# THE WARDENS' HANDBOOK

## THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

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# THE WARDENS' HANDBOOK

The Wardens of Parishes and Missions
The Diocese of Maryland

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We want to begin by thanking you for your service to the Church. Your ministries are key ingredients in the leadership of your congregation. The partnership-in-ministry among clergy and lay leaders in any congregation can be a strong and positive force in the growth and development of the congregation.

We view this Wardens' Handbook to be a vital piece in helping congregations to move from maintenance to mission. You will find many thoughtful pieces to contemplate, and you will find a rich variety of resources in this Handbook. We believe this is a wonderful tool. Read it, refer to it, and use it. When the printed word does not provide all that you need, contact members of the Diocesan Staff or one of us. We are also resources and conduits to other resources.

May God bless your ministries.

Faithfully yours,

Robert W. Ihloff

The Right Reverend Robert W. Ihloff
*Bishop of Maryland*

+John L. Rabb

The Right Reverend John L. Rabb
Bishop Suffragan

## Section I

## INTRODUCTION TO THE WARDENS' HANDBOOK

John E. Kitagawa

### A. Purpose of the Handbook

Being a Warden in a local congregation is a challenging and sometimes bewildering ministry. Many people are elected or appointed to the office without much preparation and little training. The purpose of this handbook is to help Wardens to be effective partners in the leadership of their communities of faith. This is not an instruction manual. A more apt image for this Handbook would be a toolbox for lay leaders. The Handbook raises a number of issues for reflection, offers a number of resources, and encourages Wardens to enter into a strong partnership with the ordained and lay leaders of their congregations. In other words, this Handbook is an attempt to point Wardens in helpful directions, and suggests where there might be help or support. Reading and using this Handbook will be helpful, but Wardens will profit by contact with more experienced Wardens and by participation in training workshops.

### B. Issues Addressed by the Handbook

While some congregational dynamics make some congregations appear to be similar, all congregations are unique. Numerous factors impact the health and vitality of congregations. In Section III, the Handbook lifts up the importance of maintaining the focus on the mission of the Church. Then, in Section IV, two wardens reflect on the Call to the ministry of Warden. The Section V discusses duties, responsibilities and expectations of Wardens, including canonical and legal issues. Property Management is often entrusted to one Warden, but all wardens need to pay attention to issues regarding basic financial concerns raised in the sixth section. The seventh section raises a number of issues concerning the relationship of the local congregation with other institutions, including the diocesan structure. The ninth section offers three tools for understanding congregations. An important section follows with discussions of some of the crises that have enormous impact on the life and ministry of congregations. Wardens take on special responsibilities during the Interim Period, so section eleven attempts to draw attention to some of the common things to consider. Just as the opening section of the Handbook offers reflections on being called to the ministry of warden, section twelve offers some reflection on the transition time when the warden leaves office. A modest final section lays out some of the potential sources for assistance for Wardens. A number of resources make up the Appendix.

> Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for____(*fill in name of your parish/mission)*. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*
> [Adapted from B.C.P.]

**Section II**

# THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

John E. Kitagawa

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name
of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to
obey everything that I have commanded you (Matthew 28: 19–20)."

With all the day-to-day issues and concerns confronting ordained and lay leaders of congregations, it is all too easy to lose a clear focus on the mission of the Church. Even under the best of circumstances, there is much to distract congregational leaders. All manner of things make legitimate claims for time, attention, and resources. Congregational leaders must still remember that the local church is the community called by God to invite others into a deepening fellowship of faith, to feed them for the journey, to lead them into a deeper relationship with the Lord, and to engage them in meaningful ministries to their neighbors.

## A. Use The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) Catechism

The ***Catechism*** in the Book of Common Prayer (p. 855) offers the following succinct questions and answers about the mission of the Church:

Q. What is the mission of the Church?
A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Q. How does the Church pursue its mission?
A. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

Q. Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?
A. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

## B. Baptismal Service from the BCP

The liturgy of *Holy Baptism* further describes the mission of the Church. Having proclaimed belief in the Triune God, the baptized make further promises (p. 304–305):

1. [to] continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers
2. [to] persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord
3. [to] proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ
4. [to] seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself
5. [to] strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being

To be meaningful, these fundamental principles of Christian mission must be defined in relationship the particular character, context, and gifts of the congregation. In practical terms, many congregations develop mission statements with supporting goals and objectives in order to give content and direction to its mission strategy.

## Some Questions to Consider:

Look at each of the promises of the Baptismal Covenant (quoted above from BCP, p. 304–305).

1. In what ways does your parish/mission working to embody each of these promises?
2. What might be some of the missed opportunities and challenges?
3. Referring to the Catechism questions and answers cited above, is your parish/mission using the full potential of ***all*** your members?
4. What resources do you need to develop or redevelop your parish/mission's ministry?
5. In what ways does your parish/mission assist its members to live-out their Baptismal promises in their daily living?
6. What resources do you need to develop or redevelop this aspect of your parish/mission's ministry?

## Two Prayers:

Everliving God, whose will it is that all should come to you through your Son Jesus Christ: Inspire our witness to him, that all may know the power of his forgiveness and the hope of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* [Book of Common Prayer]

Almighty and everlasting God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift: Send down upon our clergy, lay leaders, and upon the congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of your grace; and, that they may truly please you, pour upon them the continual dew of your blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honor of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ. *Amen.* [Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer]

**Section III**

## CONSIDERING THE CALL TO BE A WARDEN

By the time you are considering a call or vocation to be the Warden of a congregation, you probably have been involved in the life of the Church in many and various ways. Perhaps you have been the chair of a committee, or a leader in worship or education. Becoming a Warden requires moving into a new role in relationship to your congregation, vestry and rector. It will require your time, your thoughts and your prayers. Deciding to accept an appointment or election to the position of Warden is not a matter to be taken lightly

The process of discerning this particular vocation at this particular time can be placed within the context of your own spiritual journey. How have you come to know that this is the best role for you in your congregation? What gifts has God given you to use in this role? How have your prayers and the prayers of others led you to consider this role? What changes in your life are required in order to be an effective Warden? Will it take too much time away from your family, job or self-care? How has God prepared you to move into the role of Warden?

These and other questions are best considered and answered within the framework of a faithful life of prayer: both yours and that of your congregation. Where appropriate, ask your family and friends to pray for you as you work through this discernment. Uphold in prayer the mission of your congregation and the mission of the Church, and ask God to place in your heart the desire to serve God where God most needs you to serve. If you are not specifically appointed or elected to the position of Warden, make your discernment known to your rector or those on your vestry. In the end, remember that God will answer your prayers, and (especially) if you become a Warden, God will give you the grace and gifts to serve as God pleases most.

## Section IV

## DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

### A. Duties, responsibilities, and expectations of parish leaders

Several years ago, the featured speaker at the Wardens' Conference said something to the effect that it will always be the case that the roof leaks, or the boiler needs to be fixed, or that there is a problem with the Church School or some other program. He said that it is very easy for vestries to focus all of their time and energy on these sorts of issues. These issues must be addressed, he acknowledged, but not at the expense of the true leadership function of the vestry. The real function, he said, is to see the "burning bush[1]" in the middle of the room and to discern its meaning for the parish. In other words, what is God calling the parish to be and to do? Whom is God placing in our communities for the Church to serve? What are we called to sacrifice or let die in order for new life to flourish?

The speaker was trying to get at the difference between simply maintaining the institution and discerning the unique way that your particular community of faith envisions the particular mission God intends for you and for which God empowers you. While the discernment process is extremely important, the leadership of the congregation must also remember that vision without action is empty and fruitless, meaning vision must be converted into action plans. The opposite is also true: action absent of vision is empty and fruitless.

Change happens all the time. As one congregational development expert has said, "strategic planning is the art of anticipating change." Leaders should not have illusions about the process of change. In fact, "the depth of change tolerable is an issue of pain management." Many people will not be happy with change, resistance may develop, conflicts may arise, and crises may occur. In these circumstances, you need to remember the baptismal covenant's call "to respect the dignity of every human being, and to seek and serve Christ in all persons[2]."

A good working partnership between ordained and lay leaders is a key ingredient in the growth of a congregation. Pay attention to the human dynamics at Vestry meetings, and in the life of the community. Be open and honest about the way key decisions are made in your community. Help members of the congregation to know when and how their input is welcomed and valued. Remember that you do not have to go it alone. There is help and there are resources. Use diocesan resources. Seek out the Bishops for guidance. Sometimes, outside help in the form of a consultant is the catalyst that helps leaders lead.

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[1] Exodus 3: 1 ff

[2] *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 305

[3] The Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Maryland may be found and downloaded from the diocesan website: www.ang-md.org.

## 1. Constitutional and Canonical Requirements

**a.** The Vestry[4]

Vestrymembers are elected in a variety of ways in the parishes and separate congregations of the Diocese of Maryland. Normally, the by-laws of the congregation define both qualifications for voting for, and for holding the office of Vestryperson.

Once elected, Maryland Canon 2–165 of the Diocese of Maryland requires that persons elected to the Vestry, or who become wardens must “make and sign” this Oath, either “in the presence of the congregation, or at a regularly appointed meeting of the Vestry”:

> *I, A.B. do declare my belief in the Christian Religion and do declare that I accede to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and that in obedience to the same, I shall execute the office of a Vestrymember or Warden (or act as a member of the Advisory Board) without prejudice, favor or affection, according to the best of my skill and knowledge. So help me, God. Amen.*

The Canons of the Episcopal Church summarize the responsibilities of the Vestry in the following way:

> Except as provided by the law of the State or of the Diocese, the Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy (Title I, Canon 14 (Of Parish Vestries), Sec. 2).

**b.** Some of the specific responsibilities of the Vestry are:

- To select the lay delegates, according to by-laws of the congregation, to the Annual Convention of the Diocese (MD Constitution, Article 2)
- To support the budget of the Diocese of Maryland through the acceptance of an assessment (MD Canon 5-100, Sec. 1 (c), (d))
- With the Rector, to Prepare and deliver the annual parochial report (Title I, Canon 6, Sec.1; MD Canon 2-160)
- To conform to Business Methods in Church Affairs (Title I, Canon 7)

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[4] ***A Note About Mission Congregations***

*Two particularly significant differences exist between parishes and mission congregations.*

*First, the Bishop is the Rector of all mission churches. S/he appoints his/her **Vicar** to serve as the ordained leadership of the congregation (MD Canon 2-140, Sec. 1).*
*Secondly, the Bishop **annually appoints his/her Advisory Board** to function much like a Vestry (MD Canon 2-140, Sec. 5). In both cases, in recent history, Bishops of Maryland have seriously engaged the mission congregations in the selection of clergy, and have appointed the Advisory Board on the basis of elections in the congregation.*

- To make sure the Treasurer is bonded (Title I, Canon 7, Sec. 1)
- Not to encumber or alienate the real property of the parish (Title I, Canon 7, Sec. 2; MD Canon 2-180)
- To make certain that an audit of finances is made annually (MD Canon 2-160)
- Not to encumber or alienate the dedicated and consecrated church or chapel belonging to the parish (Title II, Canon 6)
- With the clergy, "to exhibit to the Bishop the Parish Register and to give information on the state of the Congregation, spiritual and temporal… (Title III, Canon 14, Sec. 2 (e))" when the Bishop makes a visitation
- To inform the Bishop within 30 days when a rector leaves (Title III, Canon 17, Sec. 1)
- Not to call a rector without making him/her known to the Bishop within 30 days.
- When clergy are absent, to make provision of services of public worship. (Title III, Canon17, Sec. 1)
- Resolution of disagreements or dissension which imperils the pastoral relationship between Rector and people (Title III, Canon 20).
- In extreme cases, when the Rector or Vestry "desire a dissolution of the pastoral relation, and the parties cannot agree, either party may give written notice to the Ecclesiastical Authority (Title III, Canon 21; MD Canon 4-120)"
- Through the Treasurer, to inform the Church Pension about the relevant information regarding the Rector's compensation and pension (MD Canon 1-520)
- Establish a compensation review committee (MD Canon 4-140)

**c.** Other significant Maryland Canons:

- Canon 2-110, Of the Formation of New Parishes and Separate Congregations, with appendix
- Canon 2-120, Of Aided Parishes and Separate Congregations Under Missionary Administration, with appendix
- Canon 2-140, Of Diocesan Missions and Missionaries

**d.** In addition to these canonical requirements, Vestries are encouraged to consider the following items:

- An annual evaluation of the partnership in ministry, that is, of the clergy and lay leadership
- A periodic review of the manner in which the clergy carry out the responsibilities spelled out in Title III, Canon 14. If there be other staff members, to evaluate their performances too.
- Periodic evaluations of programs and ministries carried out in the name of the parish
- Other assessments to learn about the vitality and health of the congregation.
- Long Range planning
- Make sure the appropriate people receive training in to prevent sexual misconduct in relationship to children and adults.

### 1. Officers of the Vestry

The Rector or his/her designee is the presiding officer at Vestry meetings (Title I, Canon 14, Sec. 3; MD Canon 4-110). Generally this is a Senior Warden, sometimes called the rector's warden. In Maryland, the Junior Warden is sometimes called the peoples' Warden, or sometimes the Property Warden. Vestries are usually served by a Treasurer and sometimes Assistant Treasurers. A Registrar or Secretary is the other officer. Wardens, Treasurers and Registrars are sometimes appointed by the Rector or Vestry, sometimes elected at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, depending the by-laws. The by-laws will also determine whether these officers must from the Vestry, or are "at large". By-Laws will also determine whether the officers have the right to vote or not.

## B. Traditions of Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Rector's Warden, People's Warden

In many congregations, the Senior Warden is the Officer who works most closely with the Rector or Vicar. S/he may meet regularly with the Rector or Vicar to discuss various concerns, including the cleric's well being. S/he participates in planning vestry meetings, takes on administrative tasks, and is the responsible person when the Rector or Vicar is away. In many congregations both wardens meet regularly with the Rector or Vicar. In some congregations the Junior Warden is responsible for the maintenance of the property.

Some parishes and missions have the tradition of having a Rector's or Vicar's Warden. This designation makes it clear that among this Warden's responsibilities is an advocacy role for the Rector or Vicar. Depending on the By-Laws, this position may be appointed by the Rector or Vicar. In such congregations there is usually a People's Warden. This designation makes it clear that among this Warden's responsibility is an advocacy role for the people of the congregation. Depending on the By-Laws, this position may be elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

## C.1. Meeting strategies for the Vestry and its committees

The development of the vestry meeting agenda is worthy of careful consideration and planning. Planning can greatly enhance the possibility of having an effective meeting. With each potential item it is worth asking, "what's the purpose of this item?" Is it to share information (make a report), to seek the vestry's feedback and input, to develop policy, to help the vestry move to a decision, etc.? Note that on the agenda. It will help vestry members understand what is being asked of them, and that will influence how they participate in the discussion. Similarly, it is helpful to ask what the desired outcome may be. Is the outcome to be a decision, greater clarity about an issue, more information for a future decision, raising awareness of a problem, etc.? Again, this can help to focus the discussion.

Advance planning can help you know who needs to be at the table when a particular item is discussed. Sometimes, these means inviting people who will influence the community's willingness to support a decision. Sometimes, this means inviting people with skills or expertise. Our congregations are full of people with expertise and skills. Take advantage of that, and invite their participation and help.

As the vestry makes decisions, be sure to clarify who is responsible for follow-up, timetables, etc. When entrusting a task to an individual, a group or committee, taking the time to define the project, expectations, and time-lines is extremely helpful. Try to avoid recruiting people with the Sunday morning announcement, “there’s a sign up sheet in the narthex…” Figure out the skills needed for the task, and then find the people who have those skills. Sometimes, you may have to seek those skills outside your community. A conversation with members of other congregations may produce a volunteer willing to help out with a well-defined task. Contact members of the diocesan staff who have many contacts to share.

Minutes are useful tools, but they often are only produced and distributed in time for the next meeting. Consider using newsprint at the meeting. Contemporaneous notes on newsprint have the advantage of vestry members being clear about the decisions they have made before leaving the meeting. This can save future misunderstandings based on who remembers what.

## C.2. Alternative Meeting Strategies for Vestry and its Committees

The way in which vestry meetings are planned and executed varies among churches and is primarily shaped by the rector's preferences in conjunction with the lay leadership of the parish. Regardless of the rules by which a meeting is organized, its effectiveness will be directly related to the amount of preparation that goes into planning agendas. It is recommended that the leadership team, composed at least of the wardens and rector, meet one to two weeks prior to a Vestry meeting to plan the agenda, consider how to support the work of any committees relating to the Vestry, and get information out in advance of the meeting.

In addition to good planning, it is helpful to have meeting norms (guidelines on how members of the Vestry should prepare for meetings and how business is to be conducted). Meeting norms can increase the efficiency of meetings, and they can promote the ability of individuals and the group is a whole to connect the work of the Vestry to Christian call and spiritual formation.

One alternative meeting strategy is to have someone other than the Rector chair the meeting. Meetings may be convened and facilitated by a warden although the President of the Vestry is the Rector. This practice frees the Rector to participate more fully in the meeting and it places more emphasis on lay leadership. This alternative is practiced in the Maryland Diocesan Council where the first Vice President, a lay person facilitates Diocesan Council meetings, although the President of Council is the Bishop.

Another alternative meeting strategy is to move away from parliamentary procedures and to adopt other Christian disciplines such as spiritual discernment. Traditionally, Vestry meetings have followed “a secular model derived from parliamentary procedure. They begin with prayer, a meditation or a time of sharing; they may end with a prayer. They surely bring Christian principles with them. But the structure and procedures they use are indistinguishable from meetings of other institutions (*Grounded in God,* pg. 37).”

"Spiritual discernment is a prayerful, informed, and intentional effort to distinguish God's voice from other voices that influence us *(Grounded in God*, pg. 1)." Some vestries in our Diocese have begun to use the disciplines of spiritual discernment for conducting business and making decisions. Meetings are grounded in prayer. Ample space is created in the agenda to allow the group to center in silence and prayer and to address major issues in a contemplative manner. People are encouraged to share scripture passages or images that can help a group draw together in understanding an issue. Issues are addressed using reflective exploration rather through persuasive argument. Emphasis is placed on developing habits of total, undefended listening to each other and to the Holy Spirit. Issues are resolved by consensus.

Vestries that are interested in preparing for a spiritual discernment approach will need to take deliberate, steps to explore the concept of discernment and to introduce the practice through a retreat or series of practical workshops. Listening Hearts Ministries, located in Baltimore is a resource, providing training and materials for groups interested in adopting for business meetings of the church. A number of books provide information on spiritual discernment and are listed in the appendices of this handbook.
Two books that have been widely used by vestries adopting discernment practices are: Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community, Farnham, *et al.*, Morehouse Publishing, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1991 and Grounded in God- Listening Hearts Discernment for Group Deliberations, Farnham, *et. al.*, Morehouse, 1996.

## D. Working out a Clear Understanding of the Warden's Role

Every congregation is unique. The history and dynamics of the congregation as well as the particular cleric serving the congregation make it imperative that Wardens and Rector or Vicar be as clear as possible about mutual expectations and about their roles in the life of the congregation. One significant factor is size of the congregation (Family, Pastoral, Transitional, Program, or Resource) – See Section 9. Another significant factor may be the stage in the Life cycle the congregation is in – Also see Section 9. Before the Rector or Vicar takes vacation time, or suffers an illness, work out how various issues will be handled should they surface, and be clear about where the Warden might find help and support within the congregation, from neighboring clergy, and/or from the Bishop's Office. Simple communication is the key.

## E. The Importance of Mutual Ministry Reviews

The first point here is to distinguish between **mutual ministry reviews** and **evaluations of clergy**. Many lay members of the congregation are accustomed to being evaluated as employees of a company, and bring that mindset into the Church. In the Diocese of Maryland, there is an emphasis on mutual ministry reviews because this approach is a reflection of the basic concept that we are all partners in ministry. A mutual ministry review is grounded in a shared vision, agreed-upon goals and objectives, and a covenanted relationship among the congregation's leaders, including vestry or advisory board members and the clergy. In the appendix are two models for mutual ministry reviews.

At times, it may be appropriate and desirable to conduct an evaluation of clergy or lay employees. One model is included in the appendix.

## F. Confidentiality

Nothing can be more destructive than the breaking of confidentiality. This is not just in relationship to pastoral matters. This also applies to discussions in committee or vestry/advisory board meetings. Pastoral information must always be considered confidential, unless it is specifically known that the individual or family is comfortable with information being shared. One may hear the same information from other sources, but it is wise to preserve confidentiality until one is certain that the individual or family is comfortable with the information being shared. In committee or vestry/advisory board settings, be clear prior to a discussion whether the expectation for confidentiality is in order. It may be wise to have a quick review at the end of meetings to be certain that everyone is clear about what can or cannot be discussed with others – including spouses – and how those matters can be discussed in a consistent manner.

## G. Communication and Relationships

Needless to say, communication and relationships are crucial to the health of any congregation. The larger the congregation and the more complex the network of relationships, the more intentional leaders need to be about communication within the system and to the individuals and communities beyond the congregation.

Written pieces such as Sunday bulletins and newsletters are but one area with which to be concerned. What does a congregation communicate to newcomers through signs, the way the facilities are maintained, how people are greeted? What message is communicated to a prospective member? Are you interested in them and how the community might serve their needs and help them on their pilgrimage, or are you interested in them as a potential pledger who will help eliminate the deficit budget or make it possible to do something new?

One area to think about is how the vestry or advisory board communicates with the wider congregation. It is easy for leadership to be excited about a vision or new ministry only to discover there is no following. The vestry or advisory board needs to discover effective ways to communicate to the congregation and to empower the congregation to share feedback or new ideas to the advisory board or vestry.

## Section V

# BASIC FINANCIAL CONCERNS

While the Wardens are not expected to know the details of every financial transaction of the congregation, it is important for the Wardens to maintain an appropriate awareness of the congregation's overall fiscal health. This section will address some of the most often asked questions regarding finances and liability.

## A. Oversight

The Officers of the vestry should be working with the Rector/Vicar as members of a team. In larger congregations, there may be the need for executive meetings to set the agenda for vestry meetings. In smaller congregations, this team approach may be more informal. In all situations the Wardens, as officers of the vestry or officers of the church as an incorporated institution, are personally liable for all financial concerns. It is in your best interest, as well as that of the congregation, to keep abreast of the following matters:

1. **Oversight of finances**
   - Make sure that your congregation's financial records are audited annually. Audit options are discussed in the Manual of Business Methods and Church Affairs, available from the Diocesan Financial Office.
   - Work with your treasurer to see that a monthly financial report is presented to the vestry. At a minimum, the report should reconcile to cash - a report that includes a balance sheet is preferred.
   - Every Warden should know that the Parochial Report is due on March 1st of every year.
   - Work with your Rector/Vicar to complete this document on time.

2. **Property and liability insurance**
   - Have your congregation's liability insurance reviewed annually.
   - Keep records of all changes in property value.
   - Keep records (and adjust your insurance as necessary) to account for the acquisition of new property (e.g. computers, other office equipment).

3. **Employee/personnel matters**
   - Adopt personnel policy and/or use a policy manual that is in accordance with Diocesan standards and canons.
   - Maintain current copies of all contracts with church employees, both lay and ordained.
   - If your congregation does not have a policy manual, spell out the contractual arrangement with each employee in the body of his or her contract.

4. **Other church sponsored organizations**
   - Day Schools - if unincorporated, their finances fall under the purview of the Vestry; if separately incorporated, the vestry should still have at least an annual report of their finances

- Other organizations run by the congregation **-** Any organization that runs a cash operation needs to be included in the congregation's annual budget; any such organization should provide quarterly financial reports to the vestry

## B. General Accounting Procedures

Each congregation should have a copy of the Manual of Business Methods and Church Affairs. This manual addresses issues such as the proper procedure for counting the Sunday offering, minimal standards for bookkeeping and reporting to the vestry, as well as other important financial issues. It is available from the Diocesan Financial Office.

## C. Compensation

One issue that remains confusing for many parish treasurers is the split between federal and state tax law, and Social Security tax law with regard to ordained employees. To help clarify this issue, please keep the following in mind:

1. For Federal and state tax purposes, paid clergy are usually employees, and a W-2 should be given at the end of the year (NOT a 1099)
2. For Social Security purposes, clergy are self-employed.
3. Withholding taxes and Social Security (FICA) for clergy payroll is a matter of choice.
4. If you reimburse the clergyperson for any portion of FICA, that amount IS considered taxable for federal and state tax purposes (as well as FICA).

Every congregation must have a compensation review committee for ordained and lay staff (Canon 4-140 Section 3). This committee can be a standing or ad hoc committee of the Vestry. National and Diocesan canons require that compensation be reviewed annually. Minimum reimbursement standards for clergy are set each year at convention, and can be found in the minutes from the convention or from the Diocesan finance office. Compensation should be a part of the clergy or lay employee Letter of Agreement. Some of the following points should be considered for ordained employee compensation:

**1.** Cash compensation is usually the base line from which the rest of the package is derived.
**2.** Housing is usually considered next. When an allowance is supplied instead of a residence, the amount of that allowance is not taxable for federal or state tax purposes, but is taxable for FICA. Even if a residence is provided, an allowance can be considered for furnishings or other items. An allowance for utilities is often a part of the housing package. The fair rental value of the residence is also taxable for FICA.
**3.** Pension is also a part of the total compensation package. Any questions regarding how the premium is determined should be directed to the Church Pension Fund (phone number is listed in the appendix).
**4.** Income replacement insurance should be considered (this is similar to disability insurance). Contact the Church Pension Fund or the Diocesan Compensation Review Committee for more information.

5. Instead of having allowances for specific items, many congregations are moving to having an expense reimbursement plan. Included in this can be
   - Mileage (not counting commuter miles)
   - Tolls
   - Parking
   - Certain entertainment
   - Book expense
   - Other miscellaneous supplies
6. By having a flexible reimbursement fund, this allows clergy to use the funds more efficiently. Certainly, an annual cap to this fund should be set and reviewed each year. Unlike a housing allowance, receipts must be submitted to the church treasurer, and in a timely manner. (**Note:** If commuter mileage is reimbursed, this must be included in taxable income for federal, state, and FICA purposes).
7. Other items that should be included in the compensation package are:
   - Costs and expenses for continuing education
   - Costs and expenses for clergy events and convention
8. Of course, part of the compensation package should include specific details regarding:
   - Weekly days off
   - Sundays off (in addition to vacations, if desired)
   - Sick days
   - Vacation
   - Time off for continuing education
   - Time off for clergy events and convention
9. Christmas and Easter bonuses, as well as cash retirement gifts to clergy and lay employees are subject to standard taxation.
10. Expense reimbursements to be avoided include:
    - Commuting mileage
    - Any "flat" allowances for which a mileage log book or proper receipts are not first presented
    - Reimbursements for medical expenses (other than insurance) unless part of an IRS approved plan
    - Payments to clergy because covered under spouse's employer's medical plan, unless included as taxable compensation
    - Non-IRS approved pension plans
    - Payments of tuition loans unless included as taxable compensation
    - Payments to a clergy accessible fund to be used for the clergy to buy a house, unless included as taxable compensation
    - Health club or country club dues, unless included as taxable compensation

While this is an attempt at a fairly exhaustive list of items that should be considered for clergy compensation, there are other items you may wish to include. If you have any questions, please contact the Diocesan finance office.

## D. Discretionary Fund

The Rector/Vicar's discretionary fund is the property of the congregation. If it is kept as a separate bank account, it is to be kept in the name of the congregation and use the congregation's Tax Identification Number. Its sole use is for charitable purposes, and should not be used to reimburse expenses. The Discretionary Fund must be included in the congregation's annual audit, giving proper respect to matters of confidentiality.

Church Canon requires that the loose or open offering from one Sunday per month be set aside for the Fund. Alternatively, any congregation that wishes to budget an amount equal to the average Sunday loose offering may do so.

## E. Loans

Congregations from time to time have the need to make loans for capital improvements. The Diocese has several resources available for such use.

**1.** The Middendorf Fund
- Makes loans for capital improvements, new construction, and major repairs.
- Currently (5/99) makes loans at the rate of 4%.
- In general, makes loans for a minimum of $35,000
- Contact the Diocesan Finance Office for more information.

**2.** The Diocesan Property Committee
- Serves primarily missions and small congregations
- Makes loans for under $35,000 at the current rate of 4% (5/99).

**3.** The Episcopal Church Building Fund
- Makes loans for capital improvements at commercial banking rates.
- Will review plans for and give advice regarding major renovations and new construction.
- Contact the National Church Office in New York.

**4.** Other sources - The Diocese has listings of other sources for loans. Contact the Diocesan Financial Office for more information.

## F. Investments

Most congregations have the need to make some investment of excess cash on hand. There is a Diocesan Investment Fund in which congregations may purchase shares. It is maintained by the Mercantile Trust Department. For information, call the Diocesan Finance Office.

If you have more than $1,000,000 to invest, you should compare commercial banks and find the best rate.

If you are expecting to make any investment other than a guaranteed instrument (such as a bank account or Certificates of Deposit), you must first obtain approval from the Diocese. This is in accordance with Title 1, Canon 7 of the national church canons.

## G. Gift to the Congregation

In addition to pledges, gifts are often made to congregations by way of bequests, memorials, and additional funds given by a member or non-member of the congregation. These gifts are most often made in cash, but may also come in the form of stocks, land, buildings, jewelry, ground rent rights, or some other real property. When deciding what to do with these gifts, keep in mind that there are several categories of restriction that the giver may place upon them. They are:

**unrestricted -** funds which can be used for any purpose

**designated -** funds which must be used for a specific purpose

**temporarily restricted -** such as funds that are given for a particular purpose for a specific length of time, then allowed to be used for other purposes

**permanently restricted -** funds which are designated for a particular use in perpetuity

The Vestry has the fiduciary responsibility to use any gifts for the purpose for which they were given. Additional information about the gifts should be directed to the Diocesan Finance Office.

## H. Software Programs

There are currently a great variety of software programs available for use in management of financial records and church membership. Quickbooks is an adequate program for most congregations, and will interface with several membership programs. You should, however, shop around for a program that meets your particular needs and interfaces with your existing software. Ask other congregations your size what they are using, and ask if they can give you a demonstration before you invest substantial money.

## I. Fiscal Misconduct

Any suspicions of fiscal misconduct should be reported immediately to the Rector or Vicar. If you suspect the Rector or Vicar of fiscal misconduct, it should be reported immediately to the Bishop. While we all hope to work in an environment of trust and integrity, there have been (and probably will continue to be) situations in which the actions of a particular person does not rise to meet the standards we expect of one another. In these situations, it is important to refer your suspicions to the proper person(s) for investigation, and not attempt to engage in our own inquiry. There are many reasons for such behavior, or the appearance of such behavior, and appropriate referral will help resolve the matter with integrity.

## J. Corporate and Personal Liability

Your congregation’s general insurance policy will provide officers of the vestry with general liability coverage when operating within the purview of the specifically assigned duties of the particular office. In general, it will cover loss due to errors and omissions. Check your policy for your particular coverage. Additional coverage may be available through the Vestry member’s homeowner's policy, which is usually available at less than $200 per year. No insurance policy will cover losses due to negligence and deliberate malfeasance.

**Section VI**

# BASICS OF PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

## A. General

The canons of our church state that the Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property .Therefore the Property Committee should have a clear mission and policy statement. It should cover insurance, building maintenance, rentals and leases, and use of the buildings by outside groups. The Vestry should approve this statement.

Parishes generally own their real estate, but the Diocese owns Mission real estate. Mission property committees have the same responsibilities as those in parishes. Their actions are approved by the Advisory Board, but sales, purchases, major modifications, leases, and rentals must be approved by the Diocesan Property Committee.

The chair of the Property Committee reports directly to the Vestry. In many congregations, the Junior Warden has the responsibility for building maintenance, but this assignment is custom, not canon. The chair of the Property Committee may be any responsible and qualified person willing to give the necessary leadership.

Once the Mission and Policy Statement is approved, the next step is to adopt a strategic plan. This plan outlines everything that must be done (cleaning, waxing, painting, operation and maintenance of mechanical and electrical equipment, cleaning, grounds, etc.) Next, a plan of action is needed. It tells who does what, how they do it and when. After these two plans are adopted, the Committee has a clear guide for doing its job.

Every Warden should have the “Vestry Resource Guide” published by the Episcopal Church Foundation. Pages B7 and B8 contain an excellent outline of stewardship of property.

## B. Long Term Planning

Long term planning is not the job of the Property Committee. Long term planning involves every group in the congregation. However, the Property Committee is an important player in planning because of its intimate knowledge of the physical plant.

## C. Usage Monday through Saturday

Sunday is the big day for all congregations. Worship and Christian Education are the principal events. An active congregation, however, will use the buildings every day. Uses will or may include:

1. Special Holy Days: All Saints. Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, weddings, funerals, etc
2. Sponsored groups: Choir, youth, scouts, study classes, preschool, day care, soup kitchen, etc.

3. Administrative and pastoral: Parish offices, counseling, committee and task force meetings, etc
4. Outside non-profits and community groups: AA, NA, etc
5. Parties leasing or renting the facilities

A congregational calendar is necessary to prevent Chaos. Preparing the calendar is not the duty of the Committee, but it should have a copy. Lights, heat and air conditioning must be turned on, rooms must be clean, insurance must be provided (if applicable.)

## D. Cemeteries and Columbaria

Congregations having cemeteries and columbaria should appoint a separate committee to handle them. They involve record keeping and special conditions that are independent of maintenance and operation. However, these facilities must be mowed, cleaned and serviced. The Property Committee is the logical group to do these things, but they should be specifically delegated.

## E. Leases and Rentals

Good stewardship may lead Vestries and Advisory Boards to rent or lease property to nonaffiliated groups or agencies. Since leases and rentals are extra income, they must be handled carefully to avoid loss of non-profit income tax status. If the lessee or renter is also a non-profit, any arrangement should share costs, not make a profit. If lessors or renters are enterprises for profit, the Vestry should obtain professional tax advice.

Missions may not lease or rent property without approval of the Diocesan Property Committee.

## F. Alienation or Encumbrance of Church Property

From time to time members of the Standing Committee have been asked about the circumstances under which the alienation or encumbrance of property owned by a parish or separate congregation requires the prior written approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee. At the suggestion of the Standing Committee, Diocesan Chancellor Ronny Reno has written a memo to set forth the circumstances under which such approval is required (VIII-G "Real Property Checklist").

> There are two National Canons and one Diocesan Canon, which deal with this issue. The first is Section 3 of National Canon I.7 that provides as follows:
>
> "No Vestry, Trustee, or other Body, authorized by Civil or Canon law to hold, manage, or administer real property for any Parish, Mission, Congregation, or Institution, shall encumber or alienate the same or any part thereof without the written consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese of which the Parish, Mission, Congregation, or Institution is a part, except under such regulations as may be prescribed by Canon of the Diocese."

The other National Canon addressing this issue is Section 2 of Canon II.7 that provides as follows:

"It shall not be lawful for any Vestry, Trustees or other body authorized by laws of any State or Territory to hold property for any Diocese, Parish or Congregation, to encumber or alienate any dedicated and consecrated Church or Chapel, or any Church or Chapel which has been used solely for Divine Service, belonging to the Parish or Congregation which they represent, without the previous consent of the Bishop, acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee of the Diocese."

Our Diocesan Canon 2-180, entitled "Of the Alienation or Encumbrance of Church Property" provides as follows:

Section 1. In conformity with the Canons of the General Convention, application must be made to the Bishop and Standing Committee for leave to alienate or encumber any Church property. The applicant shall furnish with the application sufficient data to enable the Bishop and Standing Committee to determine that:

(a) The proposed alienation or encumbrance will not render the applicant insolvent or unable to pay its debts as they mature; and

(b) The proposed transaction is not likely to result in any foreclosure or other loss of Church assets or to impair the ability of the applicant to continue to meet the other obligations of its Christian mission.

Section 2. Whenever an application to encumber or alienate unconsecrated Church property is denied by the Bishop and Standing Committee, the applicant shall have the right to appeal to the Convention, whose decision shall be final."

There is a committee note to Canon 15, which states that "the phrase 'church property' in the foregoing Canon means real estate and does not include personal property."

An analysis of these three Canons leads to the conclusion that all real property owned by a parish or separate congregation cannot be encumbered or alienated without the prior written consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee. This permission is required even though the real property is not used for Church purposes. Although the requirement can be modified by Diocesan Canon with respect to unconsecrated real property, to date the only material modification made by our Diocesan Canon is to give a parish or separate congregation the right to appeal to the Diocesan Convention if the Bishop or the Standing Committee have denied permission to alienate or encumber unconsecrated property.

Since the words "alienation" (which is defined in Black's Law Dictionary as "the transfer of title and possession of lands") and "encumbrance" (which is defined in Black's Law Dictionary as "any right to, or interest in, land which may subsist in another") are technical legal terms, and since, with respect to certain short term alienations and encumbrances, the Bishop and Standing Committee have given a blanket approval, a "question and answer" format might be helpful in explaining the application of these three canons.

1. A wealthy parishioner dies and leaves his farm (including animals, machinery and house furnishings) to St. Swithins, with the understanding that it will be sold and the proceeds added to St. Swithins endowment. Is the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee to the sale required?

Consent to the sale of the land and building is required since they constitute real property, however it is not required with respect to the animals, machinery and house furnishings since they constitute personal property.

2. St. Swithins has called a new rector who owns his own home and does not intend to live in the rectory. The congregation would like to lease the rectory to a third party pursuant to a year to year lease that can be terminated by either party at the end of a lease year provided that the party desiring termination gives timely notice prior to the expiration of the then current lease year. Is the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee required?

Although a lease constitutes an alienation because it transfers a leasehold estate in the property to the tenant, as long as the lease is a bona fide arms-length transaction and at market rent, and can be terminated by the church at the end of any lease year, the Bishop and Standing Committee have given them blanket consent to this type of short term leasing transaction. However, if the tenant is guaranteed possession for more than a year, or the lease is not at arm's length, then the prior approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee is required.

3. St. Swithins is located adjacent to a busy highway. The Church has been approached by the State Highway Administration who would like to purchase a 20-foot widening strip. The State Highway Administration has made an offer that the vestry believes is reasonable and is willing to accept. Is the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee required before the offer of the State Highway Administration is accepted?

Yes, since the transaction will result in the voluntary transfer of title to the 20 foot widening strip. On the other hand, if the State Highway Administrator's offer is rejected, and the State proceeds to acquire the widening strip pursuant to a condemnation proceeding, then no consent is required since the State has an right to acquire land for highway purposes over the objection of its owners.

4. St. Swithins has contracted to purchase adjacent land that it intends to use to expand its parking lot. In connection with the sale the seller has agreed to finance a portion of the purchase price. At settlement the church will be required to sign a purchase money mortgage covering the adjacent land to secure the payment of the deferred portion of the purchase price. Does the grant of the purchase money mortgage require the prior consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee? Would the answer be different if the purchase money financing is to be provided by a bank instead of the seller?

Would the answer be different if the church already owned the property that it was mortgaging to the bank?

A mortgage is an encumbrance and accordingly the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee is required, irrespective of whether the mortgage is to be held by a seller or a bank, and irrespective of whether it is a purchase money mortgage or a mortgage of existing real property.

5. St. Swithins has been asked by an adjacent landowner to grant to the adjacent landowner the right for him and any successor owner of the adjacent land to use the church's driveway as a secondary access to the adjacent land. The adjacent landowner is prepared to pay a reasonable sum for this privilege. Is the prior approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee to the transaction required?

Yes. What the adjacent landowner is being given is an easement, which is an encumbrance and therefore requires the approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee. If, on the other hand, instead of granting the adjacent landowner an easement, only a license is granted to use the church's driveway (i.e., a right of use that can be terminated by the church upon not more than one year's advance notice to the adjacent landowner), then approval is not required since the Bishop and Standing Committee have given their blanket approval to such short term relationships.

6. St. Swithins endowment includes a number of ground rents covering residential properties located in the metropolitan Baltimore area. The treasurer would like to sell the ground rents and reinvest the proceeds in stocks or bonds. Is the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee to the sale required?

Although technically a ground rent is an interest in real property, (St. Swithins, as the owner of the ground rent, is the landlord under a 99 year lease that is perpetually renewable by the tenant), for most purposes a ground rent is treated as an investment that is similar to a bond having an infinite maturity that requires semi-annual payments of interest. For this reason the sale of a Maryland ground rent does not require the prior approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

## G. Real Property Checklist

Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
4 E. University Parkway, Baltimore, MD 21218

As more fully described in the attached letters from diocesan chancellor, Russell R. Reno, Jr., it is necessary under certain circumstances for a parish or mission to obtain the consent of the Standing Committee prior to conveying or encumbering real estate. Examples include sale of rectory, sale of real property devised to the church, subdivision of church-owned land, condemnation by public authorities, the granting of easements (including environmental and historical preservation easements), creation of ground rents, leases of a term greater than one year, mortgages/deeds of trusts, among other possibilities. The following checklist is provided as guidance for churches seeking this approval and as a guide for the Standing Committee to insure that all requests are handled uniformly and are well documented. The Standing Committee is committed to helping, not hindering parishes seeking approval and to dealing with requests promptly and fairly.

1. Information to be provided:

   a. Description of project (shares the vision, i.e., A big picture; include plats, drawings, pictures, etc.)

   b. Financing projections, including copy of bank commitment letter, if any

   c. Resolutions from vestry

   d. Copies of current budget and financial statements for preceding three years

   e. History of diocesan pledge

   f. History, if any, of consideration by other diocesan committees, bishops (copy of report(s))

   g. Any relevant documentation, e.g., copy of proposed easement or lease

   h. If relevant, explication of tax effects, e.g., IRS, state and local real property tax (tax treatment of rental income, estimate of real estate tax)

2. Time Frame: The Standing Committee usually meets on the third or fourth Thursday of each month between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. There are usually no meetings in July and August and the May meeting is a very brief meeting, normally held at and immediately following the adjournment of the annual diocesan convention. Requests for Standing Committee consideration should be submitted at least two months prior to the date on which approval is needed. The information outlined above should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the Standing Committee meeting at which the request will be considered for the first time. Please schedule a time on the Standing Committee meeting agenda by contacting Standing Committee president, through the Bishop's office (800-443-1399 or 410-467-1399 at least three weeks prior to the meeting).

## Section VII

## RELATIONS WITH THE DIOCESE AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

### A. The Diocese of Maryland

That part of the church most closely related to the parish is the diocese. The Diocese of Maryland is one of the domestic dioceses geographically situated, usually along or on state boundaries, which comprised the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA (the "National Church"). The diocese consists of each congregation and special organizations within its borders, and of the individual Episcopalians affiliated with them. Each diocese in the National Church is headed by a Bishop, who may or may not be assisted by other bishops (coadjutor, suffragan, assisting) according to the desires of the individual diocese and the workload within the diocese. Each diocese according to its own requirements employs other diocesan staff as needed and available. Dioceses are supported financially primarily by contributions to the diocesan accounts by the parishes and separate congregations. Bishops of a diocese, while serving as bishops of the whole church, are elected to office by a specific diocese. The Diocese of Maryland elected its 13th bishop diocesan in 1995 - The Right Reverend Robert W. Ihloff. After the retirement of Bishop Suffragan Charles L. Longest in the fall of 1997, the Reverend John L. Rabb was elected as Bishop Suffragan at an electing convention of the Diocese in 1998.

Laws (canons), policies and practices of each diocese, which must not contravene the National Church canons, are established by the convention of the diocese, which is a body of representatives of each parish in the diocese meeting at least annually and more frequently as deemed desirable. Such, diocesan canon, policies and practices are applicable to all congregations within the diocese, and work effectively as the uniting requirements of the parishes and separate congregations. The annual convention of the Diocese of Maryland is customarily held in May of each year. The members of convention are elected by the congregations within the diocese and youth representatives elected by the regions.

Between meetings of convention, the business of the diocese is carried out by the Diocesan council, a smaller body consisting of 12 members elected by and to represent each of the 12 regions of the diocese, and 9 members representing the diocese at large, elected by diocesan convention. Seats on the diocesan council are held by a mixture of clergy and laity.

At the 1996 convention of the Diocese, the following purpose statement was adopted for the Diocese as a whole, and for each congregation within the Diocese.

We, the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland,
a community of congregations and individuals
in covenant with god and one another,
commit ourselves to carry forward
God's reconciling work through Jesus Christ
as we build up the Body of Christ,
strengthen one another for Christ's mission, and
strive for justice and peace within the Church and the world.

To assist in accomplishing this purpose, the convention also adopted five broad directions for diocesan wide attention and activity during the immediate future.

1. Evangelism: Make evangelism central to the life and identity of each congregation and individual and the Diocese as a whole.
2. Education: Support and encourage local congregations to be centers of learning for people of all ages.
3. Sharing Resources: Develop, manage and share resources among our congregations to be better able to extend the Kingdom of God among all people.
4. Claggett: Renew the Bishop Claggett Center as a vital center of ministry and mission.
5. Justice: Facilitate further education on and the implementation of the biblical concept of justice so that we can discern direction and goals for this dimension of our mission.

(Note that priority is not indicated by the order of the directions, except that the convention did specifically order that Evangelism should be placed first in any listing of these broad directions.)

It is the duty of the Diocesan council, as well as that of the Convention, to see that these broad directions are acted upon, to monitor positive progress, and to review from time to time whether these directions are still valid for the focus of attention of the diocese as a whole.

In the summer of 1996 a group of persons from throughout the diocese were called together by Bishop Ihloff to study the structure of the diocesan staff, commissions and regions, to recommend ways of restructuring that would make the diocese a more effective body. The end result of the restructuring efforts was to abolish the previous commissions of the diocese, and to flatten the administrative structure of the diocesan staff. A number of diocesan positions were redefined, and job descriptions rewritten. Currently the diocesan staff participates in a number of teams: pastoral, operations, missions. Each staff member serves on one or more teams. The diocesan council has oversight of the operations of all parts of the diocesan affairs, and has summoned several advisory groups to assist it in the conduct of its business.

One of the most important Council committees is the Program and Budget Committee, which receives 'information on available diocesan funds and ministry needs of the parishes, regions and committees of the Diocese, and helps Council to formulate an annual budget This committee, like the Council itself, is representative of all regions of the diocese. It is the contact point for congregations wishing to obtain financial support for various ministries deemed to be of value to the diocese and to the church as a whole.

Communications among and between various members of the diocese - whether individual, congregational committee or diocesan level staff - are facilitated by the Diocese of Maryland's internet communications link – the diocesan web page. The address for this web page, which is maintained by diocesan staff, is http//www.ang-md.org. Each member of the diocesan staff also has an individual email address consisting of the person’s first initial and 1ast name (e.g., rihloff) followed by @ang-md.org). Other communications with diocesan staff at the Diocesan Center in Baltimore may be made by telephone 410-467-1399, 1-800-443-1399. The fax number at the Center is 410-554-6387. The mailing address is as follows: The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, 4 East University

Parkway, Baltimore MD 21218.
To reach diocesan staff at the Bishop Claggett Center call 301-874-3860, 1-800-793-1687. The fax number at the Claggett Center is 301-874-0843. The mailing address is as follows: The Bishop Claggett Center, P.O. 40, Buckeystown MD 21717.

A primary purpose of the diocesan administration is to support the congregations and individuals that make up the Diocese in their Christian ministry and growth. Each parish is encouraged to partake of the resources, good will and eager support of their diocese.

## B. Day Care Centers

Many congregations are blessed with wonderful facilities. Unfortunately, many of these facilities are greatly underused during the week. Many congregations see this as both a stewardship concern and a mission opportunity. How might the facilities be put to better use for the ministry? How might that space also produce some income to assist in the maintenance of this asset?

Day Care for children or for senior citizens is one possibility. Quality programs for these populations are difficult to find. It is an opportunity for the church to extend its ministry of hospitality. It is an opportunity to have a positive impact on the quality of life of those most immediately served and of their families.

There are many aspects to explore, of course. Congregations interested in exploring this kind of ministry must be aware of the many governmental regulations that pertain. For example, architecture and accessibility of the facilities are major considerations. A clear understanding of the needs of the surrounding population is an important initial step. How tragic it would be to develop a Day Care Center for children when the real need is a Day Care Center for seniors!

Churches within the diocese with established programs are eager and willing to share their knowledge and experiences. Legal advice will be crucial.

## C. Programs that lease space

Many churches find themselves in the situation of having more building space than they can use on a regular basis. As good stewards of the gifts we hold corporately, it is our challenge to maximize the use of our property in ways that promote the proclamation of the Gospel. Some congregations may chose to do this by offering free space to groups such as AA, neighborhood community councils, after-school programs for children, or other organized religious groups that do not yet have their own buildings.

However, some churches have enough vacant building space that they may consider leasing it to a tenant. For some, this will be a simple process of finding a tenant-family for an unused rectory. For others, it will be a more complicated process of considering tenants for Parish Hall space or other buildings that are owned by the parish. The legal particulars of such arrangements are discussed in other parts of this manual. This section will address the mission and outreach aspects of making such a choice.

When considering leasing substantial space to another organization, look first to the mission to which we are all called as Christians. In various places in the New Testament we are exhorted to make known the Good News of the Gospel to those who do not yet know it, and to love one another as we love ourselves. Now, it may seem difficult to connect these commandments to the issue of leasing church property. Yet, consider the decision-making process when we keep these commandments in mind. What kind of business is your potential tenant operating? A child-care center? A vocational rehabilitation organization? A job training program? All of these organizations, even without a particular religious affiliation or identity, can be viewed as part of our mission to serve those whom Christ would serve.

If you are considering leasing your property to an organization that is a for-profit business, or from whose rental income the church will make a profit, you will need to consider not only the legal status of such a transaction, but the mission that you are accomplishing by doing so. Again, you should consult the sections of this manual that address the legal issues related to property. However, the profits from such a lease agreement can be designated for a particular project that will enhance the mission and outreach of your particular congregation. Your own congregation's mission statement is a key element in considering this option.

Decisions to lease church property should take considerable thought and prayer. It will stir up feelings among parishioners who have experienced that space in a different way (e.g. "Where will we have the Church Bazaar next year?" or "How can they leave the old Nursery Room? I remember Mrs. So-and-So teaching me about Jesus there!") The congregation's mission should be a leading consideration when making a decision to lease property, as well as the appropriateness of the tenant with the life of the Church.

## D. Thrift Shops

A thrift shop is a wonderful project for a church that has the proper facility and "people-power" to make it successful. In the Diocese of Maryland, there are a number of thrift shops that have been very successful. The Diocese of Maryland can furnish the names of those in your area.

The church, before undertaking such a project, should see how this fits into its mission. Most thrift shops are designed not to make money but to serve others in the community. After a committee has been selected to study the feasibility of having a thrift shop, has reported to the Vestry, and received approval to move ahead, there are certain things that should be considered:

1. A Strategic Plan/Business Plan - This item can be overwhelming to some people when they consider undertaking such a project. There must be people in the congregation or friends of the congregation or those from other parishes that have been successful with a thrift shop, to help you undertake this project. The plan should include a mission statement, resources available to start a thrift shop, and the recruitment process to secure volunteers. The plan should be in writing and approved by the Vestry.
2. Incorporation or Un-incorporation - Incorporating has advantages and disadvantages. There are probably more un-incorporated thrift shops in Diocese of Maryland than

there are incorporated. Solicit help from a member of your congregation that is in the legal or accounting profession to assist you in this matter.

3. Notification of the Diocese of Maryland - Notify the Diocese that you are contemplating starting a thrift shop, as they can be a rich source of valuable information and assistance.
4. Inventory for the shop - A decision needs to be made whether you work on a consignment basis or a donation basis or a combination of both. The combination plan seems to work very well for most thrift shops.
5. Inventory Turnover - A constant supply of merchandise is very important for our shop. The pricing has to be fair and the merchandise in good repair. You will receive merchandise that is questionable and it would be appropriate to have a contact with Goodwill, Disabled American Veterans or some other organization to take these items.
6. Organization - It is recommended that you have a set of by-laws and officers for your thrift shop and one person from the thrift shop be the liaison to the Vestry. It is possible that you may seek help in organizing the shop and for training of the new board.
7. Start-up Funding - The reason why you have the Vestry approve the strategic plan is because you may need to have them give you a grant and/or loan to start-up your endeavor. You may be fortunate to have a parishioner or two that would be willing to make donations to this cause. This is a very important consideration and must be well thought out before starting your program.
8. Annual Reports to the Vestry - If you are unincorporated then your asset and liability account must be incorporated in to the church's profit and loss statement and you will be subject to the general audit of the church's finances. If you are incorporated, then the appropriate papers both for federal and state governments must be filed and these statements would also be filed with the treasurer and/or the financial officer of the church.
9. Social Ministry - This can be one of the more rewarding aspects of your thrift shop. In most communities there are people who are in need. If your parish is in a large community, then there are government agencies that can supply lists of families in need. Catastrophes do occur in communities, large or small, such as fires, floods or disasters that affects the families of the community. The thrift shop can aid with clothing and other items that are part of the inventory of the thrift shop. This is a wonderful outreach for the church.

This may seem to be a large order but it is a wonderful ministry to incorporate members of your congregation into the life of the parish and to provide an opportunity for outreach into the community.

## E. Columbaria

One of the things churches do best aside from providing a place to worship and caring for the spiritual support of its members is to make available appropriate opportunities to mark eventful milestones in the lives of people. People come to churches for baptisms, marriages, and funerals. In some instances churches even provide cemeteries for members. In more recent time, however, it has become impractical for churches to establish and maintain cemeteries. Thus, many churches are installing columbaria.

A columbarium is a series of niches in a wall, either inside or outside the church building, where the cremated remains of individuals are immured (the word columbarium comes from the word for dovecote, and immure means to place in a wall). Many churches in the Diocese of Maryland have installed columbaria for the convenience of their members, and there are several companies that sell the proper equipment. Zoning restrictions need to be investigated if a columbarium is to be installed outside, but there are no zoning restrictions for an interior installation.

While the initial purchase and installation cost can be substantial, the columbarium can soon pay for itself, depending on the cost of niches to subscribers. In some instances memorial funds be used to finance. A parish may opt to provide niches at cost or it may choose to try to make enough profit to ensure perpetual care. Either route is generally less expensive that the burial of a body in a commercial cemetery.

Those who have experienced funerals using columbaria have been favorably impressed. The immurement site is convenient to the place of the service, and perpetual care is provided as long as the church stands. Inclement weather is not a problem. Others have felt the “communion of saints” in the place of worship when they remember those who have been immured.

Members of congregations with columbaria should make themselves available to those considering installing a columbarium at their church.

## Section VIII

## THREE TOOLS FOR UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONGREGATION

## A. The Dynamics of Size: A Quick Summary of Arlin Rothauge's Work

The following pages are notes and drawings summarizing the work of Arlin J. Rothauge [Sizing Up A Congregation]. This document is brief, and can be obtained from the Episcopal Church's parish resource center (800-903-5544). This material is useful to help you to assess some of the dynamics of your congregation, and how they impact on your congregation's ability to grow, and to develop its ministry.

To use this material:

- Read the notes and look at the illustrations (Appendix Section XIV - H).
- "Active" membership can be determined by the average **adult** attendance at all your Sunday services.
- It is likely that your congregation does not fit one "Size", and that you have characteristics of two or more. On the whole, which "Size" seems most like you? What effect do the other characteristics have on the life of your parish?
- If you feel you are in transition from one "Size" to another, what are the stresses and strains? Where's the conflict? Look particularly at the changing roles and therefore changing relationship between clergy and lay leadership. Also, note that the way new members are integrated into the different sized congregations changes.
- As a result of looking at this material and your congregation in relationship to the material, what steps do you need to take? Where are the opportunities and challenges?

**1. The Family Church - Up to 50 Active Members**

a. Single cell unit. An extended family.
b. Power resides with the patriarch and/or matriarch. The gatekeeper is the key person in relationship to growth. The priest is the family chaplain.
c. Necessary to have a single vocation such as service, worship, education, evangelism, pastoral care that all agree on.
d. Devotion of all resources of all members to the church's vocation.
e. Communication occurs through informal network.
f. A strong sense of belonging produces a strong loyalty, but can make it difficult for a newcomer to become member.
g. Newcomers must come through gatekeeper. Membership is relatively easy, but adoption into the family occurs only with the approval of the patriarch and/or matriarch

**2. The Pastoral Church – 50 to 150 Active Members**

a. Increased size means there is a need for more centralized leadership and authority on the part of the clergy.

b. The priest must be able to relate to all in the leadership circle, and must make them his/her allies. He/She retains a relationship with those in fellowship circle, but begins to be somewhat distant from the wider membership circle.
c. Family and friendship circles are like the single cells of the Family Church. This is important for cohesion and growth.
d. The effectiveness of the priest is directly related to his/her ability to communicate and to delegate to the leadership circle.
e. Members and leaders look to their priest for inspiration and direction. There is potential for either danger or opportunity.
f. 1982 study of Episcopalians in this size church indicated that 54% chose a parish because they like the rector.
g. The newcomer sees pattern of strong personal relationships with his/her priest. However, the priest is constantly meeting newcomers, which means after an initial period of attention, the newcomer feels withdrawal of attention, and sometimes feels rejected. This points to the need to integrate newcomers into family and friendship circles.
h. Members are often casual or even uninterested in newcomers. Members think they are friendly, but in reality, friendly only to themselves or to visitors. Becoming a member can be a more difficult matter.
i. Joining the congregation is relatively easy, but inclusion in the fellowship circle is difficult. The newcomer must often be persistent, and must endure a screening process.
j. It is very helpful to have person with the gift of hospitality: He/She remembers names, peoples' interests, what the family/friendship circles are, is able to make introductions, to give information, and match interests of the newcomer with groups.

**3. The Program Church – 150 to 350 Active Members**

a. Again, the increase in size means a need for further organization and structure. Administration becomes a primary gift of the spirit. Administration means making ministry possible through organizational development, planning, etc.
b. Lay leadership is crucial to the effectiveness of this Church. Clergy and staff must share more responsibilities and authority.
c. Clergy and Lay team ministry requires coordination, communication, and training.
d. Clergy become pastors to (lay) pastors. Clergy helps lay leaders lead.
e. In this system, the Rector is a visionary, a coordinator, and an administrator (goal setting, planning, strategy, training, and evaluation).

f. The key to the effectiveness of this congregation is the affirmation of a vision for mission and ministry and a clear statement of purpose. Leaders understand themselves to be accountable to these points.

g. Parish life centers on different programs and worship services. Parishioners' sense of family and belonging come through these. Lay leaders must be pastorally sensitive.
h. Problem: How does the congregation have a sense of unity and belonging given all of the diverse programs? There is a need for coordination and communication and for ways to bring people of different programs and worship services together for common events, purposes, and projects.
i. Visibility and quality of programs often draw newcomers. Program leaders must be aware that their programs serve as entryways to the parish.
j. Such congregations need a directory of program. Newcomers need to be oriented.
k. Communications channels must take into account the visitor and newcomer.
l. There is a need for sophisticated and intentional newcomer ministry aimed at incorporating new members.
m. Gift identification with new and current members becomes an important step in learning how to incorporate new members.

**4. The Corporation Church – 300 to 500+ Active Members**

a. Again, size dictates greater organizational development.
b. The Rector as C.E.O becomes remote to most parishioners. S/he is known intimately only by a small percentage of the congregation. S/he sometimes seems like a "legendary figure". S/he must be a very good administrator.
c. The staff becomes increasing specialized.
d. There are many opportunities for lay leadership. It is important to develop ways to identify, recruit, train and "groom" new leaders.
e. There is a proliferation of small group opportunities. Like the Program Church, small groups are essential building blocks.
f. Impressive worship, powerful preaching, and the quality of diverse programs attract newcomers.
g. Communications vehicles need to be increasing sophisticated. Descriptive brochures about programs are important. Material must be written with the newcomer in mind.
h. One way of dealing with newcomers and growth is the founding of a new congregation.

## B. The Life Cycle of the Congregation

“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”
(I Corinthians 12: 27)

*One of the primary images for the Church, given to us by Saint Paul, is the body, the Body of Christ (see I Corinthians 12 in its entirety). Life as we know it begins at birth and moves through various stages to death. Due to our resurrection faith and theology are that death is not the end, and that rebirth and new life are possible. Putting these two thoughts together helps us to understand that every body – every congregation – goes through the lifecycle.*

See the pages in the Appendix (Section XIV- I) for charts related to the Life Cycle stages. This material can be used to help you and the leadership of your parish/mission to gain some helpful perspective on where you are and where you want to be. Knowing where you are will help you to develop the vision and the resources to grow and to experience new life. As the charts indicate, there is the potential for “dying and rising,” illustrating that you do not have to wait for the death stage in order to talk about rebirth or renewal.

To use this material:

- When you look at the stages (Birth to Death) think about characteristics of stages of life. How are these characteristics reflected in your congregation's life and ministry?
- Be honest. After looking through the material, is your congregation in a “Growth Phase” or a “Declining Phase”? Note your personal reactions. When working with this in your leadership group, allow people to react and to discuss their reactions to this honest assessment of your congregation’s life cycle stage.
- Now look more intensely to determine where in the “Growth or Declining Phase” your congregation might be. Again, be honest!
- What might be some initial steps to continue in the “Growth Phase” or to arrest the decline, and move back to a growth phase?
- Obtain Arlin Rothauge’s “Life Cycle of the Congregation” booklet.

### C. The Health of Your Congregation

Most of us are familiar with the rituals of a physical examination by a physician. I am sure that all of us have gone through the experience of having blood samples drawn, pulse taken, blood pressure measured, enduring that ice-cold stethoscope, being tapped and probed, and so on. If your physician is like mine, he or she seeks to learn something about your lifestyle, family life, and the stresses of your job. Even though we know that regular physical exams are for our own good, we sometimes avoid them. When we are younger or feeling good, we tend to avoid this ritual. Why bother? Similarly, sometimes we avoid our physicians because we do not want to hear the familiar refrain: “lose weight”, or “watch the cholesterol”, or “stop smoking”, or [you fill in the blank]. Sometimes, we avoid our physician because we simply do not want to fork out dollars we would rather spend on something else. Many of us keep as far away from physicians as possible until we get sick or we are fearful that something may be going wrong.

Not surprisingly, congregations like the one you represent often avoid the ritual of regular diagnostic work. Healthier congregations often forego it, mistaking the lack of obvious symptoms to mean no illness is festering. Congregations where things may not be as well as desired may avoid the diagnostic work because they have a pretty good idea of the problem(s), and they really do not want to be reminded. Congregations where things are obviously in bad shape, may avoid the diagnostic work because they fear there will be no therapy to restore health.

The Commission on Congregational Development in 1996 developed the document, “How Healthy is Your Congregation? (Appendix, Section XIV-J)”. It is a good diagnostic tool. To use it to its fullest requires honesty on the part of those using the rating system (see the bottom of the page following the twelve categories).

This tool is best used in a group with a third party to keep you honest.

- Read the whole document first. (Appendix, Section XIV - J )
- Rate your congregation in relationship to each category, and write a few comments describing why you rated from 1 to 4. Respond mainly to the statement next to the numbers. The paragraphs are descriptive to help you better understand the statement, and may be helpful in articulating why you gave a particular rating.
- Put all ratings up on a piece of newsprint. Calculate an average rating for the group for each category
- Discuss how you react to the average rating of the group, one category at a time.
- Give each person an opportunity to comment on his/her personal rating as you discuss each category
- What does this exercise tell you about your congregation’s health? What kinds of therapies may be required? What do you need to do to help the congregation get healthier?

# CRISES IN THE PARISH/CONGREGATION

## A. Danger and Opportunity

The Chinese character for crisis is a combination of the characters for danger and opportunity. We are usually more familiar with the dangerous aspects of crisis than those of opportunity. However, as wardens we are in a unique ministry and role. It is our responsibility to attend to the worldly matters of church business, while at the same time participate in the mission of spreading the Good News of Christ. It is through attending to responsible actions and just decisions that we find the opportunity to combine these roles, and witness to the Church and the world that we are a people of compassion, justice and truth.

Few people like to deal with crisis. Aside from emergency room personnel, police officers and firefighters, most of us tend to lead rather quiet lives. We learn to dread times of crisis because it usually means that we or someone we love is in turmoil, pain or danger.

However, no one can lead a life without some moments of crisis. We can be in denial of this and ignore its ramifications, or we can choose to face these inevitable moments and be as prepared for them as possible.

This section will address some potential points of conflict and crisis. Some of these crises will come routinely in the life of any congregation. Others will be unexpected and certainly unwanted. The underlying theme of this section is preparation. While crises cannot be avoided, some may be prevented, diverted or managed with the proper training and information.

## B. Clergy Retirement/New Congregation

Most of us look forward to the time when we can retire. We dream of days when we can spend more time with our family than in rush hour traffic - time doing the things we want to do instead of responding to each day’s crises and deadlines. Some may miss the sense of accomplishment brought by a career, but most soon settle into a routine of pleasurable activities that can be followed at one’s own pace. There is a sense that retirement begins in an atmosphere of joy and congratulations for a job well done.

Consider, however, when it is a cherished priest or deacon who announces retirement. We may feel sad at the loss of a person who has been an integral part of our lives. We may think: Who will perform our daughter’s wedding? Who will baptize our new grandson? Who will visit me when I am sick? These are the thoughts that often come to mind along with those of congratulations.

Similarly, when a priest or deacon announces a call to a new congregation, we may initially be saddened or shocked. Nonetheless, our thoughts may turn again to issues of loss or abandonment: Why is he moving? Has our congregation lost its appeal? Are we not paying a good enough salary? Who will come to be our new rector?

All of these responses are part of a normal process of transition. When a member of the clergy leaves a congregation there are many tasks to be done. Other sections of this manual address the clergy search process. As a warden, your role will increase significantly. Other lay leaders will be identified to participate in the process of transition. Interim or supply clergy will be called to attend to the pastoral and sacramental needs of the congregation. Perhaps the congregation itself will be called upon to reflect on its corporate mission and ministry. Hopefully this will be a time of growth and opportunity.

The concrete tasks associated with operating a congregation will consume a substantial amount of time and energy. Additional tasks will become apparent as you move into this transitional time. The following are some points to consider:

1. How can you help facilitate opportunities for the congregation to express its sorrow at the loss of the clergy person, while at the same time share in the joy he or she may have in anticipation of a new situation? A farewell party is certainly appropriate. A group project, such as compiling a scrapbook of letters and photos, is a good way to enable each person to express their sentiments and feelings.
2. Take the time to process your own feelings, whatever they may be. Be a role model for the congregation.
3. Familiarize yourself with the resources available to you. Contact the Bishop's Office with any questions you may have. Ask around for the names of other wardens who have gone through a similar transition.
4. Make sure you know how to delegate! If you don't know how, get someone to teach you. You are not responsible for doing everything. You are responsible for making sure everything gets done.
5. See to it that your own needs for support are met. Your increased responsibilities will necessitate more time at church. However, if you are consistently missing needed time from your own family or work, you are taking too much on your shoulders. Ask people to do specific tasks. Reread #4 above.
6. Even though it may feel like it is taking forever, transitions are not meant to be a permanent condition. The interim period will come to an end, you will hire a new priest, and the life of your congregation will continue. When the transition is over, take time to reflect on the ways in which you have grown emotionally, spiritually, and in other ways. Give a prayer of thanks to be in God's service at such a pivotal time in the life of a congregation.

## C. Clergy Health, Family Problems, or Other Crises

Most clergy live a very public life. Without always knowing it, we require a lot from them. Meeting the demands of congregation, family and personal needs is a difficult task.

The Bishop asks us to be supportive of the need for clergy to take regular days off, vacations, retreats, and sabbaticals. We are asked to support their need for time to participate in collegial activities with other clergy. In spite of these healthy and preventive measures, some clergy will experience medical problems, which may affect their ability to perform their regular duties. Others will experience marital or family problems, which are difficult to work out in the public sphere of congregational life.

Some clergy may isolate themselves from their colleagues and peers, or attempt to take too much on their shoulders. Still others may experience “burn-out” or need to retire, but are unable to acknowledge the reality of this particular situation.

Some of the following thoughts and suggestions may be helpful to you if you are the warden of a congregation in such a situation:

1. If your rector looks overworked, tired or depressed, find the opportunity to express your concerns to him or her.
2. Urge your rector to take regular days off, holidays and vacations. Set a tone in your congregation, which honors your rector’s need for personal time away from the congregation.
3. All families experience times of stress and transition. Be supportive of your rector’s need for family time, and for the family’s need for privacy and time away from the congregation.
4. Be understanding, but do not attempt to be your rector’s therapist or doctor, even if that is your profession. Urge your rector to seek professional help when needed.
5. If your rector is experiencing serious health problems, make sure that you and your rector work with the Bishop’s Office to obtain clergy coverage for your congregation, and that the Bishop is aware of the situation.
6. Be attentive to rumor control. Discuss with your rector what is appropriate and what is not appropriate to share with the congregation. Share appropriate information with everyone at the same time (letters to the congregation work well in this situation). Brush up on your communication skills.
7. Recognize the possibility that your rector may decide to leave the congregation, may choose to retire, or may not survive extreme health problems. Be prepared for these circumstances. Maintain an open relationship with the Bishop’s Office. Most rectors have long-term disability or retirement opportunities available to them through the Church Pension Fund. Familiarize yourself with the procedures for obtaining long-term supply or interim clergy.
8. Remember that you are not expected to deal with the ramifications of these problems by yourself. Use a team approach with the Vestry. Seek out advice as appropriate. The Bishop and the Bishop’s Office are always available to help you in your particular situation.

Health, family problems and other crises are not unique to clergy. We all experience them at some point in our lives. With some preparation, reflective problem-solving and solid teamwork, everyone will have the opportunity to grow, learn more about himself or herself, and learn more about the congregation as a community.

## D. Allegations of Clergy Sexual Misconduct or Other Improprieties

The Church Insurance Company (June 1994) defines sexual misconduct as:

(a). Sexual abuse or sexual molestation of any person, including but not limited to, any sexual involvement or sexual contact with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent; or

(b). Sexual harassment in a situation where there is an employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between the persons involved, including but not limited to, sexually-oriented humor or language; questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference unrelated to employment qualifications; undesired physical contact; inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance; or repeated requests for social engagements; or

(c). Sexual exploitation, including but not limited to, the development of or the attempt to develop a sexual relationship between a cleric, employee, or volunteer and a person with whom he/she has a pastoral relationship, whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.

The Church Insurance Company (June 1994) defines a pastoral relationship as:

> "A relationship between a cleric, employee, or volunteer and any person to whom such cleric, employee, or volunteer provides counseling, pastoral care, spiritual direction, or spiritual guidance or from whom such cleric, employee, or volunteer has received confession or confidential or privileged information."

In addition, clergy, lay employees, and church volunteers are subject to all local, state, and federal laws regarding child sexual abuse and the reporting of suspected child sexual abuse to the proper authorities. A copy of the Code of Maryland regarding these issues is included in the appendix.

Other improprieties may include an inappropriate pastoral response to a member of the congregation (e.g., a callous response or no response when called upon), bullying or mean-tempered interactions, revealing confidential information about a person or situation, public behavior which puts self or others at some type of risk, or any action or behavior which significantly and negatively affects the life of a member of the congregation or the congregation as a whole.

The last thing a warden wants to hear is an allegation of clergy misconduct. We will want to explain it away, ignore it, blame the victim or pretend that is does not exist. Misconduct is a violation of trust on many levels. We may expect such behavior in other arenas, but certainly not in the Church. Our response may be one of "not my rector." We may experience confusion over how a person can be pastoral to some people and yet victimize another person or group of people.

We may confuse our individual experiences with our rector with how our rector responds to others. Sometimes it is those who are closest to the rector who are not able to see the effects of his or her behavior, and who may be the last to hear of improprieties.

Given your personal relationship with the rector, you may see the situation up close and be hesitant or reticent to respond, or you may never see the problem until it lands in your lap via a complaint or allegation. The key is to be prepared ahead of time. The following suggestions may be helpful to you:

1. Know the definitions of sexual misconduct, fiscal misconduct, and other improprieties. When you become a warden, attend the diocesan misconduct prevention workshop. They are required for clergy, lay employees and some volunteers. Wardens are always welcome to attend.
2. Our country follows the basic tenet that a person is innocent until proven guilty. Just as there are procedures for criminal law, there are procedures for Church, or Canon law. These procedures include instructions for investigating allegations of clergy misconduct. When you become a warden, call the Bishop's Office to find out who the contact person is for putting these procedures into effect.
3. Keep material available to your congregation (in the pamphlet rack or some other conspicuous place) that explains the nature of clergy misconduct. Include the phone number of the Bishop's contact person for filing a complaint.
4. If you begin to suspect that some type of misconduct is occurring, talk to your rector about specific situations. Always have another member of the Vestry with you when you talk to your rector. Contact the Bishop or the Chancellor if your concerns are not adequately addressed. You can have informal conversations with these persons without filing a complaint.
5. If a person makes an allegation to you, urge them to call the Bishop or the Chancellor. Again, they can have informal conversations with this person to become aware of their rights without filing a complaint.
6. If a formal complaint is filed, remember that it is not your job to conduct the investigation. The Diocese has trained personnel to complete this part of the process. It will be important for you to maintain confidentiality while not keeping secrets. It is crucial that you reveal to no one the identities of the alleged victim(s).
7. As a warden, you will be in a difficult and awkward position. You may begin to question the nature of your relationship with your rector, the level of trust that is at stake, and whether or not you should have recognized irregular behavior in your rector at an earlier time. The relationship with your rector may become adversarial or broken. It is the responsibility of the warden and the Vestry to maintain the congregation while keeping contact with the rector.
8. Until the allegations are investigated and determined, your congregation will be in a time of great turmoil. Rumor control is especially important. Prayer is essential. The level of trust that was once a given may not return to normal for many years.

9. If the allegations are proven correct, the Diocese will provide a response team to assist you and your congregation through this crisis. You may find yourself having to initiate a search process. Interim or supply clergy may need to be hired. The most important thing you can do at this time is remaining in contact with the Bishop's Office, even if there are feelings of animosity toward the Diocese on the part of yourself or the congregation. The Diocese can assist you with some of these concrete needs, and can assist you and your congregation in the process of healing.
10. In the resources section of this manual is a list of books, articles, and other resources that address issues related to clergy misconduct. If you are in the midst of such a situation, you may wish to obtain one or two of them. You may also wish to purchase one or two of them for your church library.

Addressing allegations of clergy misconduct or other improprieties is a messy and painful business. Your trust of the Church and even your faith may be shaken to its core. Prayer is an important step to healing, and it will be important for you and your congregation to remain faithful in prayer even if it feels as if it is to no avail. Remember and trust Christ's promise to us at the end of the gospel of Matthew: "I will be with you, even to the end of the age."

## E. Staff and Personnel Issues

Many congregations operate with minimal staff; perhaps just an organist and a part-time secretary. Other congregations will have a larger staff pool. At some point in time every congregation will face a crisis related to church staff. The organist may storm out on Sunday morning over a dispute regarding hymns. The secretary may have an illness in the family that requires an unexpected leave of absence. Another employee may have a drug or alcohol-related problem. Someone else may have as many "bosses" as there are parishioners. The treasurer may be employing a counting method of "one for you and one for me." Again, the key to successful management of a crisis lies in good preparation for contingencies.

Although there is separation of Church and State in our culture, churches are required to follow all employment and taxation laws of the jurisdiction in which they are located. You will need to familiarize yourself with the appropriate laws regarding unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, payroll taxation, the Family and Medical Leave Act and other laws that affect employers. You will need to set forth clear expectations for your employees (particularly regarding confidentiality), have a written contract, and build a process for annual review. Some congregations may wish to create a written personnel policy. The Diocese can be of assistance in some of these matters. The Diocese is currently working on a model for congregational personnel policies. The Diocese can provide you with a list of other churches your size with which you can consult. All of these actions will assist you in managing a crisis that arises with church employees.

If you find yourself with an employee crisis, the following are some steps to consider:

1. Your best guide is any written documents you may have. Contracts, job descriptions, personnel policies and local laws can guide you in making decisions. If your employee crisis results in litigation, the court will look to these documents to establish the nature of the employer/employee relationship.
2. Do not make employee decisions in a vacuum. Normally, the Vestry maintains the authority to hire and fire. They may choose to delegate this task to others, such as the Rector, a personnel committee, etc. In the best of circumstances, the rector, wardens, Vestry and personnel committee will deliberate on these matters together.
3. Develop a clear contract and job description for each employee. It does not have to be long and written in "legalese." It simply has to be clear, and accurately describe the job and expectations.
4. Make sure that you post the appropriate personnel notices required by your legal jurisdiction (e.g. Worker's Compensation, OSHA Safety Laws, etc.).
5. Establish personnel policies for your church's specific situation. Develop a procedure for warnings and reprimands. Clarify procedures for employee complaints. Make sure that your employees attend the sexual misconduct prevention training. Familiarize yourself with child abuse reporting laws.
6. Allegations of any type of misconduct should be addressed immediately by the Vestry or personnel committee. Contact the Bishop's Office or the Chancellor if legal action may be required.

Remember that the key to managing an employee crisis is to do the work ahead of time. We often forget that we are employers, and we owe it to our employees and to our congregation to effectively manage this aspect of congregational business.

## F. Problem Solving Model

This is a simplified adaptation of a commonly used problem-solving model. Feel free to adapt it to your particular situation.

(Adapted from Social Work Processes [4th Edition] by Beulah Compton and Burt Galaway)

**1. Contact Phase**

a. Activities
- Engagement and problem definition
- Definition of the problem for work
- Goal identification
- Negotiation of preliminary contract
- Exploration, investigation, gathering information
- Assessment

b. Skills needed

- Ability to use self in the interests of the person or group being helped, based on self-awareness and understanding of the process of change, and knowledge of available resources.
- Listening, which includes not only listening with ears to words and with eyes to body language, but a total kind of perceptiveness, attending with care to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the person or group being helped.
- Communication of empathy, genuineness, trustworthiness, respect, and support.
- Use of such techniques as paraphrasing, clarifying, perception checking, focusing, questioning, reflecting, informing, summarizing, confronting, interpreting, assuring, and reassuring.
- Skill in analyzing the information presented and matching needs with resources.

**2. Contract Phase**

a. Activities

- Assessment and evaluation
- Formulation of an action plan
- Prediction of outcome

b. Skills needed

- All of the skills listed in the contact phase
- Ability based on knowledge of problems, goals, and resources available, to prioritize and organize information in such a way as to suggest useful action.
- Ability to generate a range of alternative plans with associated predictions as to probable success and cost.
- Ability to use own judgement and participation of the person or group being helped to select among alternatives.
- Ability to put all of the above together in a statement of actions to be taken, when and by, or with, what systems, within what time frame.

**3. Action Phase**

a. Activities

- Carrying out plan
- Termination
- Evaluation

b. Skills needed

- All skills listed in the contact and contract phases
- Skills in use of a range of methods as appropriate to roles necessary to carrying out the plan
- Skills in a range of evaluative processes

**Section X**

# THE INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN RECTORS/VICARS

In this section it is our objective to provide you with information that has been gathered from many sources, including personal experience, to assist you if you are faced with any of the following clergy vacancies. The Church Deployment Board of the Episcopal Church, the Alban Institute and the Diocese of Maryland are great resources. The Vacancy Process has been part of the Episcopal Church life for years. Whereas the more organized "Interim Process" has been operating for a little more than 25 years. We encourage you not to try to re-invent the wheel. The process does work, especially if you follow the will of God in all of your deliberations.

## A. The Increasing Role of the Warden

Clergy Vacancies

1. Resigns or is terminated
2. Is on Sabbatical Leave
3. Is incapacitated by Severe Illness or other Cause
4. Is on Vacation
5. Dies

The size of your parish will determine what steps you would take in each of these situations. A larger parish will have assistant clergy that can fill the vacancy temporarily until a replacement has been secured.

We strongly recommend that the following steps be taken in all cases mentioned above. The Bishop is the pastor for all clergy and the Bishop's office must be notified whenever a vacancy is created for the position of rector or vicar.

## B. Steps to Be Taken

1. Notification of the Bishop of the Vacancy or Other Problem
2. Convening the Vestry
3. Overseeing day-to-day Operations

## C. The Interim Process Begins

Create the Environment for Closure between the Congregation and the Departing Rector/vicar

Whatever the reason for the departure, it is very important that a group be selected to organize an appropriate farewell to a departing rector/vicar or an appropriate memorial service for a rector who is deceased. In the case of a departing rector with many years of service, or even a short tenure, the congregation will go through a grieving process. The closure must be sensitive to the needs of all concerned.

The departing rector/vicar should remove him or herself from the daily activities of the church and not participate in any of the “interim process”. This means participation in weddings, funerals or other important events in the life of the congregation. This may seem very harsh and insensitive, but from experience it has been proven that the congregation must say good-by, and the departing rector must accept the good-bye and start a new life independent of the former parish.

## D. Calling the Interim Rector

The 69th General Convention in 1988 passed two resolutions with respect to interim ministries in recognition of the value of such specialized ministries to many congregations and parishes. The Resolutions recommend recruitment, training and use of professional interim pastors and consultants for the Episcopal Church. They go on further to define the interim period, interim ministry and interim pastorship.

While interim rectors will only be present in the parish for one to two years, they provide continuity at Sunday services. They provide an important supportive role in facilitating the grieving and healing process when a rector leaves. These are vitally important to the on-going health of the church community, particularly when a long-term rector leaves or when the rector leaves under difficult conditions. The Wardens and other lay leaders will want to work closely with the interim rector to insure that the grieving healing process is done in a sensitive manner.

## E. Stages & Tasks for the Interim Ministry and Calling a New Rector

We have included a model for stages and tasks for interim ministry and calling a new rector as developed by the Church Deployment Board of the Episcopal Church, which should be helpful.

### 1. Preparation for the Interim Process

After the rector has submitted his or her resignation to the vestry, the Senior Warden is to notify the Bishop of the vacancy in writing. The office of the Bishop will inform the Senior Warden of the person or persons in the diocese who will work with the parish during the Interim Process.

The next important step is to have provision made for continuing ordained ministry in the parish. This should be in consultation with the Bishop's office, using supply priests or an interim priest. The interim will normally serve for a temporary time during the search process and will provide continuity at Sunday services and can facilitate a smoothly run day-to-day operation for the congregation. Names of interim rector candidates will be received from the Bishop's office. The vestry will interview the candidates and they will make the final selection.

We have referred to the Bishop's office for contact during this interim process. We encourage you to meet personally with the Bishop, as the Bishop is extremely interested in what is happening in each parish, especially those that are going through the interim process.

## 2. The Agreement for the Interim Rector

The agreement for the interim rector is a very important document and must be for the mutual benefit of the interim priest and the vestry of the church. The Bishop's office can assist by furnishing sample agreements and other information. The Church Deployment Board of the Episcopal Church can furnish a manual for the interim process. We encourage you to order at least one copy for the wardens and vestry, and one copy for the Profile and Search Committees.

The senior warden, for the vestry, completes the agreement with the interim rector. The agreement is signed and then forwarded to the Bishop's office for review and signature. A copy will be kept by the Bishop's office and a signed copy will be returned to the parish.

## 3. The Senior Warden's Role

During the period when the former rector leaves the parish and the interim rector is installed, the senior warden will convene with the vestry and provide the necessary leadership in setting the meeting agenda and ensuring the spiritual dimension remains central to the process. If an assistant priest is available, that person will assist in these arrangements until the interim priest is in residence.

In smaller churches the senior warden will have oversight on the day to day operation of the church, delegating to other members of the vestry and the junior warden as needed. The senior warden is responsible in assisting the interim rector in seeing that the programs of the church continue during the interim process. In smaller churches, the wardens' roles increase significantly.

These are times for shared leadership and extra effort from all members of the church community. The church must not lose sight of its call to mission, its call to continued spiritual growth, and its call to serve one another. If these commitments are well established before vacancy, the interim process will be much easier and more successful.

## 4. Self-study and the Development of a Profile Position

In some parishes, one committee is selected to do the profile process and also the search process. We recommend consideration of making this a two-step process, as it will involve more members of the congregation. The congregation needs to have ownership and you can draw on the leadership of the congregation to share in this process.

If resources are available, it is recommended that a consultant be secured at this point to assist in the calling process. Names of qualified consultants can be secured from the Bishop's office. More and more priests are being trained in this area or have expertise from prior experience.

A very important issue in the formation of this committee is whether or not a member of the vestry should serve. It is strongly recommended that neither the senior or junior warden be a part of this committee as they have other leadership responsibilities.

The profile process raises many questions. What is our past and our present and what do we want for our future? Moreover, what is God's call to us today? What is our mission and our ministry? Finally, what does all of that say about the clergy leadership God is calling for your Congregation?

During the profile process, the congregation should be given the opportunity to participate, through special meetings: meetings with committees or commissions of the church or meetings with individuals - those that are recent members and those that have been members for many years.

This is the time for the congregation to get in touch with its own story, its unique gifts and challenges, its history, to help people let go of the past and focus on the future into which God has called them. The profile report, which will be in writing, becomes the basic tool to reach out and invite potential candidates by the search committee. It is recommended that this committee and the congregation use the section on "Life Cycle Stages" to better understand where they are in the cycle of church life.

Once the profile report has been published, there should be a time for celebration and communication with the congregation and for the dismissal and appreciation to those who have served on this first phase of the interim process.

**5. The Search Process**

The search committee, if it is a separate group from the profile committee, is often called the “Calling Committee”. If the parish was unable to have a consultant participate in the profile process, we would encourage you to make the investment to hire a consultant for the search process, if only on a part-time basis to assist the calling committee. It is recommended from the experience of many parishes, that no member of the vestry serve on this committee, as this phase must be kept in the strictest of confidence by those who serve, which includes the vestry and the congregation.

The Bishop's office should be kept informed, on a regular basis, of the progress of the parish during the interim process. The Bishop's office needs to know how things are progressing, where you are in the process, and especially if any difficulties are experienced.

The Bishop's office will furnish potential candidates to the search committee at the same time that the search committee is receiving names from the National Church Deployment office and from other sources, including suggestions from parishioners. The Bishop will review the "short list" of names after the search committee has completed this step of the process.

The consultant can be most helpful in developing a prayerful process for the search committee. The congregation needs to be invited to participate in prayerful support of the committee while it is doing the search. The consultant can also be very helpful in providing guidance about the methods used and to provide skill- training for the members of the committee.

When the vestry appoints the search committee they should develop a written “charge” to the committee, outlining the committees responsibilities and how they want the candidates presented to the vestry for the final selection. The search committee will need to narrow the list down, over a period of time, to their final selections. These candidates will be interviewed by the full committee, approved by the Bishop's office and invited to meet with the vestry.

When the time has arrived and the search committee is ready to present to the vestry its final selection of candidates, they should be in order of the committee's preference. The committee will give full background information about each candidate and answer all questions raised by the vestry.

The vestry should then meet with the consultant after the presentations have been made and then, in prayerful discernment, agree on the candidate whom they will call.

**6. The Call, the Agreement and the Public Announcement**

After the vestry has made their decision, the senior warden should call the candidate as soon as possible to inform him/her of the vestry’s decision and to ask the candidate's willingness to serve. Arrangements should be made immediately to meet with the candidate as soon as possible to prepare the agreement. Sample agreements can be secured from the Bishop's office.

Normally the finalists have been informed of the financial arrangements that would be made if they were called so that preparation of the agreement should not be too difficult. The importance of the agreement can not be over-emphasized.

The Bishop's office should be notified of the selection. The senior warden and representative of the vestry should prepare the agreement with the rector-elect (there will be a separate section in the Appendix about agreements).

Once the vestry has approved the agreement and it is signed by the senior warden or other vestry representative, and the rector-elect, the agreement is then forwarded to the Bishop for review and signature. It is very important that an announcement be made to the congregation as soon as possible

**7. Closure for the Interim Ministry**

Soon after the call has been made to the rector elect, preparation will be made for the closure of the ministry of the Interim Rector. Timing of departure will depend upon when the rector elect can start to serve and when the interim may be leaving for a new call. A celebration of ministry should be planned with a reception to follow the service.

The search/call committee sometimes will remain in place until the rector-elect has been installed. But whatever your choice in your parish, we recommend that proper recognition be given to this committee as they have played a most significant part in the interim process. They should be discharged from their responsibilities and thanked for their service.

**8. Celebration of the New Ministry**

We are fortunate in the Diocese of Maryland that a service written by Bishop Theodore Eastman has been used throughout the diocese. The Bishop's office should be contacted to set the date that is convenient for the Bishop to participate in the service. At that time the public announcement should be made inviting the community of faith to participate in the service.

**9. Entering the New Mutual Ministry**

After the new rector has been installed, the new life of the church is just beginning. The beginning of a new ministry is a particularly vulnerable time. The rector and his or her family need the support of the church and help of the congregation in discerning the call, to assist in the move, when required; to assist the family in locating new housing; to learn about the schools and other needs of the family. It is recommended that a special committee be formed to undertake this process. This time is sometimes referred to as the "Calm" after the call of the new rector.

This is an important time for the new rector. The rector should work very closely with the Bishop's office for his or her own pastoral needs, and for better understanding of the new life of the parish and the diocese.

This is a period of high expectations on the part of the new rector, the vestry and the congregation. The wardens can be especially helpful at this time in supporting the new rector and assisting the congregation, where appropriate, to understand that everything is not going to change. The congregation, through prayer and rededication, can receive the new rector into their lives and the lives of their families with confidence and hopefully with enthusiasm.

This is also an important time for the wardens, especially the senior warden, to see that the needs of the new rector are met. A walk through of the facilities, introduction of key personnel and a special welcome at the rector's first vestry meeting are a few suggestions.

### 10. New Mutual Ministry Review

The agreement between the new rector and the vestry calls for periodic review of the mutual ministry. Thus, it is important that some time during the first year, certainly after the first six months, that the goals of the church be established and be attached to the rector's agreement and this will become the standard for the review of the new mutual ministry. The review is not to find fault with anyone, but to determine if the expectations have been met. Where there are weaknesses, changes should be made so that the church can go forward. A procedure for review has been developed and this information can be secured from the Bishop's office. There is the opportunity to have another consultant participate in this step.

Participants in the review generally help each other see how each person's ministry relates to the health of the other ministries in the congregation and the call that God has made to the church. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "God has so adjusted the body… that the members may have the same care from one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together [1Corinthians 12:24-26]."

## F. Check List for Wardens

1. Report rector/vicar vacancy to the Bishop's office
2. Convene the Vestry and layout the vestry's new responsibilities
3. Schedule an appropriate closure for the congregation and the departing rector/vicar
4. Make arrangements for clergy for services
5. Call an interim rector
6. Appoint Profile Committee
7. Hire a consultant, if appropriate
8. Publish the Profile Report
9. Appoint the Calling/Search Committee
10. Oversee the operation of the church
11. Secure manual from the Church Deployment Board of the Episcopal Church
12. Communicate with the Bishop
13. Presentation of Calling Committee's report and candidates to vestry
14. Decision of vestry
15. Place call to rector candidate
16. Farewell plans for interim rector
17. Negotiate new agreement between vestry and candidate
18. Installation of new rector
19. Start-up of new ministry
20. Develop goals for mutual ministry

**Section XI**

# WARDEN'S RETIREMENT

## A. Closure

All those leaving a ministry need appropriate closure. If the warden has gone through a trying event in the parish life or participated in an interim process there is probably more reason for closure. The parish should plan an appropriate time or event to honor and recognize the retiring warden. This is an opportunity for showing the parish's appreciation for his or her service and can be done simply as a resolution from the vestry, as part of the congregational meeting, or as part of a service in the church.

We must all acknowledge that serving the church as a warden is no easy matter, and that experience has shown that wardens often leave office with unresolved issues, both positive (e.g. he or she liked being a warden and didn’t want to leave) and negative (e.g. clergy and parishioners caused pain and hurt that was hard not to take personally). It is often inappropriate to deal with these feelings within the parish leadership circle. If your heart is troubled, seek out a learned priest or counselor not in the parish where you worship. Talk the issues through and then take whatever steps may be necessary to effect reconciliation with those with whom you are at enmity. If feelings go unresolved, retired wardens may feel they must leave the parish to find new ministries elsewhere, leaving good friend and affiliates behind. This is unnecessary if you identify and own your feelings and resolve them with help.

## B. Exit Interview

After the warden retires, an exit interview should be arranged as soon thereafter is convenient with the new warden. This could include some representatives from the vestry, as appropriate.

This interview should be arranged around a series of questions prepared by the warden and the vestry. Among the questions, there would be a need to know how the warden feels about the spiritual and financial life of the congregation, and what they feel would be the areas that should be addressed by the new warden, especially if there has been a transition in the rectorship or some other issue that has been troublesome during the warden's service.

## C. Transfer of Files and Records

The warden may have used files or papers from many sources during their term, which may be of value to the incoming warden. We recommend that pertinent material that is important to the life of the church should be turned over to the rector, church historian, or to the office secretary for proper filing.

## D. Appropriate Availability to New Warden(s)

This is a sensitive area, as each person has his or her own special skills and agendas. Some people are looking for counsel; others would rather do it by themselves. Thus, we suggest that the new warden be informed that the retiring warden is available to be of assistance, but that he/she does not want to interfere with the work of the new warden. It is possible that there are several wardens that have retired and this group could be available in emergency situations or unusual events in the life of the church, where they would be called as a resource for historical purposes and for assisting the warden in special situations.

## E. Discerning a New Ministry for the Warden

We strongly encourage you to give the new warden an opportunity to assume his or her new duties in the church life, stepping back so that they can step forward. Your rest and change is well earned.

Life goes on and the retiring warden should recognize the fact that there are many other areas in the church life that would be of particular interest to them, especially those areas where they felt that additional help was needed. We further recommend that, because of the experience gained from this important position in the parish, you seek out work in the diocese or elsewhere in the life of the church. This might be a good time to take a much-deserved sabbatical, to study, to pray and to grow.

## Section XII

# HELP!

You need help. Where do you turn for help? First, take a deep breath. Then, lift a prayer to God. Remember that "***Our help is in the Name of the Lord***." Know that you probably don't have to re-invent the wheel. Someone or some community in the Diocese of Maryland has dealt with a similar problem, dealt with a similar issue, or worked through a crisis like yours. **There is help out there! Help comes in many forms and at various levels of intensity.**

The pages of this Handbook cover a number of topics, and provide some much useful information. The text and the Appendices point to a number of resources. Try the Internet. The diocesan web site is http://www.ang-md.org.

There are a lot of people available to you. Do some networking with other wardens, get a feel for wardens in similar circumstances, size, or location of the congregation. These colleagues are a good place to start. Clergy in your region may also be a good source of assistance. The Bishops and Diocesan Staff are ready, willing and able to serve you. The Bishop's Chancellors have extensive legal knowledge and numerous contacts. The leadership of diocesan committees, commissions, and task forces offer specialized expertise: Evangelism, stewardship, investments, finance, property, and Christian Education being a few examples. A complete listing of diocesan resource people with phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses can be found in the Appendix, Section B.

Stay in touch with the Diocesan Calendar and mailings. There are many training opportunities that may be helpful to you, to members of the vestry or advisory board, or to parishioners engaged in diverse ministries. The Wardens' Conference is one example. The Ministry Fair is another. Others are more focused such as a Stewardship Conference. Some of these events are national or ecumenical events. For example, many people from Maryland have participated in the Start Up! Start Over! Conference presented annually by the Episcopal Church Building Fund. Several clergy and lay leaders participated in a recent national conference for those interested in advocacy ministries for children. Knowledge is power. Knowledge can help the growth and development of ministry.

Some people have negative associations with the concept of consultants. For some, the use of a consultant implies the congregation is somehow failing, or somehow lacking in ability to help itself. Not so! Consultants are sometimes needed to help resolve conflicted situations. More often than not, however, consultants are people with specialized skills who can help a congregation to develop a particular ministry, engage in long-range strategic mission planning, or to manage growth. Diocesan staff can help you clarify your need for consultant help, and put you in touch with the appropriate resource person. The appropriate people and resources are out there.

**Section XIII**

## Appendix

### A. Bibliography

*(The following Books and Booklets are among the many printed resources available in the area of Congregational Development. A few of the older ones may be out of print.)*


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## B. PRAYERS FOR THE CONGREGATION

### 1. In the Book of Common Prayer:

- For the Church, p. 816
- For the Mission of the Church, p. 58 (Rite I), pp. 100 – 101, p. 205 (Rite I), p. 257, pp. 816 – 817
- For Clergy and People, p. 817
- For the Parish, p. 817
- For a Church Convention or Meeting, p. 818
- For the election of a Bishop or other Minister, p. 818
- For the Unity of the Church, p. 204 (Rite I), p. 255, p. 395 (#6), p. 818
- For those about to be Baptized or to renew their Baptismal Covenant, p. 819
- For all Baptized Christians, p. 201 (Rite I), pp. 252 – 253
- For all Christians in their vocation, p. 206 (III, Rite I), p. 256 (III)
- For Guidance, p. 832
- For Quiet Confidence, p. 832

### 2. A Prayer for a Congregation in Transition (Source unknown)

Almighty God, you have graced us, in the time between rectors (vicars), with the opportunity to re-examine who we are as your people in this parish (mission). Grant us the will to use this time to be open to the leading of your Holy Spirit, that we may envision the path you would have us travel in the years ahead. Lead us to choose a faithful pastor to join us on that path, who will care for your people and help equip us for our ministries, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

### 3. A Prayer (Source unknown)

Disturb us Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves; when our dreams come true because we dreamed too little; when we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess, we have lost our thirst for the waters of life; when having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity; and in our efforts to build the new earth, we have allowed our vision of the new heaven to dim.

Stir us, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas, where storms will show your mastery; where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. We ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes, and to push us into the future in strength, courage, hope and love.

AMEN.

4. **Prayer for the Church** (From *Prayers of our Hearts in Word and Action,* Vienna Cobb Anderson)

Hear our Prayer, most gracious God, for the people of Church. Grant unto them enquiring hearts and minds to seek your Truth and inspire them to do your will in all that they undertake. Open their hearts to the concerns of their neighbors that they may seek justice, care for the afflicted, feed the hungry, and shelter the homeless. May they be instruments of your love and grace in this world. Deliver then from pride, hypocrisy, divisions, and all evil and grant that in their lives and labors they may praise your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Savior. AMEN.

5. **Words to a hymn** (can be sung to the tune of The Church's One Foundation)

*We are all one in mission; we all are one in call*
Our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all.,
A single great commission compels us from above
To plan and work together that all may know Christ's love.

We all are called to service, to witness in God's name.
Our ministries are different; our purpose is the same:
To touch the lives of others with God's surprising grace,
So every fold and nation may fell God's warm embrace.

Now let us be united, and let our song be heard.
Now let us be a vessel for God's redeeming Word.
We all are one in mission; we all are one in call,
Our varied gifts united by Christ, the Lord of all.
AMEN.

## C. SAMPLE LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR A RECTOR

Between

The Wardens and Vestry of

______________________________ Church

and

The Reverend ________________________________________________________

Who has been elected Rector with the understanding that this tenure is to continue until dissolved by mutual consent or by arbitration and decision as provided by the relevant canons of the Diocese of _________________________and of the General Convention

PREAMBLE

The Rector shall lead ___________________________________ church as pastor, priest and teacher, sharing in the councils of the congregation and of the whole Church in communion with our Bishop. By word and action, informed at all times by the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Constitution and canons of the General Convention and our Diocese, the Rector shall proclaim the Gospel, love and serve Christ's people, nourish them and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

This ministry is further described in the Rector Position Description approved by the Rector, Wardens and Vestry on __________________________, which is hereby acknowledged and made part of this Letter of Agreement.

**SECTION A: TIMES OF WORK AND LEAVE**

1. The Rector's work includes not only activities directed to the parish and its well being, but also labors on behalf of the Diocese and community. The Rector's scheduled work week is five days, usually measured as ten to twelve units of mornings, afternoons, or evenings in various combinations reflecting the demands of this ministry. In general, no more than three evenings per week are expected. The Rector is expected to preserve at least one continuous twenty four-hour period each week solely for family and personal use.

2. The Rector will have the following periods of leave at full compensation:
   a. National Holidays: to be taken so as to not interfere with worship for major occasions
   b. One month annual vacation, consisting of twenty-three workdays which shall include five Sunday's. No more than __________ days and one Sunday may be carried forward to succeeding years.
   c. Professional Development leave at the rate of two weeks per year

d. Two weeks per year of service in this parish for Sabbatical Leave, to be available after the third year and cumulative through the sixth year. Sabbatical arrangements shall be made in full consultation with the Vestry (but in no case shall the Rector be absent from the parish no more than 3 months at one time), to insure benefits for the parish as well as for the Rector.

e. _______________ weeks Parental Leave for the period immediately surrounding the birth of a child to the Rector and his or her spouse, beginning at a time decided by the Rector.

**SECTION B: COMPENSATION**

In this section you are to set out the compensation/benefits package that you are offering your Rector. Diocesan policy says that it must include the following parts

- Cash salary amount equal to or greater than the current Diocesan Minimum and adjusted annually to reflect Cost of Living and diocesan minimum compensation guidelines as established by the Convention

- Use of a Rectory or a Housing allowance in accord with IRS regulations. If you provide a rectory you should set forth the terms of use and payment for maintenance and utilities

- Church Pension Fund payment

- Insurance - medical and life, for the Rector and his/her family on the Diocesan Insurance plan. If you choose to find an alternative medical service provider you must provide coverage equal to or better than the Diocesan plan

- Mileage reimbursement at the current Federally established rate

- Allowances for continuing education (minimum $250.00)

- Workmen's Compensation Insurance and Income replacement insurance

- Normal church office expenses

- Reimbursement allowance for expenses incurred in the carrying out of the Rector's duties on behalf of the parish

- The cost of a telephone in the Rector's residence. The telephone number shall be published to insure the Rector's accessibility in case of emergencies. The Rector shall pay the cost of all long distance calls.

- Discretionary fund: in accordance with the canons of the church, a Discretionary Fund is to be established under the Rector's Sole control for members of the church.
- Professional Development Allowance up to _________________ per year for professional development leave.

1. The Rector shall not charge fees for performing any rites of the church (for example, weddings, funerals, and baptisms) for members of ___________________ Church. The Rector may, however, receive income from other sources such as sacramental services performed for people not in any way related to _____________________ Church. Fees and honoraria for professional services performed on personal time for groups unrelated to ______________________________ Church, or for sermons, books or articles published outside the church.

2. SECA Reimbursement payments to be paid quarterly before the 15th of April, June, September, and December, according to the following formula

___________________________________________________________________________

**SECTION C: USE OF BUILDINGS:**

In addition to the use and control of the Church and Parish buildings for the discharge of duties of the Rector's Office, as provided by canon law, the Rector shall have the right to grant the use of the buildings to individuals and groups from outside the parish, following guidelines approved by the Rector and Vestry and in accord with the Bishop's guidelines for use of church property.

**SECTION D: MUTUAL MINISTRY REVIEW**

The Rector, Wardens and Vestry agree to an annual discussion and mutual review of the total ministry of the parish, in order to

- Provide the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry opportunity to assess how well they are fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the ministry they share
- Establish goals for the work of the parish for the coming year
- Isolate areas of conflict of disappointment which have not received adequate attention and may be adversely affecting mutual ministry
- Clarify expectations of all parties to help put any future conflicts in manageable form

A mutually agreed upon third party should be engaged to facilitate the mutual ministry review process.

**SECTION E: OTHER AGREEMENTS**

1. All moving and travel expenses incurred in making the move from ________________ to ____________________________ shall be paid by _____________________________ Church. Moving expenses shall include family travel, transporting household goods, reasonable temporary accommodations during the move, and an incidental expenses allowance of up to two weeks compensation ($_________________________)

2. The moving date shall be in the week of _________________. The Rector shall begin duties in the parish no later than __________________, unless delayed by unforeseen adverse circumstances.

3. All pay and benefits become effective on __________________________________.

4. This Letter of Agreement and its related Position Description shall be made part of the minutes of the next Vestry meeting following its signing, and copies shall be given to each Vestry member.

5. In the event of the Rector's death, the Vestry agrees to continue payment of the Rector's cash salary, and appropriate Health and Hospital Insurance to the Rector's surviving direct dependants for a period of ___________________ months.

6. This letter may be revised only by mutual agreement at the time of the annual mutual ministry review, except that compensation and expenses revisions shall be mutually agreed upon in a separate budget process.

7. If the Rector and Vestry are in disagreement concerning the interpretation of this Letter of Agreement, either party may appeal for mediation to __________________ _____________ or another mutually agreed upon third party.

8. In the absence of any other statement concerning severance pay should this agreement be dissolved by mutual consent, the diocesan policy shall apply * (see attached)

_____________________________ _______________________________________
Date Rector

_______________________________________
Senior Warden

Reviewed ______________________________________________
Deployment Officer

Approved ______________________________________________
Bishop

## D. SAMPLE LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR INTERIM RECTORS

Between
The Wardens and Vestry of
(Parish)

The Reverend_______________________

Who has been called as Interim Rector (appointed Interim Rector by the Rt. Rev. Robert W. Ihloff, Bishop of Maryland), with the understanding that this tenure shall continue at least ________ months and month to month (unless extended by mutual agreement for a longer period of time) after that time until _______ weeks prior to the arrival of the new Rector, unless dissolved by mutual consent or upon sixty days notice of either party. In no circumstance is the Interim Rector eligible to be a candidate for Rector of the parish.

**DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS OF THE INTERIM PERIOD**

This time between rectors is seen as a prime time for renewal, for re-energizing the parish, for planning and goal setting. Beyond maintaining effective ministry during this period, the Vestry and the Interim rector shall work together to prepare for a healthy transition to the next Rectorship. Specific tasks to be addressed in the Interim time include:

- Coming to terms with the history of this congregation and its relationship with previous clergy
- Discovering the congregation's special identity: what it dreams of being and doing apart from previous clergy leadership
- Renewing and reworking relationships with the Diocese, so that each may be a more effective resource and support to each other
- Building commitment to leadership of the new Rector in order to be prepared to move into the future with openness to new possibilities.

**VESTRY RESPONSIBLITIES**

All ministries other than those reserved to ordained leadership such as administering the sacraments are understood as mutual ministries of the laity of the congregation and the Interim Rector. The Vestry shall lead the members of the congregation to support and cooperate with the Interim Rector in pursuit of parish goals and in the performance of the developmental tasks of the interim period. Although the Vestry is responsible for the appointment of both the Profile Committee and the Search Committee, no work to these ends will be undertaken until the Interim Rector is in place.

The Vestry, as agent of the Bishop and the Diocese of Maryland, is legal agent for the congregation in all matters concerning its corporate property and in its relationship with the Interim Rector. The Vestry will see that the Interim Rector is properly supported personally and organizationally as well as in the Vestry's financial obligations to the Interim Rector.

**INTERIM RECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Interim Rector represents and extends the ministry which is the Bishop's pastoral and canonical responsibility for the congregations in the leadership transition. The Interim Rector shall lead ________________________________ Church as pastor, priest, and teacher, sharing in the councils of this congregation and of the whole church in communion with the Bishop. The Interim Rector shall:

- Work with the Vestry and other lay leaders to maintain the regular schedule for worship services and preaching, education, pastoral care, and pastoral offices, calling upon the sick and shut-in, visiting newcomers, and ongoing administration of the parish.
- Supervise all parish staff in the exercise of their responsibilities and ministries, for which they shall be accountable to the Interim Rector.
- Function as Chair of the Vestry and support the Vestry in its responsibilities.
- Prepare the congregation for the coming of the next Rector by:
    1. Helping the congregation deal with its grief and any other unresolved issues arising from the Rector's departure,
    2. Deal with internal conflicts and help heal any divisions within the congregation,
    3. Help the Vestry, parish leaders, and staff make such changes as may be needed to align parish life and administration with generally accepted standards in the diocese.
- Attend quarterly gatherings of Interim Ministers in the Diocese of Maryland, and the monthly meetings of the Ecumenical, Regional Interim Network Group in Washington, DC
- Submit semi-annual reports on the progress of this ministry to the Diocesan Deployment Office

The Interim Rector shall communicate regularly with any consultant in the search process, but not work with the Search Committee as they develop the parish profile, position description, and solicit and screen candidates. The Interim Rector shall not be eligible to be a candidate for Rector.

## INTERIM RECTOR TIMES OF WORK AND LEAVE

1. The Interim Rector's work includes not only activities directed to the parish and its well being, but also labors on behalf of the Diocese and community. The Interim Rector's scheduled work week is five days, usually measured as ten to twelve units of mornings, afternoons, or evenings in various combinations reflecting the demands of this ministry. In general no more than three evenings per week are expected. The Interim Rector is expected to preserve at least one continuous twenty four-hour period each week solely for family and personal use.
2. The Interim Rector will have the following periods of leave at full compensation:
   a. National Holidays: to be taken so as to not interfere with worship for major occasions
   b. One month annual vacation, which shall include four Sundays. The Interim Rector shall give thirty days notice to the Wardens and Vestry before taking vacation time. The Interim Rector shall arrange for supply clergy and the Vestry agrees to pay supply clergy at the rate recommended by the Diocesan Convention.
   c. Attendance at the Convention of the Diocese of Maryland and the Bishop's Clergy Conference and any other Clergy Days called by the Bishop.
3. All untaken leave time will be paid to the Interim Rector upon termination of his/her ministry in the parish. Such time is to be computed at the rate of one week leave time earned for each quarter (3 month period).

## COMPENSATION

In this section you are to set out the compensation/benefits package that you are offering your Interim Rector. Diocesan policy says that it must include the following parts:

- ❖ Cash salary amount equal to or greater than the current Diocesan Minimum and adjusted annually to reflect Cost of Living and diocesan minimum compensation guidelines as established by the Convention
- ❖ Use of a Rectory or a Housing allowance in accord with IRS regulations. If you provide a rectory you should set forth the terms of use and payment for maintenance and utilities
- ❖ Church Pension Fund payment
- ❖ Insurance - medical and life, for the rector and his/her family on the Diocesan Insurance plan. If you choose to find an alternative medical service provider you must provide coverage equal to or better than the Diocesan plan.
- ❖ Mileage reimbursement at the current Federally established rate
- ❖ Workmen's Compensation Insurance and Income replacement insurance
- ❖ Normal church office expenses
- ❖ Reimbursement allowance for expenses incurred in the carrying out of the Rector's duties on behalf of the parish

- ❖ The cost of a telephone in the Interim Rector's residence. The telephone number shall be published to insure the Interim Rector's accessibility in the case of emergencies. The Interim Rector shall pay the cost of all long distance calls.
- ❖ Discretionary fund: in accordance with the canons of the church, a Discretionary Fund is to be established under the Interim Rector's Sole control for members of the church.

**SUPPLEMENTARY COMPENSATION**

The Interim Rector shall not charge fees for performing any rites of the Church ( for example, weddings, funerals, and baptisms) for members of __________________________ Church. The Interim Rector may, however, receive income from other sources such as sacramental services performed for people not in any way related to _____________________________ Church. Fees and honoraria for professional services performed on personal time for groups unrelated to ______________________________ Church, or for sermons, books or articles published outside the church.

**USE OF BUILDINGS**

It is understood that the general pattern of building use followed during the last Rector's tenure shall be maintained unless there is specific action of the Vestry to the contrary. The Interim Rector shall have the right to grant use of the buildings to individuals and groups from outside the parish only under the guidelines approved by the Vestry parish.

**MUTUAL MINISTRY REVIEW**

There shall be a quarterly discussion and mutual review of the total ministry of the parish, in order to:

- ❖ Provide the Interim Rector, Wardens and Vestry opportunity to assess how well they are fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the ministry they share.
- ❖ Evaluate progress on the developmental tasks, and establish and adjust goals for the work of the parish during the Interim
- ❖ Isolate areas of conflict of disappointment which they have not received adequate attention and may be adversely affecting mutual ministry
- ❖ Plan health closure for the interim ministry and prepare for the coming of the next Rector.
- ❖ Clarify expectations of all parties to help put any future conflicts in manageable form

A mutually agreed upon third party should be engaged to facilitate the mutual ministry review process.

**OTHER AGREEMENTS**

1. All pay and benefits become effective on ____________________________.

2. This Letter of Agreement and its related Position Description shall be made part of the minutes of the next Vestry meeting following its signing, and copies shall be given to each Vestry member.

3. In case of illness, the Interim Rector shall notify the Senior Warden. If the illness occurs on a Sunday, the Interim Rector shall arrange for supply clergy and the Vestry agrees to pay the supply clergy at the rate recommended by Diocesan Convention.

4. This letter may be revised only by mutual agreement at the time of the annual mutual ministry review, except that compensation and expenses revisions shall be mutually agreed upon in a separate budget process.

5. If the Interim Rector and Vestry are in disagreement concerning the interpretation of this Letter of Agreement, either party may appeal for mediation to the Office of the Bishop for arbitration.

| | |
|---|---|
| __________________ | ____________________________________ |
| Date | Interim Rector |
| | ____________________________________ |
| | Senior Warden |

Reviewed __________________________________________
Deployment Officer

Approved __________________________________________
Bishop of Maryland

## E. MUTUAL MINISTRY REVIEW SEMINAR *(Sample)*

_____________________________ *Church*
**Location**
**Date**

**Purpose of the Day:**

1. To fulfill one of the specific terms of the Rector's (Vicar's) Letter of Agreement
2. To gain a clearer picture of ministry at _____________________ Church
3. To gain a clearer picture of the ministry relationship among the leaders of Church
4. To affirm ministries that are going well and flourishing, and to call attention to opportunities for further ministry development

**Schedule:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9:00 am | Gather, coffee, etc. |
| 9:15 am | Explanation of the Day<br>The Holy Eucharist, Rite II -- Opening acclamation through the Gospel (Rector/Vicar; celebrant. Lectors from vestry/advisory board) |
| 9:25 am | Introductions (please be sure there are name tags!)<br>Introduction to the day, purposes, review schedule, housekeeping, etc. |
| 9:30 am | **Review the vision and mission of ______________________ Church**<br>• Reflect on the mission statement, its clarity, and whether it remains viable |
| 10:00 am | **Review parish goals and objectives**<br>• Are they well know, clear, and is there consensus about them<br>• In general terms, how well have these been fulfilled, what challenges and opportunities remain? If things did not go as well as desired, what/who got in the way? What/who contributed to the things that went well? |
| 11:00 am | **Review and Assess current programs**<br>• Using the listing provided, look at each ministry with the basic questions of what went well and why and what did not go well and why<br>• Do these ministries reflect and support the mission statement, goals and objectives?<br>• Where are the "holes" in relationship to the mission statement, goals and objectives? |
| NOON | Prayers of the People (Vestry/Advisory Board member picks one of the forms and leads)<br>Lunch |
| 12:45 pm | **Review and Assess the fulfillment of responsibilities**<br>• Are responsibilities clearly delineated?<br>• What responsibilities are being fulfilled, and what responsibilities are "falling through the cracks"? |

1:15 pm **Review what conflicts and disappointments that can be identified**

- Identify conflicts and disappointments
- Identify the roots of the conflict or disappointment
- Work on a plan to address these conflicts and disappointments

1:45 pm **Clarify expectations**

- What expectations seem unclear to the rector/vicar?
- What expectations seem unclear to the wardens and vestry/advisory board?
- Work on a plan to clarify and gain consensus

2:15 pm **Closure**

- What needs follow-up, and by who?
- Who has already agreed to do what?
- What issues have surfaced that bear greater attention?

Eucharistic Prayer, Communion, Thanksgiving, Blessing

3:00 pm **Dismissal**