses, particularly the following:
  - a. *Canon Law and Pastoral Administration*
  - b. *Biblical Womanhood*
  - c. *The Office and Work of the Deaconess*

### *Concepts to Study*

1. The nature of the Episcopate, according to the Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Articles of Religion
2. The structure of Anglican church government
  - a. As compared with the Roman view
  - b. As compared with the Protestant view
  - c. The meaning of the following terms, and the structure, function, responsibilities, and authority limits of each:
    - i. Diocese
    - ii. Vestry
    - iii. Wardens (Senior/Junior)
  - d. The scriptural foundations
3. The role and functions of the Deaconess in the life of a diocese and/or Parish, being sure to cover the following points
  - a. Possible venues of service (i.e., parish, school, diocesan committees)
  - b. Her responsibility to the Bishop Ordinary and to the Rector of her Parish
  - c. Description of the setup for Holy Communion (citing Scripture and the BCP wherever applicable)
    - i. What is required vs what is optional
    - ii. Names and functions of altar vessels, linens, and other appointments
    - iii. The administration of Holy Communion and Unction to home-bound or sick parishioners
  - d. As compared with the role and functions of a Deacon

## Liturgics

The topic of Liturgics, which combines Doctrine and Ministration, has been given a separate section in the study guide to indicate that it will be given special emphasis in the exam. Recent trends in the Church have led to errors regarding the nature of both Holy Orders and holy order, resulting in such innovations as women's ordination and laxity in the conduct of public worship. Therefore, knowledge of liturgics is deemed vital for the Deaconess Candidate, especially those who will be responsible for training others in the preparation of sacred space.

### *Recommended Resources*

1. *Recalling the Hope of Glory*, Allen P. Ross

2. *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary*, Massey H. Shepherd
3. *Sanctifying Life, Time and Space: An Introduction to Liturgical Study*, Marion Hatchett
4. *Anglican Public Worship*, Colin Dunlop
5. Applicable Cranmer Theological House courses, particularly the following:
  - a. *Liturgics*
  - b. *Leviticus and Hebrews*

### ***Concepts to Study***

1. The meaning of the term “liturgy” and the function and significance of liturgy in the life of the Church
2. The origin, intent, and uses of the following
  - a. Daily Office
  - b. The lectionary
  - c. The litany
  - d. Family prayer
3. The Sacrament of Holy Communion
  - a. Its purpose
  - b. The structure of the Eucharistic liturgy in the BCP
  - c. The necessary elements and preparation
  - d. The requirements for valid consecration
4. The Sacrament of Baptism
  - a. Its purpose
  - b. The structure of the baptismal liturgy in the BCP
  - c. The necessary elements and preparation
5. The rite of Confirmation
  - a. Scriptural basis
  - b. Historic development
  - c. Liturgical practices
  - d. Preparation of Confirmands, and how a Deaconess may function in this process
6. The marriage office
  - a. Scriptural teaching on marriage
  - b. Why it is viewed by some as a sacrament
7. Vestments
  - a. The Biblical explanation for their use
  - b. The types of vestments worn by the following
    - i. Bishop
    - ii. Priest
    - iii. Deacon
    - iv. Deaconess
  - c. The occasions upon which various vestments are worn
  - d. A comparison/contrast between the low church and high church Anglican view of vestments
8. The boundaries of liturgical responsibility
  - a. For a Priest
  - b. For a Deacon
  - c. For a Deaconess
9. The qualifications for ordination to Holy Orders
  - a. Arguments for and against the ordination of women, and the historical view of this practice
  - b. Arguments for and against the ordination of homosexuals, and the historical view of this practice
10. The historic (catholic) view of the second commandment

- a. Anglican view
- b. Puritan view
- c. Implications in preparing sacred space
- d. Implications in the posture and behavior of worshippers

## Appendix

1. The list of resources for Deaconess candidates will be maintained online at [www.recdss.org/dssresources.html](http://www.recdss.org/dssresources.html)
2. Sources for purchasing used and out-of-print books:
  - a. <http://www.abebooks.com>
  - b. <http://www.biblio.com>
  - c. <http://www.alibris.com>
3. Collections of online resources (digital libraries)
  - a. Christian Classics Ethereal Library: [www.ccel.org](http://www.ccel.org)
  - b. Project Canterbury: <http://anglicanhistory.org>
  - c. <https://archive.org>



# THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION FOR THE ORDER OF DEACONESSES

Send responses as a Word document or as a PDF to the Bishop Ordinary and to the Chair of the Board of Examining Chaplains.

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Please read each question carefully. Your answers will be typed and sent by email in a Word document or as a PDF. You may use the resources at your disposal for this examination, but all of the wording should be your own, free of plagiarism. Be sure to proofread well before submission.

The written exam gives the Examining Chaplains insight into how you use resources and process scriptural, historic, and theological information as well as the state of your spiritual, theological, and ministerial formation. They will draw from your answers and from the Study Guide for the Deaconess Examination in order to question you further in an oral examination. Oral examinations typically take place on the Wednesday before Synod each year and generally take two hours or more to complete. The Ordinary may arrange for the examination of a Candidate at another time or location as he deems fit.

## HOLY SCRIPTURE

1. Write a summary of your view of the inspiration, inerrancy, and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures.
2. Holy Scripture is called the Word of God, as is our Lord Jesus Christ. What is the connection between them?
3. Define “Gospel” and explain the relationship between Genesis 3:15 and the Gospel, discussing how Genesis 3:15 was fulfilled in each of the following major periods of redemptive history: Patriarchal, the Exodus, the judges, the kings, the exilic, the postexilic, the Incarnation, and the Church.
4. Give an overview of the Book of Genesis by chapter, listing characters and themes.
5. State the major theme of the Book of Exodus and provide a brief overview of the book. Include a discussion of the role of Miriam in the ministry of Moses and Aaron as well as the judgment that fell upon her for sin against Moses.
6. What are the five main sacrifices of the Old Testament? How was the intent of each one fulfilled in Jesus Christ? How do they relate to the liturgical worship of the Church?
7. Discuss at least three prophecies from Isaiah, including how they are referenced in the New Testament and how they relate to Jesus Christ.
8. State the main message of three of the Minor Prophets, including a discussion of how each one pointed to the work of Jesus Christ.
9. Trace the major events in the life of Christ as presented in one of the Gospels, explaining the connection of each event to one or more Old Testament prophecies and the importance of each event in the fulfillment of the Covenant.
10. What happened at Pentecost and why is it important, not only to the Church but to the entire world? How does Pentecost relate to Joel 2:27-29? How would you respond to proponents of women’s ordination with regard to their view of the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy?
11. State the theme of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans and provide an outline of the book and overview of the book’s contents.
12. Using an epistle of your choice, discuss the role of women in the Church, specifically defending the Biblical foundations for the office of Deaconess.
13. Discuss the spiritual gifts and elaborate on the ones you believe you possess to fulfill the Office of Deaconess.

## DOCTRINE AND THEOLOGY

1. What is the creedal doctrine of creation, and why is it important? Discuss, in particular, the creation mandate and the pre-Fall authority structure and how it relates to the role of women in the family and in the Church.
2. What is the Articles' view of the authority of Scripture? Discuss, critique, and contrast this view to the magisterium view of authority in the Roman Church. Does Anglicanism have a magisterium? If not, why not? If it does, where is it and why?
3. What is the view of original sin in the Thirty-Nine Articles?
4. According to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion what is the correct doctrine of regeneration and justification, and how do these doctrines relate to conversion, personal faith, the sacraments, and good works?
5. State your view of the Sacrament of Baptism and demonstrate how it is consistent with the Articles of Religion.
6. Discuss your view of Holy Communion+ and demonstrate how it is consistent with the Articles of Religion.
7. What is the Anglican view of sacramental grace? Compare and contrast this view with that of Roman Catholicism and other Protestants. Include in your answer why the Articles condemn both transubstantiation and any view that would reduce the sacraments to being "only a sign."
8. Do the Articles of Religion allow asking departed saints to pray for the Church on earth? Defend your answer, relating it to Article XXII.
9. What is the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and the Articles of Religion? What is His role in redemption?
10. Discuss each of the Principles in the Reformed Episcopal Declaration of Principles and demonstrate their compatibility with the 39 Articles of Religion.
11. Is there an "Anglican view" of eschatology? If so, what is it? If not, why not? Discuss which views of eschatology would be acceptable and which would not be acceptable according to Scripture, the BCP, and the Articles of Religion.

## CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND MORAL THEOLOGY

1. May an Anglican minister hear a confession? If so, how should it be heard, and what are some practical considerations? What, if any, is the role of the Deaconess in the hearing of confessions?
2. What are the major Scriptural principles on which the counseling of women and children should be based? What should be the relationship between the Rector and a Deaconess with regard to pastoring the women and children in a Parish?
3. What would be your response to a woman who confides in you that she is pregnant and intends to have an abortion?
4. In counseling a woman, is it ever appropriate to recommend that she seek a divorce? If not, why not? If so, under what circumstances would such a recommendation be made?
5. What is your philosophy of ministry to children and youth? How would you answer the charge that Christianity must be made relevant to young people and current cultural trends? Defend your response with Scripture.
6. What are the major considerations for a Parish in developing evangelism and outreach ministries? What are the advantages and disadvantages of supporting external ministries in their work (for example, community food pantries or clothes closets)? What criteria would you use in determining which external ministries to recommend to your Parish?

## CHURCH HISTORY

1. Outline the major events in Church History, including the history of the Church in the United States.
2. What is meant by the term "the Ecumenical Councils of the undivided Church"? What was the primary focus

of each of these Councils? Did any of the Councils speak to the office of Deaconess? If so, summarize their teaching on this matter.

3. Outline the history of the office of Deaconess, including the institution of the office, the suspension of the office (and why this occurred), and its reinstatement in modern times. Identify any figures or groups who were instrumental in restoring the office and explain their reasons for doing so.
4. Provide a brief biography of three key figures (at least one Anglican) in the history of Christian Missions, discussing their mission field and its particular challenges, their methods, and their influence on the Church as a whole.
5. Provide an overview of the modern mission movement and evaluate its methods according to Christ's Great Commission to the Church as recorded in Matthew 28:19-20.

### CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND PARISH ADMINISTRATION

1. What is the Episcopate according to the Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Articles of Religion? Compare and contrast Anglican Church government with the Roman and Protestant views.
2. What is a diocese? Describe how it is structured and governed, including in your answer a discussion of the Standing Committee (what it is and how it is selected), the Ordinary, Bishop Coadjutor, and Suffragan Bishop. In what Scriptures does this organizational structure find its basis?
3. What is a Vestry? What are its responsibilities with regard to the Parish? To the Rector? To the Bishop? What are the limits of its authority?
4. What are the Senior and Junior Wardens and what are their responsibilities?
5. What is a Deaconess? How is she Set Apart? How do her office and responsibilities compare to those of a Deacon?
6. Where does a Deaconess fit into parish life? What are her functions (cite both her primary duties and her limitations)? Must all Deaconesses serve a specific role in a Parish? If not, what are some of the other venues in which a Deaconess may serve, and how is the decision made regarding where each one will serve?
7. Citing both Scripture and the Book of Common Prayer, describe the preparations for a service of Holy Communion, discussing what is required and what is optional (for example, Must the bread be unleavened? Is grape juice a suitable substitute for wine?). Defend your answers with citations from Scriptures and BCP rubrics.
8. May Holy Communion be offered to a sick parishioner in the hospital or at home? If so, what are the practical considerations of preparing, transporting, and serving the elements? May the Sacrament be administered by a Deaconess under these circumstances? Defend your position.

### LITURGICS

1. What is the meaning of liturgy, and what is its significance in the life of the Church?
2. Discuss and defend the historic (catholic) and Anglican view of the second commandment, comparing and contrasting it to the Puritan view.
3. What is the Daily Office in the Book of Common Prayer? Explain its origin, intent, and historical use in the Anglican Way. May a Deaconess serve as Lay Reader at a service of Morning or Evening Prayer? If so, under what circumstances, and what adjustments must be made in the liturgy?
4. What is the lectionary, and what are its intended uses?
5. What are vestments? Give a Biblical case for the importance of vestments and discuss the Biblical symbolism of the vestments worn in low and high church Anglican congregations. What are the vestments of a Deaconess?
6. What is required to have a valid consecration of the sacrament of Holy Communion and why?
7. What is Holy Baptism in the Book of Common Prayer? May a Deaconess assist with administration of this

sacrament, and if so, what is her role?

8. What is Confirmation in the Book of Common Prayer? Defend its Scriptural basis and the historic development of this rite. Discuss some of the liturgical practices associated with the rite (e.g., how the Bishop confirms, what confirmands wear, the use of oil, the ceremonial slapping on the cheek). What is the role of the Deaconess with regard to Confirmation?
9. Is the marriage office a sacrament? If so, why? If not, why not? Defend your answer.
10. What may a Deacon do and not do liturgically and sacramentally? Why and why not? Is a Deaconess equivalent to a Deacon in these matters?
11. Does the historic Anglican BCP allow for the ordination of women? Give a Scriptural and historic defense of your answer.
12. Does the historic Anglican BCP allow for the ordination of a homosexual? Give a Scriptural and historic defense of your answer.
13. What is the Litany? Discuss the history of its development, and explain why it is important and how it is normally used, citing in particular any seasons of the liturgical year in which it is most appropriate.
14. Discuss the origin, place, and use of Family Prayer.



# THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION FOR THE DIACONATE AND PRESBYTERATE

Send responses as a Word document or as a PDF to the Bishop Ordinary and to the Chair of the Board of Examining Chaplains.

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Please read each question carefully. Your answers will be typed and sent by email in a Word document or as a PDF. In each section of the examination, you are instructed to choose a number of questions for the diaconal exam and a number of questions for the presbyteral exam. Please, include the text of the questions you have chosen in your answer document. It is understood that if you were examined for the diaconate within the REC, you will choose for your presbyteral examination those questions you did not answer in your diaconal examination, so that all questions are answered between the two examinations.

You may use the resources at your disposal for this examination, but all of the wording should be your own, free of plagiarism. Be sure to proofread well before submission.

The written exam gives the Examining Chaplains insight into how you use resources and process scriptural, historic, and theological information as well as the state of your spiritual, theological, and ministerial formation. They will draw from your answers in order to question you further in an oral examination. Oral examinations take place on the Wednesday before Synod each year and generally take two hours or more to complete.

## HOLY SCRIPTURE

*For the Diaconate, answer any ten of the following. For Presbyterate, answer all of the following or all that were not answered in the Diaconal exam.*

1. Write a summary of your view of the inspiration, inerrancy and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures.
2. What is the relationship between Genesis 3:15 and the Gospel? Please explain how Genesis 3:15 was fulfilled in each of the following major periods of redemptive history with specific reference through whom Genesis 3:15 was uniquely fulfilled: patriarchal, the Exodus, the judges, the kings, the exilic, the post exilic, the Incarnation, the Church.
3. Trace the life of Joseph relating it the promise in Genesis 3:15 and the life of Christ.
4. State the major theme of the Book of Exodus and provide a brief overview.
5. Pick one of the apocryphal books, summarize the theme and give a brief overview.
6. State the three kinds of law in the Old Testament and explain the differences, offering examples of each one.
7. What are the five main sacrifices of the Old Testament?
8. What is the meaning of sacrifice in the Old Testament?
9. Describe and explain the major areas, pieces of furniture and objects in the Temple. Relate these to Jesus Christ and show the relationship to liturgical worship.
10. Discuss Amos 9:11-12 and its use by James at the Jerusalem Council. What implications does this have for Temple worship, dispensationalism, and the Church?
11. What is the Biblical covenant? Please compare and contrast covenant theology to Dispensationalism stating how each differs on the continuity and discontinuity between Old and New Covenant.
12. Discuss at least three prophecies from Isaiah, how they are used in the New Testament, and how they relate to Jesus Christ.
13. State the main message of three of the Minor Prophets.

14. Summarize the major events in the life of Christ, explaining the importance of each one.
15. What is the significance of the Transfiguration for the Church and its worship?
16. State the theme of the Gospel of John and provide a brief overview, providing specific explanation of the meaning of the seven miracles and the seven "I Am's" in the book.
17. Discuss and develop the significance of two of Jesus' post resurrection appearances.
18. State the theme of the Book of Romans and give a short explanation of the outline and contents of the book.
19. What happened at Pentecost and why is it important?
20. Discuss spiritual gifts explaining what gifts are available to the Church today

## CHURCH HISTORY

*For the Diaconate, answer any five of the following. For Presbyterate, answer any fifteen of the following or all that were not answered in the Diaconal exam.*

1. Please identify the following, explaining the major contributions of each: Clement, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Athanasius, Augustine of Hippo, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine of Canterbury.
2. What were the seven Ecumenical Councils, the issues, and leading persons involved?
3. Define, summarize the importance and state the history of monasticism stating its strengths and weaknesses.
4. Who were Anselm, Rattramus, Abelard, Thomas Aquinas and why were they important?
5. What is conciliarism and why is it important?
6. What is the Babylonian Captivity and why is it important?
7. Write a brief overview of early Christianity in Briton prior to Council of Whitby. Describe how Christianity spread to Britannia and why this early history is important. Please summarize why this period became so important at the time of the English Reformation.
8. State why the Protestant Reformation was necessary and important.
9. Please compare and contrast the English Reformation with the Continental Reformation, stating the leading figures and their importance.
10. Who were the Oxford Martyrs, why were they martyred, and what was the result of their martyrdom?
11. Who were the Non-Jurors, what were their issues, who were some of the leading figures, and what was the outcome of this movement?
12. Please summarize Latitudinarianism, taking note of its leaders and leading issues and the effects of this movement?
13. Who were John Wesley and George Whitfield? How did they change Anglican theology and practice?
14. Briefly state who Samuel Seabury and William White were, the circumstances surrounding their consecrations, and the issues and effects of their becoming Bishops.
15. What was the Oxford Movement, its major leaders, and leading issues? Compare and contrast this movement with the evangelical Anglican movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
16. What were the concerns of Rt. Rev. George David Cummins, why and what was his original vision for the Reformed Episcopal Church, relating this vision to Augustus Muhlenberg?
17. Briefly discuss the background, causes, development, leading figures and importance of the Anglican missionary movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## THEOLOGY

*For the Diaconate, answer any seven of the following. For Presbyterate, answer all of the following or all that were not answered in the Diaconal exam.*

1. What is the creedal doctrine of Creation and why is it important?

2. What are the communicable and incommunicable attributes of God? Why are they important?
3. Write a brief explanation of the Cappadocian Fathers and their view of the doctrine of coinherence.
4. What was St. Augustine's contribution to the Church's understanding of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity? Please include in your answer Tertullian's influence.
5. State three Christological heresies and develop the correct Christology providing a Biblical and theological defense. Please include modern examples of these heresies.
6. Summarize the teaching of Pelagius and state why the Church condemned it as a heresy.
7. What is the Articles' view of the authority of Scripture? Discuss, critique, and contrast this view to the magisterium view of authority in the Roman Church. Does Anglicanism have a magisterium? If not, why not? If it does, where is it and why?
8. Discuss the Thirty-Nine Articles' view of the Apocrypha?
9. Discuss the Thirty-Nine Articles' statement, "Necessary for salvation."
10. Summarize the historic views of the Atonement, noting the leading figures and the contributions of each view. Can these views be reconciled, and if so how?
11. What is the Thirty-Nine Articles' view of original sin?
12. According to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, what is the correct doctrine of regeneration and justification, and how do these doctrines relate to conversion, personal faith, and the sacraments?
13. What is the Thirty-Nine Articles' view of good works?
14. Why is there an Article on whether or not it is possible to "sin after baptism?"
15. Please state the Anglican view of predestination as expressed in Article XVII of the Articles of Religion.
16. Please discuss the grace of God, defining and defending your view.
17. What is the Anglican view of sacramental grace? Please compare and contrast this view with Roman Catholicism and other Protestants. Please include in your answer why the Articles condemn transubstantiation and any view that would reduce the sacraments to "only a sign."
18. Discuss the statement that General Councils "may err, and sometimes have erred," and the Anglican view of authority in the Church.
19. Do the Articles of Religion allow asking departed saints (Expectant or Triumphant depending on one's view of heaven) to pray for the Church on earth (Militant)? Explain your answer in relation to Article XXII.
20. Discuss the view of traditions in the Church as expressed in the Articles of Religion and elsewhere.
21. What is the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the prayer book and the Articles of Religion? Where are the boundaries according to these standards?
22. Is there an "Anglican view" of eschatology? If so what is it? If not, why not. Develop what views of eschatology would be acceptable and not acceptable according to Scripture, the prayer book and the Articles of Religion.

## ETHICS AND MORAL THEOLOGY

*Answer for the Presbyterate only.*

1. Please state the Ten Commandments, briefly summarizing what each means.
2. Are these commandments still the moral standard for a Christian?
3. How do we account for changes (i.e. the Sabbath) and yet maintain that the Ten Commandments remain the moral standard for a Christian?
4. Discuss and critique an hierarchical view of ethics as well as situational ethics, defining and defending according to Scripture, the prayer book and Articles of Religion.
5. Is it ever appropriate to lie? Please relate Rahab the harlot's apparent lie in hiding out the Israelites (Joshua 2).
6. Discuss the place of "just war" according to the standards of the Scriptures, the prayer book and Articles of Religion.
7. What is adiaphora? According to Scripture, the prayer book and the Articles what are the "things indifferent?"

8. What is holiness, and how is it developed in a Christian? Please include some of the views in the history of the Church.
9. What is a rule of life? What is the Scriptural basis, its history in the Church (briefly stated) and the rule of life according to the Anglican Way?
10. State what abortion is and why it is wrong, providing a Biblical case for your answer.

## LITURGICS

*For the Diaconate, answer any ten of the following. For Presbyterate, answer any fifteen of the following or all that were not answered in the Diaconal exam.*

1. What is the meaning of liturgy?
2. What are rubrics and what is their relation to the liturgy and are they required? When are they optional?
3. What is the difference between ritual and ceremony in the rubrics? Why do the rubrics in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer not say much about ceremony?
4. Develop the history behind the Book of Common Prayer.
5. Discuss and defend the historic (catholic) and Anglican view of the second commandment, comparing and contrasting to the Puritan view.
6. What is the Daily Office in the Book of Common Prayer? Explain its origin, intent and historical use in the Anglican Way.
7. How may the Daily Office and the Holy Communion be combined?
8. What is the lectionary?
9. What are vestments? Give a Biblical case for the importance of vestments and discuss the Biblical symbolism of the vestments worn in low and high church Anglican congregations.
10. What is required to have a valid Eucharist?
11. What is required to have a valid consecration of the sacrament of Holy Communion and why?
12. Discuss the epiclesis in both the 1662 and the 1928 BCP.
13. What is Holy Baptism in the Book of Common Prayer?
14. What is Confirmation in the Book of Common Prayer? Defend its Scriptural basis and the historic development of this rite. Discuss some of the liturgical practices associated with the rite (e.g. how the Bishop confirms, what confirmands wear, the use of oil, the ceremonial slapping on the cheek, and so forth).
15. Is the marriage office a sacrament? If so, why? If not why not? Defend your answer.
16. How may the Holy Communion be offered with the marriage office and the burial office?
17. What may a Deacon do and not do liturgically and sacramentally? Why and why not?
18. What may only a Priest/Presbyter do in the marriage and funeral offices?
19. What is a Priest/Presbyter? How and why does the historic prayer book use both words interchangeably?
20. What happens at the ordination of a Priest that does not at the ordination of a Deacon?
21. Does the historic Anglican prayer book allow for the ordination of women? Give a Scriptural and historic defense of your answer.
22. Does the historic Anglican prayer book allow for the ordination of a homosexual? Give a Scriptural and historic defense of your answer.
23. What is the Litany? Discuss the history of its development and explain why it is important and how it can be used.
24. What is the Episcopate according to the Scriptures, the prayer book, and the Articles of Religion? Compare and contrast with the Roman and Protestant views of church government.
25. What is the origin, place, and use of Family Prayer?

## PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

*For the Diaconate, answer any ten of the following. For Presbyterate, answer fifteen of the following or all that were not answered in the Diaconal exam.*

1. In relation to the altar, where may a minister conduct the service? Give history and defense of each view?
2. What is the procession? Is it biblical? Describe who processes, in what order, and so forth.
3. May the table on which the sacrament is placed be called an altar? Explain your answer biblically and according to the prayer book and the Articles.
4. What are various practices of reverencing the altar? What are acceptable and not according to the Scriptures, prayer book and the Articles?
5. Discuss, compare, and contrast liturgical preaching (sermon based on the lessons), expository preaching, and topical preaching.
6. What are some of the good ways to prepare for a sermon?
7. Discuss some do's and don'ts when preaching.
8. When should a minister visit a parishioner?
9. What may a minister do when visiting a parishioner?
10. How may Holy Communion be offered to a parishioner in the hospital?
11. May an Anglican minister hear a confession? If so how should it be heard, and what are some practical considerations?
12. What is a Vestry? How often does it meet, and what are the limits of its responsibilities?
13. What are Senior and Junior Wardens, and what are their responsibilities?
14. What is an annual Parish Meeting? What is its purpose? Who leads it? Who sets the agenda?
15. What is a Parish Register and a register of services? What is the difference, and why is each important? Who is responsible to maintain them?
16. When should a minister consult with his Bishop?
17. What is a diocese? How is it structured and governed? Include in your answer the Standing Committee (what it is and how it is selected), the Ordinary, Bishop Coadjutor, and Suffragan Bishop?
18. What is an Archdeacon? A Canon? A Dean? How does each office function in a diocese? How is it appointed? What are the vestments related to each?
19. What is a Deaconess? How is she set apart? What are her vestments and functions?
20. What is the General Council? How often does it meet?
21. What is the General Committee? How often does it meet?
22. What is a province? How is it structured and governed?
23. What is canon law? How did it develop?
24. What is the origin of the Constitution of the Reformed Episcopal Church? How are they viewed? Can they be amended and, if so, how?
25. When is a trial for a clergyman required?



# RECORD OF AN EPISCOPAL VISITATION

Deliver entire form and the documents called for in the Checklist to the Bishop Ordinary or his designee upon his arrival.

Visit Conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS RECORD

Refer to Section VII of the Customary under "Episcopal Visitations" for information regarding this Report.

- 1. Membership List
- 2. Current Financial Statement (Income statement & balance sheet) Dated \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Year-End Financial Statement: Statement of Activities (Income Statement) & Statement of Position (Balance Sheet) Dated \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Current By-Laws of Parish. Date of last revision is \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Articles of Incorporation/Articles of Association Date of last Revision is \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. List of Parish Officers and telephone numbers (Day and Evening)
- 7. Minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. Minutes of any special Parish Meetings
- 9. Copy of Employment Agreement, Call, or Contract between Rector/Vicar and Parish
- 10. List of persons to be Confirmed or Baptized (send 14 days or more in advance of visit)
- 11. List of Bank and Investment Accounts and Balances within thirty days of visit.
- 12. One Parish Evaluation form from each member of the Vestry
- 13. One Rector's Parish Evaluation Form
- 14. One Assistant Clergy Evaluation form for each assisting clergyman
- 15. Parish Statistical Report
- 16. Parish Register
- 17. Other requested information

Comments:

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

## PARISH EVALUATION FORM

To be completed individually by each Warden and Vestry member prior to the Episcopal Visit.

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Vestry Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Held: \_\_\_\_\_ On the Vestry since: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pastoral Functions

Rate the effectiveness of Parish leadership (meaning both Clergy and Laity) with a "1" being very weak and a "5" being very strong. If you do not feel qualified to rate his performance in any area circle N/Q.

1. **Pastoral care.** The sick are visited, birthdays remembered, counseling is available, and care for the congregation is ably demonstrated. 1 2 3 4 5 N/Q

Comments:

2. **Evangelism.** Visitors and newcomers are welcomed, and follow-up is done when possible. The congregation has a missional mindset and purpose, working to make the church grow. The Great Commission is a focus of ministry. 1 2 3 4 5 N/Q

Comments:

3. **Preaching & Teaching.** The whole counsel of God's word is preached and taught. Teaching is clear and understandable, and difficult matters are not avoided. 1 2 3 4 5 N/Q

Comments:

4. **Church Discipline & Conflict Resolution.** Clergy, Vestry, and other laity work together with tact, maturity and wisdom, especially in dealing with problem situations or individuals.

Comments: 1 2 3 4 5 N/Q

5. **Leadership.** Parish leadership sets an example for the congregation in devotion to Christ and the Church, and in commitment of time, treasure and talents. Every-member involvement is encouraged. Seeks Lay involvement.

Comments: 1 2 3 4 5 N/Q

6. In your opinion, what are the greatest strength(s) of leadership in the Parish:

7. What are leadership areas that could use improvement:

PARISH EVALUATION FORM (Continued)

**The Vestry**

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Is actively engaged in the life and work of the Parish. | Yes | No |
| 2. Supports the ministry of the Rector.                    | Yes | No |
| 3. You, personally, as a member of the Vestry:             |     |    |
| Attend Sunday School.                                      | Yes | No |
| Attend Bible Study.  | Yes | No |
| Tithe.   | Yes | No |
| Attend church at least three times per month.              | Yes | No |
| Are personally involved in the following ministries:       |     |    |

**The Congregation as a Whole**

*Answer the following based on your personal observations and add comment if necessary.*

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. Has a missional mindset to actively seek new members.  | True | False |
| 2. Welcomes visitors warmly.  | True | False |
| 3. Supports the Rector/Vicar in his ministry.   | True | False |
| 4. Faithful in attendance.  | True | False |
| 5. Faithful in stewardship: time, treasure, and talent.   | True | False |
| 7. Actively supports opportunities for Christian Education/Formation<br>(e.g., Sunday School, Bible Study, Catechism classes, etc.) | True | False |
| 8. In my opinion, the greatest issue facing our Parish is:  |      |       |

9. In my opinion, the greatest accomplishment of the Parish in the last twelve months was:

10. Other comments.

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*Bishop's Use Below Line*

PARISH STATISTICAL REPORT – SAMPLE FOR REFERENCE

Parish: St. Somebody's REC, Hometown, OH Date Prepared: 8 May 2020

	Communicant Members (Canon 35.1(a))		Baptized Members		Row Totals
	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	
<b>As of Last Visit</b>	30	2	4	0	36

**ADDITIONS**

Baptisms	2		1		3
Confirmations	2				2
Transfers In	3		2		5
Became Inactive		1		0	1
Subtotal	7	1	3	0	11

**SUBTRACTIONS**

Deaths	1	1	0	0	2
Excommunications	0	0	0	0	0
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0	0
Moved to Inactive	1		0		1
Subtotal	2	1	0	0	3

<b>As of Current Visit</b>	35	2	7	0	44
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PARISH OFFICERS	Name	Email	Phone
Senior Warden	John D. Doe	joeddoe@whateva.com	(123) 867-5309
Junior Warden			
Secretary/Clerk			
Treasurer			

Certified by Rector: \_\_\_\_\_

Does Parish rent or own its place of meeting? \_\_\_\_\_ If rent, terms of lease: \_\_\_\_\_

Is property owned outright or mortgaged? \_\_\_\_\_ Balance: \_\_\_\_\_

If mortgaged, who holds the mortgage? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of mortgage company: \_\_\_\_\_

Value of Land: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Value of Building: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Year Constructed: \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Bishop's Use Below Line

PARISH STATISTICAL REPORT

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

	Communicant Members (Canon 35.1(a))		Baptized Members		Row Totals
	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	
<b>As of Last Visit</b>					

**ADDITIONS**

Baptisms					
Confirmations					
Transfers In					
Became Inactive					
Subtotal					

**SUBTRACTIONS**

Deaths					
Excommunications					
Transfers Out					
Moved to Inactive					
Subtotal					

<b>As of Current Visit</b>					
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PARISH OFFICERS	Name	Email	Phone
Senior Warden			
Junior Warden			
Secretary/Clerk			
Treasurer			

**Certified by Rector:** \_\_\_\_\_

Does Parish rent or own its place of meeting? \_\_\_\_\_ If rent, terms of lease: \_\_\_\_\_

Is property owned outright or mortgaged? \_\_\_\_\_ Balance: \_\_\_\_\_

If mortgaged, who holds the mortgage? \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number of mortgage company: \_\_\_\_\_

Value of Land: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Value of Building: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Year Constructed: \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
Bishop's Use Below Line

RECTOR'S EVALUATION OF PARISH

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

PART I: Issues Affecting the Parish

Issue	Comment
1.	
2.	
3.	

PART II: Goals for the Next Year

PART III: Rector's Vision for Long-Term of Parish

PART IV: Evaluation of Parish Structures

1. Is the Vestry supportive of the goals and vision described in Parts II and III? Explain.

2. Rate the Parish in the following areas.

Stewardship of Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship of Talent: \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship of Treasure: \_\_\_\_\_

Support of Sunday School, Bible Study, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_

RECTOR'S EVALUATION OF PARISH (*Continued*)

3. If the Parish is weak in any of the above, what steps are you taking to remedy this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Explain your understanding of pastoral care, especially as it relates to the sick and shut-ins and to those in need of counseling.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What is the greatest challenge facing the Parish
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. In what areas do you think the Vestry could be more supportive of your ministry?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What can you do to improve your ministry?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What confidential problems relating to individuals within the Parish, if any, need to be shared with the Bishop?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What is the Parish's greatest accomplishment in the past year
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Other:

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*Bishop's Use Below Line*

ASSISTING CLERGY EVALUATION

To be completed by the Rector for each assisting clergyman in advance of Episcopal Visit.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Bishop  Presbyter  Deacon

Date Called to Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Stipendiary  Compensated  Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Duties:

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rector Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clergyman Date



# RECEIPT FOR A DONOR'S CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION

To be completed by the Treasurer or designee of the Parish or Agency receiving a charitable contribution. A copy should be given to the donor and a copy retained by the preparer.

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Name of Parish or Agency\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS DOCUMENT STANDS AS RECORD OF A CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION FOR  
TAX REPORTING AND OTHER PURPOSES.  
TAX-DEDUCTIBILITY DEPENDS ON THE TAX SITUATION OF THE DONOR.**

Date of Receipt: \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Contribution: Cash/Check Donation     Item Donation     Service Donation

Description of Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Dollar Amount of Contribution or  
Donor's Estimated Value of Goods or Services\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed as Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

Notice: No goods or services were provided in return for this gift; the intangible religious benefits provided by this Parish or Agency have no monetary value for tax purposes.

\* Required

PARISH NAME

## Weekly Financial Worksheet for MM/DD/YY

Regular Collection
  Special Collection \_\_\_\_\_

CASH RECEIVED IN ENVELOPES		Envelopes w/Cash		
Bills	Quantity	Total	REF #	Last Name, FI
100s    x				
50s     x				
20s     x				
10s     x				
5s      x				
2s      x				
1s      x				
Coins				
<b>1. Sum of Currency Received in Envelopes:</b> <i>(Record this total on Summary form.)</i>				\$
Number of Envelopes Received <i>(Item Count)</i>		[RETAIN]		
Number of Bills Received <i>(Item Count)</i>				

CHECKS RECEIVED IN ENVELOPES			
Ck No	Contributor <i>(Last Name, First Initial)</i>	Total	
<b>2. Sum of Checks Received in Envelopes Listed Above:</b> <i>(Record this total on Summary form.)</i>			\$

Use additional forms if needed.



<b>SUMMARY</b>			
PARISH NAME			
<b>Weekly Financial Worksheet for</b> MM/DD/YY			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular Collection	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Collection _____

SUMMARY AND ATTENDANCE STATS		
1. Sum of Currency Received in Envelopes:		
2. Sum of Checks Received in Envelopes:		
3. Sum of Loose Currency Received in Basin:		
4. Sum of Loose Checks Received in Basin:		
<b>A. TOTAL RECEIPTS THIS WEEK</b> <i>(1+2+3+4=A)</i>		
<b>B. DESIGNATED GIFTS</b> <i>(Review envelopes and checks, and total)</i>		
<b>C. UNDESIGNATED GIFTS</b> <i>(A less B equals C)</i>		
<b>TOTAL ATTENDANCE TODAY</b>	<b>NO. OF FIRST TIME VISITORS</b>	

Offerings are counted by two people in the presence of each other (each makes a complete separate count). Counters sign this weekly record verifying all amounts received are accounted for.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counter 1, Sign & Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counter 2, Sign & Date

NOTES: