

# MINISTRY HANDBOOK

*for the Diocese of South Dakota*

Deacon Edition

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## SECTION I: DISCERNMENT

<b>What is Discernment?</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Formal Ministerial Discernment</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Outline of the Formal Ordination Process.....	2
<b>Aids and Expectations for Discernment</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Forms of Ministry .....	5
<b>Initial Steps in Discernment</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Expectations During Initial Steps in Discernment.....	9
Spiritual Autobiography .....	9
<b>The Discernment Retreat</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Zuyá: A Journey of Preparation</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>The Local Discernment Committee</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Aids for Discerning in Community</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Ordination Process Expectations</b> .....	<b>20</b>

## SECTION II: THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR THE NIOBRARA SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY, DEACON TRACK

<b>Postulancy &amp; Theological Education</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Niobrara School Course of Study, Deacon Track</b> .....	<b>24</b>
Ministry Weekends .....	25
Summer Seminary.....	25
Alternative Means of Fulfilling Requirements.....	26
<b>DIAKONIA PROJECT</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>Resources/Suggested Implementation</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Summary of Resources .....	28
Annotated List of Resources.....	31
<i>Unit 1</i> .....	31
<i>Unit 2</i> .....	34
<i>Unit 3</i> .....	37

**SECTION III: FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND REFERENCE MATERIAL**

- Fees & Expenses for Niobrara School .....42**
- Discernment/Ordination Checklists .....43**
  - Checklist: Vocational Deacon, Locally Trained..... 44
  - Checklist: Vocational Deacon, Graduate School..... 48
  - Canons for Ministry..... 52

**SECTION IV: STANDARDS OF LEARNING ..... 94**

*Section One*

# DISCERNMENT

**MINISTRY  
HANDBOOK**

*for the Diocese of South Dakota*

# WHAT IS DISCERNMENT?

Discernment is not exclusively for those who may feel called to specialized ministry in the church. On the contrary, we are all constantly discerning throughout our lives. When faced with the need to make a decision, we examine our choices in light of past experiences, knowledge, known facts, and future goals. Sometimes this is done in an instant; other times, it happens over the course of months or years.

As Christians we are all ministers through baptism. In baptism, God calls us to share in Christ's eternal priesthood and thus to bring the presence of Christ into the home, workplace, and community. Though the church can often fail to adequately affirm the central importance of lay ministry, it can never be repeated enough that clergy are not "professional" Christians and laity are in no way "amateur" Christians. This perception betrays the true baptismal foundation of Christian ministry: *all* Christians are equally called to ministry in the church and the in world. The call to ordained ministry is a different, but in no way a higher or "more Christian," calling than being, for example, a teacher, plumber, or senator.

As St. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, "There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:4-8). Not every person possesses the gifts for ordained ministry, and most ordained ministers do not share all the gifts and talents of the members of their communities. One must recognize that the term "gifts" for the church refers to more than abstract talents or potentials; being gifted for ordained ministry is not merely a matter of having a passion for the Kingdom of God, or a talent for interpreting Scripture, or the ability to speak well, or the patience and empathy to care for the lost, lonely, sick, and dying. In the context of discerning a call to ordained ministry, "gift" takes on a more holistic, communal meaning. This term includes some ability to navigate the frustrating life of the church in the world. It means the desire *and* ability to dedicate considerable time and effort to training and learning for ministry. It means the ability to commit to a regular schedule of study, preaching, and pastoral care. It means, in the end, an awareness that God's call to ordained ministry is not a call to just another job – like baptism, it is a call that, once discerned and accepted, means a lifelong commitment and a fundamental change that in some ways can never be reversed. Because ordained ministry is not a private revelation or right, but a calling from God through a community *for* a community, a community must help decide if God truly has called you to ordained ministry. Thus, a Discernment Process and a Local Discernment Committee help to clarify God's call in your life.

The heart of discernment is that ongoing conversation in relationship and in community. People should by no means enter the discernment process only after they believe themselves to have a clear call to ordained ministry. There are many ways that God calls people to ordained ministry, and your community may recognize that call before you yourself do. You may also have a general passion for the Kingdom of God in the world, and it is through the discernment process that you discover where that passion is best utilized. The formal discernment process is certainly meant to help those called to ordained ministry discover their call, but it is just as important in helping make clear God's calling if it is not to ordained ministry. Discerning a call to something other than ordained ministry in no way constitutes a failure. The only failure possible in the discernment process occurs if you enter into a ministry that you're not called into, which means that entering ordained ministry when that been so called is just as much a failure of discernment as is failing to recognize a real call *to* ordained ministry.

# FORMAL MINISTERIAL DISCERNMENT

Discernment always begins in the context of the real relationships of a worshipping community and aims toward furthering healthy relationships within those communities. To have developed these relationships, one must show a commitment to life in Christian community. Therefore, the larger Episcopal Church requires canonically that a person be a resident in and regularly participate in a faith community in the Diocese of South Dakota for *at least* one complete calendar year prior to entering the formal discernment process.

So, assuming a person has committed him- or herself to the communal life of an Episcopal congregation in South Dakota, how does the discernment process begin? Everything starts with a faith community identifying a person as having the gifts, talents, and qualities they would want in an ordained minister. In some cases, this recognition may begin in the community and be brought to the attention of the individual; in others, the individual may first feel a sense of call and have it affirmed by the community.

One must always keep these four things in mind when considering this process:

**First**, the process is not mechanical or automatic; simply putting in effort does not guarantee movement to further stages in the process. Formal discernment should be guided by the Holy Spirit and will not always conform to our expectations for a neat and orderly stepwise progression.

**Second**, always remember that this process is undertaken by fallible human beings who can judge incorrectly or fail to hear God's voice. Human fallibility makes transparency and community participation in the process that much more important. The more that communities, rather than individuals, involve themselves in the process, the more opportunities there are to put a check on human fallibility.

**Third**, discerning that one is not called to ordained ministry and discontinuation from this process, whether by the discernor or by those tasked with facilitating the process of discernment, only means, except in certain exceptional cases, that *at this time* a call to ordained ministry has not been discerned (for the regulations concerning readmission to the ordination process after discontinuation, see Title III.6, III.7, and III.8 of the *Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church*).

**Fourth**, ordination results from a call from God through the community and is no individual's *right*. A stubborn or unrepentant belief that one has a right to ordination indicates that an individual *does not* have a call to ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of South Dakota.

## Outline of the Formal Ordination Process

1. Either you or your community discover and make known that you may have gifts for specialized lay ministry or ordained ministry; *then*,
2. Talk to your priest (or whoever functions as the official spiritual leader of your community); *then*,
3. You and your priest will talk with your community leaders and elders (or Vestry/Bishop's Committee/Mission Council) for feedback. **You must have the support of your priest and worshipping community.** It is vital that both you and the worshipping community understand that support consists in the community's willingness to accept you as an ordained minister in that community. This does not mean you necessarily will return to that community, but **a community's inability to make this affirmation means that they do not discern a call to specialized (whether lay or ordained) ministry for you;** *then*,
4. You will be expected to attend a Discernment Retreat. The discernment process *cannot* proceed until you have attended one of these retreats, and you must make known your intention to attend at least one month prior to the retreat you will attend. It is here that you will work with lay leaders and clergy (including the bishop) from throughout the Diocese through a series of reflections and conversations to determine what God's call in your life is.

One of several possibilities will be discerned at this retreat. Below are the procedures for each:

- A. *Further general discernment is needed* – While God calls all people to specific ministries, whether they be lay, commissioned, or ordained, it is not clear to the discerning community what specific form of ministry you should focus on discerning further. There are many reasons why this direction may be discerned. This response may come because of a sense that you are called to ordained ministry, but there are also some red flags or areas of growth that must be addressed. If further general discernment is needed, the MTLM will hold to convene a discernment committee in your local faith community, and you will likely be encouraged to work with a spiritual director. If the local discernment committee concludes that you should pursue a specific form of lay ministry, then this will be the end of the formal discernment process for you at this point in your life. If the local discernment committee, in consultation with the MTLM, bishop, and spiritual director (if there is one), recommends that you continue discerning a call to commissioning as a Catechist or ordination as a priest or deacon, then at that time you will continue the formal discernment process for that track as given below (5a-7a for Catechists and 5b-11 for Priests and Deacons). *Note:* The normal expectation is that you will not need to attend another discernment retreat, although in exceptional circumstances this may be recommended.
- B. *Further explore a call into lay ministry* – Laity are the primary ministers of Christ in the world. It is expected that most people in the Church should be discerning the nature of their lay ministry. Such ministry is as diverse as the people who make up the Church. For some, lay ministry will be a matter of finding the best ways to act as a practicing, faithful Christian in your workplace or community outside the Church. For others, this ministry will also involve special service or leadership in the life of the Church, such as serving as lay readers, lay preachers, Sunday School teachers, or Lay Eucharistic Visitors. You will be given tools for further clarification about your call to lay ministry and then you should work with your priest to define that ministry and begin training and licensing. If it is helpful for your discernment process, it is also possible to call a discernment committee in your congregation to help you understand the form of your lay ministry. A good resource to work through with your priest is *Conversations with Scripture and with Each Other: Spiritual Formation for Lay Leaders*, Shaw.
- C. *Further explore a call to be commissioned to the Lay Order of Catechists* – Some lay people are called to invest a considerable amount of their life in service to the life of the Christian community while not being called to the specific ministries of priests or deacons. Often these are lay leaders who are called to oversee considerable portions of worship, pastoral care, and teaching in their local communities. As a result, these people are formally called out and commissioned by the Church to serve in this capacity as part of an order of Lay Catechists. While this setting apart is not the same as ordination, it does signify that Lay Catechists are vested by the Church with greater responsibility and authority; as a result, those called to the Order of Catechists are expected to make a greater commitment of their time and energy than other lay ministers to formal preparation for ministry. Those called to the Order of Catechists will follow the instructions for step 5a, 6a, and 7a.
- 5a. You will sign a Ministry Formation Covenant (MFC) between you and the Diocese affirming your understanding and acceptance of the expectations for formal ministerial formation and the responsibility the Diocese has for helping you fulfill those expectations; *then,*
- 6a. You, along with all those discerning a call to be Catechists in a given year will go through a set, yearlong course of study through Niobrara School for Ministry. You will begin and end this yearlong course of study with your “class” of fellow Catechists. This formation will involve individual study, structured group study, and attendance at Niobrara School for Ministry weekends; *then,*
- 7a. If you have successfully completed the Catechist Course of Study and your supervising priest(s), MTLM, and the bishop have no concerns about your ability to function as a Catechist, you will be commissioned to the Order of Catechists at the following Niobrara

Convocation and licensed as a Catechist by the bishop. Unless you, your priest, or the bishop specifically request that this license be revoked, you will automatically be re-licensed every year.

- D. *Further explore a call to ordained ministry as either a priest or a deacon.* Those who discern a call to further explore ordained ministry as a deacon or priest continue with the following steps:
- 5b. You will sign a Ministry Formation Covenant (MFC) in which you affirm your understanding and acceptance of the expectations for formal ministerial formation and the responsibility the Diocese has for helping you fulfill those expectations; *then,*
  - 6b. You will be given form 6P2 (for deacons) or 8P2 (for priests), which is a form requiring your local faith community to affirm that it supports you in pursuing ordained ministry. Because it is vital that you have the support of your local community, you cannot proceed in the formal ordination or ministerial formation process until you have returned a signed copy of this form to both the COM Secretary and the MTLM. Once community support has been established by the return of this form, *then*
  - 7b. You will be given an evaluation to see what knowledge and skills for ordained ministry you already possess and what areas can be improved in order to ensure that you are equipped for success during your formal ministerial education (whether through Niobrara School for Ministry or another accredited theological school); *then,*
  - 8b. You will be assigned a mentor who will work with you in drafting an Individual Ministerial Formation Plan (IMFP), that will guide your work first in completing the requirements of *Zuyá* (described below) prior to postulancy and then formal ministerial education; *then,*
  9. A continuing discernment committee/group will be formed in your local community. This group will serve at least two functions. First, it will ensure that you continue to clarify your sense of call; in this process you and/or your community may come to the conclusion that you do not have, at the current time, a call into ordained ministry, and the committee will be responsible for relaying that information to the Bishop and Missioner for Leadership Development. Second, this group will do all that it can to support your journey through formal ministerial formation and hold the Diocese accountable to its commitments; *then,*
  10. Upon completing the *Zuyá* curriculum, you will apply for postulancy. Part of your work with your mentor, the Bishop, and the MTLM will include discerning whether your educational formation will occur best through the Niobrara School for Ministry, an extension seminary program, or a residential seminary; *then,*
  11. You will begin the formal educational component of your process. Regardless of what form this takes, you will be expected to maintain regular communication with the Diocese in the form of, for instance, Ember Day letters. During this portion of your formation, regardless of what form your education takes, the MTLM will be available to help provide additional resources and consultation to ensure success. This aid is available as much for those in residential seminaries as it is for those in the Niobrara School for Ministry. Upon completing 2/3 to 3/4 of your formal ministerial education, you may apply for candidacy; *then,*
  12. Assuming the requirements for ordination as described in Canon VI (for the vocational diaconate) or VIII (for the priesthood) have been fulfilled, you will be ordained to Holy Orders. Those who are pursuing ordination to the priesthood will first be ordained as transitional deacons, and will serve in diaconal ministry for not less than six months, and, assuming they meet the above stated requirements, will then be ordained to the priesthood.

# AIDS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR DISCERNMENT

## Forms of Ministry

Essential to discerning the form of ministry into which God is calling you or a member of your community is understanding the different forms of ministry as understood by the Diocese of South Dakota. The Diocese of South Dakota understands that one can categorize the multitude of gifts, interests, and calls into six broad categories of ministry: **1) Lay ministry with a focus on life in the world, 2) lay ministry with a focus on the life of the church, 3) commissioned ministry in the Order of Lay Catechists, 4) ordained ministry as a deacon, 5) ordained ministry as a locally trained priest, and 6) ordained ministry as a seminary trained priest.** One should always keep in mind that commissioning or ordination are specialized forms of ministry for the good order and function of the Church, but they are not “additions” to baptism. Commissioning or ordination are nothing more or less than the particular shape that some people’s baptismal ministry takes. Just as some people are called, through baptism, to witness to God’s reconciling work in the world as teachers, electricians, or grandparents, others are called to do so as commissioned catechists, ordained deacons, or ordained priests.

### **Lay Ministry (All Baptized Christians not commissioned or ordained)**

All Christians are called, through baptism, to some form of ministry. The great majority of this ministry is undertaken by the laity who are the principle ministers of God’s work of reconciling the world to Godself through Christ. Among the laity, most are called to witness in their day-to-day lives to how a relationship with God in Christ has transformed them. This ministry requires that one learn to live out one’s faith at home and in the workplace, whatever that form of work may be. The importance of discernment for such a call cannot be overstated – in addition to trying to understand what occupations best fit the set of gifts, talents, and opportunities God has placed in their lives, lay Christian ministers in the world must learn when and how to share their experiences of relationship with God in Christ. For Christians called to this form of ministry, there is still an expectation of involvement in worship, fellowship, and church administration, but this is not the primary *ministry* to which one has been called.

Some lay Christians may discern that they should dedicate significant parts of their lives to serving the church in a way that does not necessitate ordination. Such ministry may take the form of volunteer work such as serving on vestries or other church boards at the local, diocesan, and larger Episcopal Church levels. Other laity may discern calls to occupations that are necessary or helpful for the healthy functioning of the church, such as working as parish or diocesan administrators, teachers or professors in religiously affiliated schools and colleges, or even providing necessary services (such as tax services for the particular needs of clergy or specialists in church architecture or construction) in ways that they can be of the greatest benefit specifically to the church.

### **Catechetical Ministry (Commissioned Laity in the Order of Catechists)**

Certain baptized Christians feel called to dedicate significantly more of their lives to serving their faith communities through a kind of priestly ministry that includes teaching, preaching, leading worship, and providing pastoral care and crisis intervention. However, because of other calls that God has placed in their lives, these lay Christians are not called to the same intensity of educational or ministerial time commitments as either locally or seminary trained priests. The Diocese of South Dakota understands this as a call to the *Lay Order of Catechists*. Because this calling stands in a kind of middle ground between the time commitment to the Church expected of all baptized Christians and the much more extensive expectations of those in priestly ministry, those identified as part of this Lay Order of Catechists are set aside in their communities by commissioning rather than ordination. Often those called to this kind of ministry have already been identified as spiritual leaders by their faith communities.

As indicated by the name *Catechist*, preparing young people for confirmation (that is *catechizing*) and providing sound teaching more generally are essential to ministry. However, Christian formation involves more than gaining knowledge of facts or ideas and also includes participation in worship and experiences of pastoral care. Thus, the Diocese of South Dakota understands the ministry of the Catechist to also entail leading worship, performing wakes and funerals, and providing pastoral care and crisis intervention in addition to formal teaching about the Bible and Episcopal beliefs. In all contexts, Catechists serve under the supervision of an ordained priest. In faith communities with consistent and regular access to an ordained priest, the ministry of the Catechist may focus on one of these roles, such as teaching or pastoral care. In other communities where contact with an ordained priest is less frequent or regular, Catechists act as the primary ministers, and in some cases such Catechists will distribute pre-consecrated Eucharistic elements in the context of a worship service (in accordance with the provisions for such an act as described in the Book of Common Prayer and Constitution and Canons).

While people involved in any form of Christian ministry should engage in that ministry with the same degree of zeal, not all ministry in the church requires the same investment of time, and Catechists are not expected to invest the same amount of time as locally- or seminary-trained priests. Nevertheless, the ministerial functions that a Catechist is commissioned to perform require not only significant spiritual maturity and leadership, but also a degree of formal ministerial education that exceeds what is expected of most other lay Christians. As such, while ordained priests must complete either a three-year graduate degree or a three to five year local course of study through Niobrara School for Ministry, all Catechists must undergo a year-long program through Niobrara School for Ministry that is specifically designed to provide Catechists with the tools that they need to perform this ministry. As with deacons and locally-trained priests, the ministry of Catechists does not entail material compensation, which is to say that they serve in a non-stipendiary ministry.

Below you will see the difference between locally trained and seminary trained priests compared to the difference between volunteer and paid firefighters; one can see the relationship between the ministries of Catechists and Priests as akin to the relationship between medical doctors (physicians) and EMTs or Paramedics. EMTs and Paramedics are trained in human health and healing and can even do some of the same procedures as medical doctors and may even have more experience with certain kinds of medical situations than medical doctors. However, medical doctors have greater authority and can perform a wider range of medical procedures and activities than can EMTs or Paramedics because of the more extensive and intensive training program required to become an M.D.

### **Diaconal Ministry (Ordained Deacons)**

Coming from the Greek word διάκονος (*diákonos*), **deacon** means “assistant,” “server,” or “envoy.” The deacon acts as a bridge between the world and Church, interpreting the needs, concerns and hopes of the world to the Church and representing the Church in the world. Deacons help the baptized find God in their lives beyond Sunday morning. Deacons are not, however, the only people in the Church who do work in the world; rather, they gather, lead, equip, and inform the baptized in that work. Deacons should enhance and increase lay service in the world – not supplant it.

In accordance with Canon III of The Episcopal Church, deacons must be academically trained in the Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the church. They must also be familiar with *diakonia* and the diaconate, demonstrate human awareness and understanding, exemplify spiritual development and discipline, and undergo extensive practical training and experience.

Because the diaconate is non-stipendiary, those called to this ministry must have sufficient energy for work both in and outside the Church. Deacons serve under the direct authority of the Bishop and are thus assigned in all cases by the Bishop for their work in the Diocese. Deacons generally work under the direct supervision of a priest, so essential to a Deacon’s work is an understanding of this role and a capacity to

function in this way. Like Priests, Deacons must cultivate one or more spiritual disciplines and regularly seek continuing education opportunities to grow in their vocation.

### **Priestly Ministry (Locally trained and seminary trained, ordained priests)**

*Priest* comes from the Greek word πρεσβύτερος (*presbyteros*) meaning “elder.” Priests are primarily ordained to a ministry of helping the laity to grow into the image and likeness of Christ to live into their baptismal ministry of acting as Christ in the world. The Book of Common Prayer summarizes the specific elements of this ministry of equipping the laity: Priests “represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the Gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God.” (BCP p. 856) Priests also provide pastoral care and conduct public worship.

Parochial priests are responsible for conducting worship, caring for parish property/facilities, and maintaining church records. Priests must endeavor to provide adequate instruction in the teachings of the Church to all in their charge, meaning instruction in Scripture, the Catechism (Outline of Faith, 1979 BCP), the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church, and the exercise of baptismal ministry. Priests provide instruction in Christian stewardship, and must responsibly dispense discretionary charitable funds. They either provide or arrange for adequate instruction for baptism and confirmation/reception.

The Diocese of South Dakota recognizes two forms of priestly ministry, which are distinguished from each other by the form of training required: **Locally trained priests** and **seminary trained priests**. While those who serve in both forms of ministry are ordained priests and are expected, in their contexts, to perform the duties described above, these two forms of ministry are considered distinct callings.

**Locally Trained Priests:** The Diocese of South Dakota’s ministry context is such that seminary trained priests cannot serve every congregation. At the same time, the Diocese believes that every congregation should have regular access to those ministerial functions that only a priest can provide – notably the Eucharist. Thus, Niobrara School for Ministry provides a course of study that meets the educational requirements for the priesthood as stipulated by Title III of the Canons of the Episcopal Church for people called to a priestly ministry exclusively in their local community. Locally trained priests are called out of their own congregations to serve those congregations under the direct supervision of a superintending presbyter and/or the Bishop. Because local priestly training does not provide the same depth or breadth as a seminary education and because locally trained priests are not expected to serve in a full-time ministry in their local communities, **the ordination for locally trained priests is non-portable and their ministry is exclusively non-stipendiary**. In other words, those serving as locally trained priests may only function as priests in the community from which they come, and they will not be paid for that service. One may think of the distinction between locally ordained priests and seminary trained priests as akin to the relationship between volunteer firefighters and full-time, paid firefighters. Both receive training to be able to safely and effectively do their work, but the paid fire fighters have much higher expectations placed on their time because of the more in-depth training that they have received. While all Priests are expected to seek regular continuing education opportunities to grow in their vocation (including Niobrara School for Ministry’s ministry weekends and summer seminary), this continued engagement is particularly important for locally trained priests.

NOTE: While those who have gone through only the regular Niobrara School for Ministry Course of Study for the priesthood cannot serve as priests beyond their local communities or receive financial compensation for that ministry, it is possible for locally trained priests to receive more in-depth ministerial education and formation that would allow them to serve as priests beyond their local communities and/or to be eligible to serve in a stipendiary position. Individual circumstances will determine what is considered necessary and sufficient training for each individual. Such training could take the form of a personalized course of study through Niobrara School for Ministry, taking courses from a residential or distance-learning seminary, or

even going through a complete seminary degree/certificate program. In any case, what is necessary for such further training will be determined by the Bishop in consultation with the MTLM.

***Seminary-Trained Priests:*** If those who are called to be locally trained priests have a call to exercise a priestly ministry as a way of meeting the needs of their specific community, others will be called to make themselves available in this ministerial capacity to the entire Episcopal Church and Churches in Full Communion with the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of South Dakota, in line with much of the larger Episcopal Church, understands such a call as requiring the successful completion of a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) program from either an Episcopal seminary or other seminary/divinity school/school of theology providing whose M.Div. program meets the canonical requirements for priestly formation in the Episcopal Church. Once it has been discerned that someone likely has a call to serve the Church as a seminary trained priest, the appropriate graduate programs that this person should apply to will be determined under the guidance of the Bishop in consultation with the MLTM. **Those who feel a call to serve as seminary-trained priests should not apply to and accept a position at any seminary without first consulting the Bishop.** Because the Diocese of South Dakota understands those priests with seminary training as capable of serving in a stipendiary position anywhere in the Church for which they have suitable gifts, those who go to seminary from Diocese of South Dakota seeking stipendiary positions must be prepared to look for ministerial opportunities outside of this Diocese. Because of the limited number of full- and even part-time paid positions for priests in the Diocese of South Dakota, the Diocese cannot guarantee open positions in South Dakota for those pursuing priestly ministry as a full-time paid vocation. Furthermore, attending seminary, particularly if it is a three to four year full-time residential program, requires a substantial investment of time and money and entails a significant life-change for an individual and his or her family. Therefore, while it is possible for “second-career” people (those who have already spent a sizable portion of their adult life in some other form of work) and/or those with families to be seminary-educated priests, the discernment process for those considering seminary will necessarily include considerations of current or future student loan and consumer debt, the strain that such a transition would put on the individual and his or her family, and the number of years such a person could theoretically serve before the mandatory retirement age of 72.

# INITIAL STEPS IN DISCERNMENT

Assuming that you have been a resident of a faith community in the Diocese of South Dakota for at least one year, here is the first stage of discernment generally undertaken before attending a discernment retreat:

1. Your faith community may have identified you as having the leadership qualities of ordained ministry (faith communities should reference the below “Aids and Expectations for Congregational Discernment” for what qualities may indicate a person is called to ordained ministry, as well as what indicators warning that a person *does not*, demonstrate these qualities) or you may be experiencing a feeling of being called to ordained ministry.
2. If you wish to pursue a process to discern the validity of the identification or feeling, meet with the priest in charge of your congregation for an initial discussion.
3. The priest will advise the Bishop’s Committee/Mission Council/Vestry of your intentions to receive preliminary community involvement, context, and feedback. This group may evaluate you on Christian commitment, personal stability, intellectual curiosity, leadership style, ability to communicate, and personal characteristics.
4. Begin thinking about your Christian journey. After the retreat, you will be expected to translate this into a Spiritual Autobiography. This will not only describe your growth in faith up to this point in life, but should also include a description of your involvement in your local congregation, how you are living out your baptismal covenant in the world, the individual and communal indications of a call into ministry, and a summary of the work you have done under the advisement of your local congregation after that identification of your call.
5. Request that your priest (or other leader of your local faith community) speak with the MTLM and then (or at the same time) the Bishop about whether you should attend a Discernment Retreat.

## Expectations During Initial Steps in Discernment

The following are expected of both individuals and congregations in the initial stages of discernment. It is through such activity that a community best begins to identify whether an individual has the gifts for ordained ministry. It is the responsibility of the priest or other congregational leaders to ensure that those who are discerning a call to ordained ministry can have opportunities to engage in these practices.

### 1. **Spiritual Formation**

Anyone beginning the formal discernment process should already engage in personal spiritual disciplines. Nevertheless, once the process begins, those discerning should become more conscious of forming themselves after the mind of Christ. Early efforts are to be made to further develop life habits of daily prayer, meditation, the reading of Scripture, and other spiritual practices. An exceptional resource for exploring different spiritual disciplines and how they can be integrated into one’s life is Richard Foster’s *A Celebration of Discipline*.

### 2. **Study and Reflection**

Study and reflection highlights and helps make connections between the reading and the experience of the person(s) discerning a call to ministry. This also provides good preparation for the theological education component of the ordination process. Examples of books/documents for study and reflection:

- a. Books on lay, diaconal, or priestly ministries, so that the person may gain greater clarity into which form of ministry they may be called.

- b. Books on discernment, such as *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community*, Suzanne G. Farnham, Joseph P. Gill, R. Taylor McLean, Susan M. Ward, or *Exploring Life and Calling*, Gary Black, Jr.
- c. The Catechism in the *Book of Common Prayer* (p. 845)
- d. Resources that pertain to other licensed ministries, e.g., catechist, preacher, etc.

### **3. Participation in Ministry Gatherings**

An essential part of the formation for ministry is participation in the various ministry gatherings throughout the year. These include:

- a. Dakota Experience (required of all lay and ordained leaders in the Diocese).
- b. Niobrara Convocation, Diocesan Convention, and other organized diocesan events.
- c. Educational opportunities such as Niobrara School for Ministry's Summer Seminary and Ministry Weekends. Theological education undertaken during aspirancy could potentially apply to one's formal ministerial education requirements, but even if it does not do so formally, such study still proves valuable by exposing the aspirant to that much more ministerial formation.

### **4. Ministry Exposure**

While reading and reflection are taking place, the aspirant will identify a ministry area(s) in which to continue or begin working during the ordination process. Suggested areas of ministry are:

- a. Outreach ministries, such as domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, advocacy for the poor;
- b. Youth work both in the church and the community;
- c. Participation in the liturgy, and;
- d. Pastoral visits to hospitals, nursing homes, jails and prisons.

## **Spiritual Autobiography**

During Zuyá (described below), one component of discerning a call into ministry will be the composition of a "Spiritual Autobiography" in which he/she explains his/her growth in faith, understanding of call, how he/she came to that understanding, and a summary of his/her activity and learning during the initial stage of their discernment. These should not be more than 12 pages long, double spaced, in 11- or 12-point font (in a standard academic, serif font such as Times New Roman, Times, Garamond, or Georgia). While there is no lower page limit, a guideline to aim for is 6 to 10 pages. Those composing their spiritual autobiographies will be significantly aided by reading William Placher's *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Wisdom on Vocation*.

# DISCERNMENT RETREAT

Participation in an annual discernment retreat will be the first step in officially discerning a (provisional) call to the diaconate, priesthood, or some form of specialized lay ministry. If through this weekend it is discerned that an individual is called to ordained ministry, he or she will then formally enter the ordination process. If the call discerned is to lay ministry, that individual will be given resources to further explore the nature of that ministry and develop that call in his or her community.

Discernment retreats will usually be held one weekend a year and will include those in the initial stages of discernment, those who may be entering the ordination process that year, and select clergy and laity from around the diocese. This weekend will include times for reflection and conversation done in the context of fellowship, prayer, and worship. Furthermore, the ordination process and formation expectations will be clearly presented. These activities will culminate with a conversation with each individual in which it is determined whether he or she should at that time continue formation for lay, diaconal, or priestly ministry. It is also possible that the result of the discernment retreat is that a person should return to his/her home parish and continue general discernment.

The discernment retreat is the opportunity for certain other necessary preliminaries for those who do enter the formal ordination process. First, they will enter into a covenant with the Diocese in which they explicitly affirm that they understand the requirements and responsibilities both of the ordination process and the expectations of ordained ministers, and that consistent failure to fulfill these responsibilities will result in the suspension or discontinuation of one's ordination process. Similarly, the Diocese, particularly those responsible for ministerial formation and the ordination process, will commit to do all that is possible to equip people for success through the ordination and ministerial education processes.

There will also be an evaluation meant to determine what preparation those entering the ordination process bring with them. This will *not* be a test to determine whether people can enter the ordination process or not. Instead, this evaluation is meant to give the diocese a benchmark of what support can be given to those in the ordination process as they move from the discernment weekend to *Zuyá* (described below).

Attending a discernment retreat does not guarantee entrance into the ordination/commissioning process, but it will be impossible to enter these processes without attending a discernment retreat. Because they are offered only once every year, it takes considerable planning and personal initiative to ensure that one has fulfilled the preliminary discernment expectations at least one month prior to the discernment retreat in the year that one desires to enter the discernment process. However, such planning should be considered part of the discernment process itself. Once in the ordination process, whether one attends a residential seminary or the Niobrara School for Ministry, considerably more will be expected in terms of pre-established commitments and time management. The life of ordained ministry will then expect even more. College students who desire to enter seminary after graduation should make every effort to attend a discernment weekend no later than their junior year.

# ZUYÁ: A JOURNEY OF PREPARATION

## AFTER THE RETREAT

Once someone has been provisionally accepted into the formal process, he/she should expect to receive his/her mentor within two weeks and will have input as to who this mentor is. In some instances, a mentor may be assigned at the retreat itself. Those who come to retreats will likely already have a sense of whether they should go to a residential seminary, pursue study through an extension program, or undertake the Niobrara School for Ministry's course of study. Still, one of the first roles a mentor plays is in helping an aspirant clarify which path to ministerial education works best for his/her personal circumstances, and, for those desiring to attend a residential seminary, to equip the student for a productive conversation with the Bishop about which seminaries to explore.

For those who undertake their course of study through the Niobrara School, their mentors will guide and direct them through the curriculum. In either case, the initial work a mentor does remains the same, and that work is to prepare everyone to succeed in their coming theological education.

## THE INHERENT DIFFICULTY OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

All education for ministry is challenging – and so it should be. When you step in front of a congregation vested with the authority to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments, or when wearing a collar in your community, your congregation and community rightfully have certain expectations of you. You bear the responsibility of leading the people of your congregation into deeper relationships with God and equipping them for their baptismal ministries. While ordained ministry is a calling and therefore *more* than a job, it is certainly not *less* than any other job. There is minimum body of knowledge that must be acquired and set of skills in which one must demonstrate competence to responsibly engage in that work. Doctors must thoroughly understand human anatomy and be able to correctly diagnose illnesses before they can practice, and electricians must understand circuits and learn to safely wire a building before they can begin their trade.

In both of the above examples, it is obvious why these expectations exist: a physician's or electrician's botched job truly can imperil the physical safety or well-being of those around them. Incompetence in engineering leads to bridge collapses, bad wiring jobs cause buildings to burn down, under-qualified lawyers let innocent people go to prison, and unskilled surgeons kill patients. While it may be a commonly held belief that the stakes are not so high for ordained ministry, this assumption is false. Not only does the undertrained clergyperson have the real potential to put the physical safety of his or her congregants at risk, the stakes are even higher since *all* clergy are responsible for the spiritual welfare of those in their care. These higher stakes make it all that much more important that there be a minimum core of knowledge and practical skills that all ordained ministers are expected to possess.

In addition to these higher stakes, responsible ministry requires a range of skills and knowledge that goes beyond most professions or technical trades. To interpret the Bible and understand Church history, one must have some awareness of cultures foreign both in time and place, as well as the ability to practice some literary criticism. To engage theologically, one must develop a capacity for philosophical and abstract-conceptual thinking. To lead worship and preach effectively, one must be able to translate these other areas of knowledge and be practiced in public speaking and even a kind of theatricality. To make matters more complex, theological education not only expects that a person can read critically and write effectively, but it has developed its own distinctive vocabulary that can sometimes make it seem like a foreign language.

No amount of preparation will make one's theological studies "easy" in any meaningful way. Wrestling with the profound mysteries of God and God's life in the world should demand some degree of struggle. However, it is possible to make what seems to many people to be an overwhelming and impenetrable difficulty less stressful and more manageable, and therefore better equip our people for success in their theological education.

## ZUYÁ [ zoo-YAH ]

*Zuyá* is a L/Dakota word that can be translated into English as “one’s journey or mission.” Like the English words “journey” and “mission,” *zuyá* conveys much more than the mere act of moving from one place to another, as the words “travel” or “trip” would mean. Rather, the L/Dakota word, as with its English counterparts, brings with it a sense of importance, gravity, or weightiness; it implies movement or progress with a goal or purpose. Generally, this goal or purpose is quite significant, and this purposive movement can be spiritual just as often as it is physical. *Zuyá* is the word used to describe the oral wisdom and teachings of Lakota elders collected by Lakota teacher, thinker, and elder Albert White Hat, Sr. that make up life’s journey. White Hat defines *zuyá* in this way:

*Zu is ‘the journey’ or ‘the mission.’ This could be war, a journey of exploration, discovery, or some other mission. Ya means that you are on that mission, or that he or she is going on that particular journey (Life’s Journey \*Zuya: Oral Teachings from Rosebud, 177).*

One’s whole life of Christian discernment can be thought of as a *zuyá*, as can a process of formally discerning a call to ordained ministry. In particular, though, there exists a period of time between first having a call to ordained ministry provisionally discerned and beginning formal ministerial education. This is that critical period of time during which a person prepares emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually with the purpose of meeting the challenges posed by formal theological education. Because the way in which one treats this journey could mean the difference between a edifying, healthy ministerial formation process and a demoralizing, harmful one, the Diocese of South Dakota develops a structured, but individualized, program for each person entering any formal ministerial training. To reinforce that this should be a mission of emotional, spiritual, and intellectual discovery and maturation, and out of respect for the contributions of L/Dakota culture to the Diocese of South Dakota’s distinctive form of spirituality within the Episcopal tradition, this program is named *Zuyá*.

When students begin theological education, their teachers and even the texts they read will make certain expectations about what skills and knowledge these students bring to their studies, and often these sources can or will do little to let those who do not possess such skills and knowledge catch up. Some students are able to acquire this background at the same time that they are trying to learn the material before them, but it often comes at the cost of a diminished capacity to learn or quality of life. For others, this prospect proves overwhelming, leading them to believe there are unable to undertake the education necessary for their calling, when in fact it is not capacity to learn, but only a set of background skills and knowledge, that are lacking.

The Diocese is responsible for ensuring that all those engaging in theological education and ministerial formation are given the greatest possible chance for success. Knowing what was above described about the nature of theological education and how different students have responded to that environment, the Diocese has the responsibility to ensure that students have the background and skills that are assumed in the course of theological education. This course of study will further provide a sense of community and continuity between those who go to residential seminaries and those who remain in South Dakota to pursue their formal theological education.

This background can be broken into three areas: competence in written communication, study skills and academic integrity, and the vocabulary of theological and religious studies. With these areas in mind, those in the ordination process will be expected to meet these learning outcomes prior to being able to enter formal theological education:

- I. Students will demonstrate competency in written communication for theological and ministerial studies when their writing is free of those explicit grammatical and stylistic mistakes that impede the communication of their ideas. Furthermore, they will need to demonstrate some familiarity with how to logically expound an idea or argument and are able to distinguish between levels of formality in written communication.

- II. Students will demonstrate competency in study skills when they can understand and apply methods for critical and engaged reading, have been exposed to a variety of effective note taking techniques and begun to discover which are most effective for their learning styles, and can make use of select techniques for improving retention and recall of information. Students will demonstrate competence in the expectations for academic integrity when they can accurately describe various forms of plagiarism, are aware of its severity, and can demonstrate the ability to properly credit other thinkers when making use of their work or ideas.
- III. Students will demonstrate competency in theology and religious studies terminology when they can show awareness of the definitions and proper usage of the 100 or so of the most frequent vocabulary items, a list of which will be provided, can make use of a theological dictionary to look up unfamiliar terms, and have knowledge of the building blocks of much for much of this technical terminology so that they can make educated guesses about the meanings of unfamiliar words as they appear.

The purpose of the evaluation taken during the discernment retreat is to identify what skills and knowledge students already have in relationship to these learning outcomes and what areas need strengthening. If there are areas that are identified as needing improvement, you will work with your mentor in consultation with the MLD to develop a course of study that meets those specific needs.

Once your mentor believes that you have successfully completed your course of study and can meet the learning outcomes described above, the mentor and student will consult with the MLD to determine an appropriate means of evaluation. There is no one form of evaluation that every student must undergo in order to demonstrate competency. Some will benefit from a written evaluation, others may submit work done under the guidance of their mentor, others may have a conversation with the MLD, and others may meet these requirements with a passing grade in a pre-approved university or community college course.

One must always keep in mind that the degree to which one needs to strengthen these skills to reach the learning outcomes does not indicate one's intelligence or capacity to succeed in theological education, but has more to do with one's chosen field of study/career and proximity in time to that study. A student who is currently in college or a recent college graduate and studied religion or philosophy will probably need to do less of this preparatory work than someone who graduated 15 years ago with a degree in accounting, or someone who has spent most of his or her career in a more technical field. The ability to pass this requirement before starting formal theological education is not meant to be an unnecessary bureaucratic hoop to jump through, but is oriented toward ensuring that those who engage in formal theological education are as equipped to succeed at possible.

### **Zuyá Suggested Materials**

1. Collegiate English Dictionary (Merriam-Webster's *or* Oxford American Dictionary)
  2. *Essential Theological Terms*, Gustavo Gutierrez
  3. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church*, A.E. Livingstone
  4. *The Seminary Student Writes*, Core, *or* *The Little, Brown Handbook*, Fowler (buying the most current edition is prohibitively expensive, but the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> are available used on Amazon for low prices)
  5. *Garner's Modern English Usage*, Garner (older, but still acceptable, editions called *Garner's Modern American Usage*), *or* *Elements of Style*, Strunk and White
- + *What to Expect in Seminary*, Cetuk  
 + *Doing Theological Research*, Pazmiño

# THE LOCAL DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE

We are all Christian ministers through our baptism. We are all called to share in Christ's eternal Priesthood. Every baptized Christian is called upon to bring the presence of Christ into the home, workplace, and community. It cannot be reiterated enough that lay ministry is the *primary* and *principle* ministry in the Church.

This Diocese does not hold to the view that ordination is a means of recognizing a mature Christian life or a successful lay ministry. In fact, "rewarding" successful lay ministers with ordination often causes harm because it can give the impression that lay ministry must be validated through ordination (and is therefore invalid or less valid in and of itself). Successful lay ministry may be one component in identifying a potential call to ordination, but it must not be the only factor. Likewise, academic accomplishment, a life of caring and compassion, a history of personal struggle and courage, and a strong personal sense of being called, are all valuable assets, but they do not of themselves mean a call to ordination. Part of discerning means determining when these parts of a person's life provide evidence of a call into ordained ministry and when they indicate a call to lay ministry. Vital to the discernment process is finding ways to celebrate and validate those called to lay ministry *other than* putting these people forward for ordination.

We as a Church community believe that God calls out certain women and men for ordained leadership roles. This leadership must be composed of individuals well-chosen, highly trained and committed to serving God and the Church. The call to Holy Orders comes to the individual from God both internally through a personal recognition and externally through the Church, both at the level of the local congregation and the Diocese. Therefore, discerning a call is a matter neither of an individual with no regard for the judgement of the community nor of the community imposing its will with no regard for the wishes of the individual. Rather, discerning a call should always be a matter of an individual in and with a community.

After someone has attended a discernment retreat, he or she will return to his or her Church community with an affirmation of a call to explore more fully lay ministry, with an initial acceptance into the ordination process, or with a need to gain greater clarity as to whether it is lay or ordained ministry into which he or she is called. In all these situations, it is necessary to form a local Discernment Committee.

## Local Discernment Committee Responsibilities:

- I. Provide support for the person seeking ordination during the entire ordination process;
- II. To continue to reflect on the person's spiritual and ministry formation, their relationship with Jesus Christ, and their involvement in the local congregation;
- III. To submit an evaluative report to the Vestry, Bishop's Committee or Mission Council which, if affirming of the person and his or her call to ordained ministry, becomes part of the application for postulancy.
- IV. To submit an evaluative report to the Commission on Ministry, Priest in Charge, and Bishop if the person is affirmed for Lay Ministry.

Serving on a discernment committee provides everyone involved with the opportunity to continue listening for what call God has placed in their lives. While assisting a person in discerning a call to ministry, members of the local discernment committee are also called to reflect on their own baptismal ministry (this would be a good time to study and meditate on the liturgies for baptism and the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant in the Book of Common Prayer). Ministry is not just about ordination, but also about exercising the gifts and talents given to us by God in specific ways for the good of the Church and for the communities in which we live.

Those coming before the local discernment committee will have spent several months coming to an understanding of what discernment means in their lives and will probably have read one or more of the following books. It will therefore prove helpful for members of the discernment committee to familiarize

themselves with some or all of this material so that they may more fruitfully be in conversation with those who are discerning a call:

1. *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community* (Suzanne G. Farnham, Joseph P. Gill, R. Taylor McLean, Susan M. Ward)
2. *Exploring the Life and Calling*, Gary Black, Jr.

If a local discernment committee has been formed for a person who has entered into the ordination process, it is still vitally important the committee remember that this is a provisional status. If the local discernment committee does not feel that the person should continue the ordination process, the committee has an obligation to make this known to the diocese. At that point, it is likely that the ordination process will be suspended or discontinued. To discern that a person should no longer be in the ordination process, but continue as if they should, will be detrimental to the person seeking ordination, the congregation, and ultimately the Church at large. On the other hand, if the local discernment committee believes that the person should proceed into the ordination process, the committee is obliged to offer support and prayer for the person as he or she continues to discern their ministry.

# AIDS FOR DISCERNING IN COMMUNITY

Below are listed guidelines for helping individuals and congregations begin the process of identifying those who may have calls into commissioned or ordained ministry. The first set lists qualities that indicate someone is called to formal Christian leadership (catechist, deacon, or priest), and the second lists qualities that either indicate that a person *does not* have a call to formal leadership or that significant further work must be done before going further in the discernment process. Discovering whether a person has either set of qualities is better done indirectly. The MTLM can help local communities develop methods for clarifying whether a person possesses qualities from either list. **Importantly, it is expected that local congregations will make explicit reference to these qualities when making recommendations to the COM and Bishop about prospective candidates.** These lists are essential reference material for all involved in the formal discernment process (local priests, Discernment Retreat Facilitators, members of local discernment committees, etc.).

## Qualities Sought in Potential Leaders (Catechists, Deacons, or Priests)

A person *may* be called by God into ordained ministry if he or she:

1. Has regularly attended and participated in the life of the local church for a minimum of one year (this is a canonical requirement; “regular” attendance and participation may differ depending upon the local community; if a person has been attending for at least a year, but you are unclear about whether their attendance and participation is “regular,” contact the Bishop for further guidance);
2. Demonstrates commitment to knowing and following Jesus Christ;
3. Shows strong signs of growth toward maturity as a Christian (it may help to look for the Fruits of the Spirit as described by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23 as an indication of growing Christian maturity);
4. Understands and accepts the ordination vows (specifically, that ordained ministry is not a “job” that one can quit if it becomes dissatisfying, but is instead like the commitment made in marriage or baptism. It will help to review pp. 510, 526-51 of the *Book of Common Prayer*);
5. Shows an ability to proclaim and live the gospel in the Church and in the world. This would include the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship, to collaborate effectively with others, and to inspire the Church in its mission to the world as community builders and reconcilers;
6. Demonstrates the gifts of being a non-anxious presence during difficult pastoral situations and the ability to mediate disagreements, especially within the Church;
7. Exhibits a capacity for and willingness to lead public worship (an individual need not be an exceptionally talented public speaker or read portions of the liturgy every week, but this person should have experience reading scripture or leading other parts of the liturgy, and these activities should be performed joyfully and not begrudgingly);
8. Talks clearly about one’s vocation to ministry and mission (affirming a love for God, the life of the Church, and the world are necessary for this calling, but not sufficient – all Christians should strive for these things; one must look further for indicators such as a desire to equip other Christians for ministry through preaching and teaching, being drawn to administer the sacraments to the community, etc.);
9. Shows an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire for a deeper understanding, has an openness to mystery and God’s new revelation, and a vision of what the community of faith might become (one should look for a desire for deeper engagement and understanding of Scripture and the Book of Common Prayer as well as a firm grasp on the basic tenets of the Christian faith);
10. Shows evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline;

11. Is mature and stable enough to sustain the demanding role of an ordained minister and to face change and pressure in a flexible and balanced way. This is largely determined by a person's ability to know when they need help from others and the ability to tend to their own health and well-being;
12. Demonstrates self-awareness and self-acceptance as a basis for developing open and healthy professional, personal, and pastoral relationships as a minister;
13. Has the necessary intellectual capacity, stamina, and quality of mind to undertake a course of formation and preparation (this does not mean that someone must have always performed well in educational endeavors, but he/she must show a capacity for critical reasoning and problem solving, some capacity *and* desire to grow in knowledge, and the ability to communicate what was learned).

### **Qualities Indicating Someone May Not Currently Have a Call to Ordained Ministry**

It may be possible that there are people in your community that exhibit some of signs described above, or feel themselves called to ministry, but if they exhibit any of the characteristics listed below, the community at the very least should proceed more cautiously and critically in the process of discernment as these characteristics may well indicate that a person *does not* have a call into ministry at this time:

1. Has the individual been a resident in the Diocese of South Dakota for less than a year, or has he or she attended worship and other gatherings extremely infrequently? (the first of these automatically means that the individual canonically cannot enter the formal discernment process)
2. Does the person have a history of causing division, harm, or conflict within the Church, his/her family, or the larger community, of which he/she continues to be unrepentant, either by continuing the behavior or by showing no remorse for past harms? (A history of causing harm in most cases does not prevent a person from discerning a call to ordained ministry – we believe that we are all sinners who can be transformed by God's grace; the warning sign is that the person shows no indications of accepting this offer of transformative grace; furthermore, this warning sign most often will not be observed by the individual in question and *must* be brought forward by the community)
3. Does the individual show little or no desire to grow in the Christian life?
4. Does the individual regularly refuse to actively participate in worship, or does so only begrudgingly?
5. Is the individual unable to clarify why he or she feels called into ministry beyond a general love of God, the Church, or the welfare of the world?
6. Is this a person whom your congregation would not accept as an ordained minister?
7. Does the individual lack characteristics that are necessary for successful pastoral ministry, such as humility, integrity, patience, self-control, empathy, etc.? If these qualities are lacking, does the individual show no desire or attempt to develop them?
8. Does the individual appear to have motives for becoming an ordained minister other than a call from God and a desire to serve God's people? For instance, does it appear the person wants to be ordained to receive authority, power, or prestige? (If there is the suspicion that such ulterior motives may be present, then the congregation should be cautious in moving forward; however, if a person has openly admitted to these ulterior motives as the primary reasons he/she is seeking ordination, then that is clear indication that he/she is not currently called to ordained ministry and should not be allowed to go further in the process)
9. Does the individual believe that he or she has a right to be ordained, or does this person consistently become indignant at the suggestion that ordination is not a right?
10. Does the person show little regard for their own physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual well-being? Does he or she show a significant lack of self-awareness? (for instance, a person may

consistently engage in insulting, demeaning, or insensitive behavior that he/she is unaware of or consider humorous)

11. Does the person disparage the need for further education, or believe that any additional ministerial formation stands as an unnecessary obstacle to ordination?

Again, many of the above characteristics in an individual point toward the possibility that he or she is not currently called to ordained ministry or prepared to accept such a call. However, it is still the responsibility of the local congregation to make a person aware that he/she is exhibiting these characteristics and provide them the support needed to rectify them. In some instances, once these situations are resolved, a person may continue with the discernment process. In other instances, the resolution of these issues will itself constitute the recognition that one is not called to ordained ministry (as in the case of someone who only desires to be ordained for the power or authority it confers).

# ORDINATION PROCESS EXPECTATIONS

Below is an outline of the *minimum* expectations for a person who is involved in the ordination process. By signing the covenant at the discernment retreat, each person acknowledges that he/she understands the following expectations and are prepared to accept the responsibilities that these expectations entail. Likewise, the Diocese agrees to do everything possible to equip students to successfully fulfill these expectations. This covenant relationship is truly meant to foster bi-directional accountability: The Diocese will hold those in the ordination process accountable to the responsibilities to which they have agreed, and those individuals and their local congregations should make the Diocese aware if they feel that they are not receiving adequate support.

1. Be familiar with this *Handbook*.
2. Understand and commit the time and funds necessary for ordination.
  - a. Each person's ministry journey is unique, and many factors bear on each step. Nonetheless, a residential seminary is meant to take three years and the Niobrara School for Ministry (NSM) Course of Study assumes a four-year schedule. Less time in NSM would only be possible if some training had already been completed and competency in those areas could be demonstrated. Thus, an appropriate time line is 3-5 years with no significant delays, and no longer than 7 years without having to reestablish competency in material studied prior to that period.
  - b. Time involves reading, study, reflection, writing, class attendance (for seminary students) or Ministry weekends and Summer Seminary (for NSM), spiritual direction, local church ministry, and meetings with your mentor. The specific amount of time required to complete assignments will differ from person to person. A full-time student in seminary should anticipate 12 to 15 weekly hours in classes and 24 to 48 weekly hours of study and writing outside of the classroom. Those working with a mentor in Niobrara School for Ministry or attending another school part-time should anticipate 6 to 12 hours of weekly study if they want to remain on schedule.
  - c. Seminary expenses include tuition, books, cost of relocation, and living expenses. One can anticipate \$30,000 and \$50,000 annually for the cost of tuition, fees, and living expenses. Most students receive scholarships and grants that offset these costs, but it may still be necessary to invest between \$10,000 and \$15,000 per year or borrow that amount in student loans. Niobrara School expenses include travel, registration fees, lodging, meals, and cost of books. Some scholarship aid is available for NSM students, and you should seek other sources for financial aid. The congregation or mission that calls you forth should also make every attempt to provide some financial support.
  - d. You are responsible for paying for the physical exam required - through your insurance if possible. The exam will ideally be completed as part of a yearly physical.
  - e. Deacons and locally trained priests are non-stipendiary, as are even some positions for seminary trained priests. There should be no expectation of income from this ministry beyond expense reimbursement for these ministries.
  - f. Deacons and locally trained priests serve in the community that called them. Completing a seminary degree guarantees neither ordination nor job placement. There is likewise no guarantee of placement in the Diocese of South Dakota for seminary-trained ordinands.
3. You are expected to be an active part of a worshipping Episcopal community that helps you discern your call, supports you, and can honestly recommend (or not recommend) you for ordination. Those at residential seminary are expected to keep their home congregation in South Dakota aware of their progress. Those in the Niobrara School for Ministry are expected to remain, whenever possible, involved in the congregation in which they started the discernment process.

4. Discernment should be ongoing and designed to help you reach the decision to continue in the ordination process, delay at any step or stage, or remain in lay ministry.
5. There is such a thing as a failure of discernment, but that is *absolutely* not the same thing as not being ordained. Because discovering and living into one's Christian vocation is the primary purpose of discernment, the only time that a discernment can be said to have "failed" is if you end up ministering in a capacity that you have not been called to.
6. At all stages, you can stop or postpone the process. At all stages you can the Bishop, at his or her discretion, may remove you from the process – although there are few scenarios in which a person will be removed without warning.
7. There is an expectation that, *as a leader*, you will be proactive in your process, communicating and cooperating with others involved, seeking forms of financial aid, anticipating and planning for necessary steps, *initiating certain steps and contacts*, asking questions or for clarification when needed, and otherwise participating fully in the process.
8. Application Forms for each stage of the process, plus the forms required for your psychological and physical exams, are made available by the Diocesan Office when appropriately requested by the applicant. **The Diocesan Office will give you the names of the approved examiners for the required psychological exams.** The diocese pays for this exam.
9. You will be assigned a mentor to help you plan your theological education and spiritual formation, and who will support, direct, and advise along the way. You may have input in the choice of your mentor, and if you are in the Niobrara School for Ministry you may set your pace of study, although this information should be included in your IMFP.
10. For those doing their primary theological formation through the Niobrara School for Ministry, it is required that you develop an IMFP in conversation with your mentor and that this IMFP be submitted to the MLD, as well as any modifications of this agreement that occur during your course of study.
11. You are expected to develop a Rule of Life with your mentor during *Zuyá*, regardless of the type of ministerial education you embark upon, and it is recommended that you get a Spiritual Director to work with you if you are attending a residential seminary (even if this is not required by your seminary). Early efforts are to be made toward forming your mind after the mind of Christ, developing life habits of daily prayer, meditation, and the reading of Scripture, and other spiritual practices. Living a life that has a proper balance between a commitment to God, to family and career, and to recreation and relaxation is the general goal.
12. Everyone in *Zuyá* and then all those who do their formation through the Niobrara School for Ministry are expected to have contact with their mentor at least once a month.
13. Whenever possible, formation shall take place in community, including other people preparing for ministry or ordination. For those undertaking most of their education in the state of South Dakota, this includes diocesan training and educational events.
14. You are expected to complete approximately 2/3 or 3/4 of your theological education before applying for Candidacy.
15. Everyone in the ordination process is required to keep the Diocese informed about their academic and financial circumstances.
  - a. Those who attend residential seminaries are required to have their seminaries send the Missioner for Leadership Development an official transcript at the end of every semester. They are likewise expected to send certificates of completion *and* complete copies of evaluations for CPE and Field Education.

- b. Those in the Niobrara School for Ministry are expected to maintain a record of their theological education and formation and to undergo periodic evaluations.
  - c. Everyone, both in NSM and seminary, is expected to submit an annual report on their financial circumstances according to a form available through the Diocese.
16. Throughout your process prior to ordination, the Missioner for Leadership Development will administer tests to those in the Niobrara School for Ministry to test preparation and understanding per the Standards of Learning, just as those who attend residential seminaries will be given examinations in order to demonstrate competency in material learned. You must have your mentor's recommendation before requesting to take an exam. All examinations must be taken and satisfactory understanding must be demonstrated prior to setting an ordination date.
  17. Once you are ordained, you are expected to make use of continuing education opportunities.
  18. You are expected to communicate with the Bishop (written note, email, or scheduled phone call or face-to-face) four times a year, in Ember weeks, throughout the ordination process. One working towards the diaconate should reflect, in these reports, on one's academic, diaconal, personal, spiritual, and practical development. One working toward the priesthood should reflect on one's academic experience and personal and spiritual development. As you describe your experiences, tell how they affected you and what growth you experienced. You may also include other material or significant family experiences that will provide the Bishop with a picture of your life and work. These "conversations" with the Bishop are kept confidential. No one sees or hears them except you and the Bishop.
  19. Background checks and the results of your psychological and physical exams are also kept confidential by the Bishop.
  20. For those in NSM, the person seeking ordination - in collaboration with the mentor - will identify an area(s) of ministry in which to work during the ordination process.
  21. You are expected to have some familiarity with the National Constitution & Canons, Diocesan Constitution & Canons, and Diocesan Policy Manual. These are all available on the diocesan or national church websites.
  22. Attend Niobrara Convocations and Diocesan Conventions (during the course of study and after ordination for those in NSM and when in residence for those in seminary).

# *Section Two*

**THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND RESOURCES  
FOR THE NIOBRARA SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY  
COURSE OF STUDY, DEACON TRACK**

**MINISTRY  
HANDBOOK**

*for the Diocese of South Dakota*

# THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND FORMATION

## NIOBRARA SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY

Postulancy is a period of continuing discernment during which you will pursue academic studies to attain proficiency in subjects appropriate to your call to the diaconate. Part IV of the *Ministry Handbook*, “The Standards of Learning,” outlines what constitutes proficiency. The Diocese of South Dakota developed this formation program in accordance with Canon III.6 to provide the academic training required by the Canons of the Episcopal Church. The program assumes a timeline of three years.

As a student, you will be assigned a mentor who will work with you on your studies and with whom you are expected to contact at least once per month (either over the phone or through face-to-face meetings). You will also have periodic evaluations and/or projects to assess your progress. When a unit is completed, the Missioner for Transition and Leadership Ministries (MTLM) will provide an examination (“mini-exam”). An exam at the end of your study will be given by the Board of Examining Chaplains to measure your ability to apply your learning to ministry in the Church and world. Group study (with others in the process and/or in your congregation) is highly encouraged.

You must keep notes as you study. You should use the study tools provided in the section on *Zuyá* as well as the “Standards of Learning” to direct and monitor your progress. Your IMFP (Individual Ministerial Formation Plan), which is developed to map out the best form of the Course of Study for you, should incorporate what you believe to be the most helpful ways for you to understand, retain, and interpret what you study. You should also keep a written record of your notes and reflections. Even if conversations with others are your primary means of reflection/interpretation, you still need to write summaries of these conversations. You need to submit this material to your mentor at regular intervals (at least once a month) so that the mentor can track your progress and make suggestions or corrections.

NOTE: Courses may use online lectures as well as printed material. You need internet access and an email address both to access online materials and to maintain contact with your mentor and the Diocese.

### COURSE OF STUDY OUTLINE

*PRIOR TO POSTULANCY: Competency in Zuyá standards of learning*

Suggested Schedule: The timeframe can be modified according to your specific circumstances, but the entire process must last between three and seven years. If it lasts longer than seven years, you will have to reestablish competency in the material from before that time. In some circumstances, it is possible to “test out” of certain of areas; further information this is provided below. 2/3 of this course of study, including evaluations, must be completed before Candidacy. The course of study is divided into three Units. Each Unit has between two and four “areas” (Old Testament, theology, etc.). The course of study is as follows:

#### UNIT ONE

<i>BIBLE AREA:</i>		
Interpretation/Exegesis	2-4 weeks	Text(s), Assigned exercises
Old Testament	12-14 weeks	Bible readings, lectures or text(s)
New Testament	10-12 weeks	Bible readings, lectures or text(s)
<i>THEOLOGY and ETHICS AREA:</i>		
Historical and Systematic Theology	14-16 weeks	Textbooks
Lakota Theology	Ministry Weekend	Texts, Handouts
Christian Ethics	4 weeks	Textbook

## UNIT TWO

<i>HISTORY AREA:</i>		
Early Church to Reformation	10-12 weeks	Textbook(s)
Anglican and Episcopal Church History	6-8 weeks	Handouts
Episcopal Church in SD	Ministry Weekend	Group Exercise
<i>SPIRITUALITY and WORSHIP AREA:</i>		
Spirituality	6 weeks	Textbooks
Liturgy & Worship	6 weeks + practicum <i>or</i> 2-4 weeks and summer seminary (when offered)	Workbook, textbook(s)
Preaching	6 weeks + sermons <i>or</i> 2-4 weeks and summer seminary (when offered)	Textbooks, sermons, handouts

## UNIT THREE

Theory and Practice of Ministry	8 weeks	Textbooks, handouts
Individual and Community Pastoral Care	18 weeks	Textbooks, handouts
Deacon Studies	3-6 weeks	Textbook(s)
Church Polity & Administration	2 weeks	Texts, handouts

## MINISTRY WEEKENDS

The Following Ministry Days/Weekends will be held on a rotating basis, but will be offered at least once during your course of study. You *must* attend each of them at least once, but you may repeat weekends. Weekends with an asterisk (\*) completely fulfill a requirement, while the others are required *in addition to* self-study or “testing out.”

Anti-Racism Training*	Episcopal Church in SD*
Self-Care/Community Care	Lakota Theology*
Exegesis	Dakota Experience*
Liturgy Practicum	Book of Common Prayer*
Congregational Speech and Song*	Evangelism*

There will also be enrichment Ministry Weekends offered by guest speakers, on special topics, or otherwise not part of the regular rotation. Attendance by all current Niobrara School students is expected at all the enrichment Ministry Weekends.

**Additional Requirements:** As part of your course of study, you will also need to complete *Suicide Awareness Training (QPR)*, *Safeguarding God’s Children*, and *Safe Church Training*.

## SUMMER SEMINARY

Each year Niobrara School for Ministry holds a week-long “Summer Seminary.” The topics covered rotate with the teacher. While Summer Seminary cannot replace directed under a mentor, full participation (including all pre-assigned work) in Summer Seminary *can* shorten the time needed for such directed study. Because Summer Seminary is meant to enrich and not replace directed study, the courses offered will do one of these four things: address core competencies that have a practical component (such as preaching or liturgy), provide supplemental teaching, deal with special topics, or cover the content of multiple ministry weekends. You are expected to attend Summer Seminary each year that you are in the Course of Study, regardless of whether the topic is one that you have studied before. Summer Seminary is not only a time for topical learning, but is also pivotal for forming and maintaining relationships in community.

## ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF FULFILLING REQUIREMENTS

This course of study is meant to equip people with the tools and knowledge for the work of the diaconate and it is possible that you will come into the process with considerable knowledge in one or more of these areas because of previous work. With this in mind, evaluations have been created – where possible – through which you may “test-out” of particular areas. There will be two pre-established dates each year on which these examinations will be administered, with the location being determined by those taking them.

The procedure for taking these examinations is as follows: Should you feel adequately prepared to “test out” of one of the units, contact the MTLM *no later than one month prior to testing* to see if your area(s) can be tested out of. If the unit has an examination, you will be told the specific time of day and location of the testing no later than three weeks before the date. These evaluations will be timed, closed book (no outside resources will be allowed during the evaluation), and you cannot take more than two examinations on one date (thus, a single person cannot “test out” of more than four areas in one year).

While we want to do everything to acknowledge self-study, it is also vitally important to ensure consistency of preparation for all those in the Course of Study, meaning that these evaluations seek to establish that *at least* as much time and effort has gone into outside preparation as is expected for completion of an area through the Course of Study. You should expect these evaluations to be as rigorous as those undertaken in the regular course of study. Therefore, if you desire to test out of a certain unit, you should only do so after consultation with your mentor or the MTLM. During such consultation, we may determine that your outside preparation is not sufficient to warrant “testing out” of an area, but such preparation may allow for a shortened time of study on that area.

“Testing out” of certain units may shorten the timeframe for the completion of the course of study, but it does not guarantee it. Furthermore, no matter how many areas you test out of, you will still be expected to spend a minimum of *one and a half years* in the Course of Study and will attend all required Ministry Weekends and Summer Seminaries during that time. Certain aspects of ministerial formation can only be accomplished through hands-on practice. Furthermore, ministerial formation encompasses much more than increasing knowledge. Formation requires that you learn to work with others and to develop skills for coping with interpersonal conflict in healthy ways. These are elements of ministry formation that can only be accomplished through relationships cultivated in community over time.

However, should you demonstrate competency in multiple units from the course of study, it is not expected that you repeat units simply to fill out the required two-year minimum. Instead, such a scenario offers you the opportunity, as part of your IMFP, to either give greater attention to those areas of ministerial formation that require hands-on work or to develop a course of study that goes deeper into one of the areas of study (theology, biblical studies, history, administration, community development, etc.). The MLD is available to suggest further resources for these courses of study.

# DIAKONIA PROJECT

A point that should be repeated often is that deacons are *not* “priests light,” even if they do have certain liturgical functions that involve assisting priests. They are a separate ordained order with a different function to fulfill in the church and the world. The core of this ordained work is not simply service, although service to the church and the world is important. Rather, what sets deacons aside specifically is their role as bridge-builders and messengers, bringing the message and help of the church to the world and the needs and concerns of the world to the church. As such, deacons should feel called to serve in a ministry or set of ministries that allows them to function in this way.

Those approved to continue discerning a call to the diaconate and to begin formation should already have developed some sense of what this ministry may look like, or at the very least have a sense of the area in which this diaconal ministry will be expressed. It is then during the two to three years of ministerial formation and formal education that you will be expected to become clearer about what form this ministry will take and begin taking steps to make sure you are equipped specifically for this ministry. Often this ministry will grow out of a profession or specific training that you already have, especially if that profession or training is in a “helping” field such as medicine, counseling, social work, or community outreach. In these cases, you will likely not need further technical training, but you will need to develop a more concrete vision for how being a deacon changes the way you engage in that work as well as how you will bring the needs and concerns of your profession to the attention of the church. For others, this ministry will come from a passion or interest not directly related to your expertise, training, or profession. In these instances, you will need to develop and implement a plan for how you are going to gain the necessary training and skills to complete this ministry. For instance, you may need to take online courses in community development, you may need to complete certification as an EMT or paramedic, or you may need to volunteer regularly in a community center, hospital, school, or nursing home.

Your *Diakonia* Project is your self-designed program for clarifying and equipping yourself for your particular diaconal ministry upon ordination. There are only a few necessary aspects of this work: 1) you will work with an ordained deacon, even if this is not your primary mentor, who will guide you through this process; 2) you will need to develop a plan that is communicated to your mentor, the MTLM, and the Bishop, who will need to approve and give feedback on your plan; and 3) this will be an ongoing project for the entirety of your time in the Niobrara School Course of Study. Beyond these points, the specific form your *Diakonia* Project will take will depend entirely on the ministry you have been called to and the skills, expertise, or clarity you need in order to fulfill that vision.

# RESOURCES/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Niobrara School for Ministry understands that mentors and students will be more comfortable with certain resources than others. IMFPs and mentoring help you achieve certain learning outcomes rather than focusing on specific texts. Because mentors and students possess different needs and strengths, specific outlines for how these resources should be studied will not be provided. Rather, the suggested time frame to cover the material and annotations help mentors and students know which resources will best help them meet the learning outcomes are given.

While putting in time and effort to read the assigned materials is necessary for ministerial preparation, time and effort **are not in and of themselves sufficient to establish competency**. Rather, you must also demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the material based on expectations drawn from the Standards of Learning. It is imperative that any difficulties you encounter be recognized early so that alternative strategies may be used. In such cases, the MTLM should be made aware of the situation as early as possible so your mentor does not bear the bulk of responsibility for corrections. Furthermore, you cannot be recommended for any testing unless your mentor is confident that you have sufficiently grasped the material. Therefore, students who have worked together may not test at the same times or progress at the same rate.

## SUMMARY OF RESOURCES

### ZUYÁ RESOURCES

Required:

1. Collegiate English Dictionary (Merriam-Webster's *or* Oxford American)
2. *Essential Theological Terms*, Gutierrez
3. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Livingstone

Optional Supplements: *Garner's Modern English Usage*, Garner; *Elements of Style*, Strunk and White

## UNIT I

### **Bibles, Biblical Reference, and Interpretation**

Required:

1. Annotated Study Bible with Apocrypha (NRSV): *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha* (NRSV), Oxford University Press; or *The Harper Collins Study Bible* (NRSV), Harper Collins Publishers
2. *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary*
3. Exegesis handouts; or *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, by Hayes and Holladay
4. *Scripture and the Authority of God: How to Read the Bible for Today*, Wright; *Exploring the Bible*, Baretto and Chan; or *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*

Optional Supplements: Bible Atlas; Bible Concordance; Other biblical translations for comparison, including The New Jerusalem Bible, The Revised Standard Version, The Contemporary English Bible; *Imagination Shaped: Old Testament Preaching in the Anglican Tradition*, Davis; *Captive to the Word*, Volf

### **Old Testament**

Required: either textbooks (*The Old Testament: A Very Short Introduction*, Coogan; or *Telling the Old Testament Story*, Kelle) or lectures (The Old Testament, Amy Jill-Levine, The Great Courses; or Yale Open Courses: The Old Testament)

Optional Supplements *Reading the Old Testament*, Barton; *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, Miller and Hayes

## **New Testament**

Required: either textbooks: (*The New Testament: A Very Short Introduction*, Luke Timothy Johnson or *New Testament Theology: An Introduction*, Dunn, or *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, Luke Timothy Johnson) or Lectures (*Jesus and the Gospels* [Lectures 1-25, 35-36] and *The Apostle Paul* [All 12 lectures], both Luke Timothy Johnson, The Great Courses or *Yale Open Courses: The New Testament*).

Optional Supplements: *The New Testament World*, Malina; *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*

## **Theology**

Required:

1. *Being Christian and Being Disciples* Williams, or *Exploring Theology*, Robinson
2. *Sacraments as God's Self Giving*, White
3. *A History of Christian Theology*, Placher

## **Christian Ethics**

Required: *Ethics After Easter*, Holmgren; or *The Christian Moral Life*, Sedgwick

# **UNIT TWO**

## **Church History**

Required:

1. *Why Study the Past?* Williams
2. *A Brief History of Christianity*, Lindberg
3. *An introduction to the Episcopal Church*, Bernardin, or *Welcome to the Episcopal Church*, Webber
4. *That They May Have Life*, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve

Optional Supplements: *Early Christian Tradition*, Lyman (CTS); *Living with History*, Thompsett (CTS); *Church History in Plain Language*, Shelley; *Greek East and Latin West*, Louth; *The English Reformation*, Dickens

## **Spirituality & Prayer**

Required:

1. *The Practice of Prayer*, Margaret Guenther (CTS)
2. *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*, Rolheiser
3. *Spiritual Direction*, Nouwen

Optional Supplements: *Prayer*, Foster; *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina*, Casey; *Approaches to Prayer*, ed. Morgan; *The Ignatian Workout*, Muldoon; *Praying Our Days*, Griswold; *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church*, Decapopoulos; *Spiritual Friend*, Edwards

## **Liturgy & Worship**

Required:

1. *The 1979 Book of Common Prayer*
2. *The Book of Common Prayer: A Biography*, Jacobs
3. *Liturgy*, Burns

Optional Supplements: *Opening the Prayer Book*, by Jeffrey Lee (CTS); *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*, Hatchett; *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer*, *Praying Shapes Believing*, Mitchell; *A Priests Handbook*, Michno; *Elements of Rite*, Kavanagh; *Book of Occasional Services*, Church Publishing; *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral*, Long; *A Theology of Worship*, Weil (CTS); *Christian Worship in North America*, White

## **Preaching**

Required:

1. *The Witness of Preaching*, Long; or *Preaching*, Craddock
2. *Patterns of Preaching*, Allen
3. Installation Sermon of Presiding Bishop Curry

Optional Supplements: *The Homiletical Plot*, Lowry; *Preaching from Memory to Hope*, Long

## **UNIT THREE**

### **Theory & Practice of Ministry**

Required:

1. *In the Name of Jesus*, Nouwen
2. *Leading God's People*, Beeley
3. *Church Administration*, Bacher and Cooper-White (used as a reference text; not to be read through)
4. *Being the Church in a Multi-Ethnic Community*, McIntosh & McMahan; or *Ministering Cross-Culturally*, Lingenfelter

Optional Supplements: *Wounded Healer*, Nouwen; *Never Call Them Jerks*, Boers; *Holy Conversations*, Rendle and Mann; *The Reformed Pastor*, Baxter; *The Vestry Handbook*; *Leading Cross-Culturally*, Lingenfelter

### **Pastoral Care**

Required:

1. *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*, Gerkin; or *Giving Counsel*, Capps; or *Caring for God's People*, Culbertson
2. *Counseling Troubled Youth*, Dykstra
3. *Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Eating Healthy*, Willett & Skarrett
4. *Community Organizing and Community Building for Health and Welfare*, Minkler
5. *Toxic Charity*, Lupton

Optional Supplements: *Counseling Women*, Neuger; *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, Holifield; *Community and Growth*, Vanier; *Worlds Apart: Politics and Poverty in Rural America*, Duncan; *Hollowing Out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What It Means for America*, Carr and Kefalas; *Start a Community Food Garden: The Essential Handbook*, Joy; *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*, Leigh, et al.

### **Deacon Studies**

Required:

1. *Deacons in The Liturgy*, Plater
2. *Many Servants: An Introduction to Deacons*, Plater
3. *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order*, Barnett

Optional Supplements: *The Servant Church: Diaconal Ministry and the Episcopal Church*, Booty; *Deacons and the Church*, Collins; *Unexpected Consequences: The Diaconate Renewed*, Epting

### **Church Polity**

Required:

1. *Many Parts, One Body: How the Episcopal Church Works*, Dator
2. Current Constitution & Canons of the Episcopal Church
3. Current Constitution & Canons of South Dakota

# ANNOTATED RESOURCE LIST

These are the same resources that are provided in the summary above, except they are presented here with important information about each of the resources. A few points about the structure of this list:

1. For certain topics, there will be a preferred resource for achieving that topic's goals. These resources will generally be the most helpful to the most students.
2. In some topics there will be several equally valuable resources. In these instances, the mentor and student may choose whatever option suits their circumstances best.
3. Required resources, in addition to asterisks being affixed to them, will receive numbered bullet points. Recommended supplemental material will not.
4. Within a numbered bullet point, texts/resources that constitute a unit will be joined by **and**, while **or** marks off different options for fulfilling an area goal.
5. This list is by no means complete, and the MTLM can help guide you to or help with the development of other resources for meeting learning goals. However, please consult with the MTLM before deviating from the list, and please give the below listed resources a fair hearing before deciding they are ineffective.

## KEY:

\*\* Preferred Resource for Fulfilling Learning Outcomes

\* Alternative Resource for Fulfilling Learning Outcomes

+ Recommended Reading or Resource

CTS (New Church's Teaching Series)

## UNIT I

### **Bibles and Biblical Reference**

A student must own at least one NRSV translation of the Bible with appropriate study notes to engage in biblical studies. Students are further expected to own a scholarly bible dictionary (the *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary* is highly recommended) as their training in exegesis will be oriented toward exegeting passages primarily for preparing sermons. Having at least one other reputable translation of the Bible will facilitate more in-depth understanding of the language of Scripture since it allows one to see ranges of meaning in the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek that are not captured by any single English translation.

1. Annotated Study Bible with Apocrypha (NRSV):  
\**The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha* (NRSV), Oxford University Press  
or \**The Harper Collins Study Bible* (NRSV), Harper Collins Publishers
  2. *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary*
  3. \*Exegesis handouts or  
\**Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*, by Hayes and Holladay
- + Bible Atlas  
+ Bible Concordance  
+ Other scholarly biblical translations for comparison, including:  
The New Jerusalem Bible  
The Revised Standard Version  
The English Standard Version  
The Contemporary English Bible

## **Biblical Interpretation**

This section should be completed before beginning Old or New Testament studies to ensure an understanding of the various frameworks for Christian (particularly Episcopalian) readings of the Bible. You can reasonably expect to spend between two and six weeks working through the principles of biblical interpretation. One or more of the following texts should be used to help you understand that the texts of the Bible are always interpreted and so that you are familiar with the range of ways that the Bible can be interpreted by Episcopalians. The student should work toward forming his or her own interpretive lens for scripture that fits within this appropriately Episcopalian range. Furthermore, you should be able to have a sense of those modes of interpretation that go beyond what our tradition has deemed appropriate (possibilities could include, from opposite ends of the theological spectrum, that the Bible may be inspirational or historically important but is neither authoritative nor normative for today's Church *or* that one's salvation is dependent upon believing that the Bible is completely free from errors of any sort). You should also understand how his or her interpretive framework allows him or her to understand and apply the texts of scripture to contemporary ethical, homiletical, pastoral, and social situations.

\*\**Scripture and the Authority of God: How to Read the Bible for Today*, Wright  
or \**The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation*

The first text is preferred because it comes from within the Anglican tradition and is generally accessible. The *Cambridge Companion* deals with a wide range of traditions, and may aid students who prefer a more academic approach. One can also draw on certain article from the *Cambridge Companion* to supplement the other text.

+ *Imagination Shaped: Old Testament Preaching in the Anglican Tradition*, Davis

Much of how exegesis and interpretation is taught in this course of study is to equip ministers to prepare informed and contextually relevant sermons. With that goal in mind, this work provides models Anglicans engaging with the Bible for preaching.

+ *Captive to the Word*, Volf

A nice collection of essays on theological interpretation of the Bible from one of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's most influential theologians.

## **Guiding Principles for both Old and New Testament**

Once students have a satisfactory grasp of the principles of biblical interpretation, they can turn to specific study of the Old and New Testaments. One can expect to spend 14-16 weeks on the Old Testament and 12-14 weeks on the New Testament, although it may be necessary to allocate more time for one or both sections. For both Testaments, it is expected that the course of study will entail reading the Bible in conjunction with a textbook and audio/video lectures (the MTLM has the Great Courses lectures for distribution). In the case of the lecture components, it is essential that the student not listen passively, but actively take notes for later review. The texts and lectures begin with general introductions to the social and historical contexts of the Old and New Testaments, and it is preferable to have completed these sections prior to reading the books of the Bible. The books of the Bible should be read in conjunction with their corresponding textbook chapters and lectures. It is expected that students read the entire New Testament and it is preferable for them to read the entire Old Testament. If that is not possible they will need to have read in their entirety: *Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings, Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, the Psalms* (preferably both in the BCP and the NRSV), *Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel*, as well as selections from all remaining books.

You will have successfully completed the Scriptural component of the course of study when you can demonstrate competency in the standards of learning associated with A. Holy Scripture (Section IV of the Handbook), with particular emphasis on the ability to interpret scripture for ministry, as demonstrated by the capacity to retell major stories, events, and theological themes of the Bible in their own words and explain how these impact contemporary Christian life in a local context.

## Old Testament

Either one of these Textbooks or one of these lectures is required:

**Textbooks:** \*\**The Old Testament: A Very Short Introduction*, Coogan

The “Very Short Introductions” series by Oxford provides accessible, accurate, and concise introductory materials, making them the preferred choice for most students. They also provide extremely helpful “further reading sections” that allow students to go deeper on particular topics. Because Coogan’s work focuses less on the importance of the Old Testament for the Church and more on its Historical-Critical study, using this book requires that one take more initiative in thinking critically about the theological and pastoral importance and authority of the Old Testament.

or \* *Telling the Old Testament Story*, Kelle

**Lectures:** \*\*The Old Testament, Amy Jill-Levine, The Great Courses

or \*Yale Open Courses: The Old Testament (<http://oyc.yale.edu/religious-studies>)

+ *Reading the Old Testament*, Barton

+ *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, Miller and Hayes

## New Testament

Either one of these Textbooks or one of these lectures is required:

**Textbooks:** \*\**The New Testament: A Very Short Introduction*, Luke Timothy Johnson

In addition to the benefits of the “Very Short Introduction” series, Luke Timothy Johnson is both one of the foremost contemporary New Testament scholars and is consciously committed to the literary integrity of the New Testament (in contrast to primarily Historical-Critical scholars who approach the New Testament as a repository of ancient data to be dissected).

or \**New Testament Theology: An Introduction*, Dunn

In addition to functioning as a complete unit with the Brueggemann’s OT introduction, Dunn’s religious background is Anglican.

or \**The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, Luke Timothy Johnson

This work covers much of what Johnson’s “Very Short Introduction” does, but it does so in considerably more detail.

**Lectures:** \*\**Jesus and the Gospels* (Lectures 1-25, 35-36) and *The Apostle Paul* (All 12 lectures), both Luke Timothy Johnson, The Great Courses

If the student has the time and desire to listen to all of Johnson’s lectures on the non-canonical Gospels (lectures 26-34), this undertaking will certainly be informative and presents no problem, but it is not necessary for the completion of the course of study.

or \*Yale Open Courses: *The New Testament* (<http://oyc.yale.edu/religious-studies>)

If you use Johnson’s lectures, it is less necessary to use one of his books as the primary textbook. However, if you use the Yale lectures, you need to use one of Johnson’s books to ensure that the student receives an introduction to the New Testament that goes beyond Historical-Critical study to include its literary and theological dimensions as well.

+ *The New Testament World*, Malina

While this is only in the recommended section, it should be noted that this or some other social/cultural history of the ancient Mediterranean world should be used to help students contextualize the writings of the New Testament.

+ *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*

## Theology

Theology is an area that may take significantly longer to get through because, as an academic discipline, it can require a significantly different way of thinking. At the same time, some people may find thinking theologically very intuitive and will go very quickly through this material. One should not be surprised if the time to read and comprehend this material ranges widely, from 8 to 20 or more weeks. However, it is

necessary to take the time to become competent in the study of theology because this area unites and informs all other areas of ministerial study, even as it is informed and shaped by them. Theology is one of the most foundational fields of study since all people, whether they know it or not, already do theology – at its core, theology is talking and thinking about God and God’s relationship to the world.

This study of theology focuses both on contemporary systematic/comprehensive theology (that is, thinking about how one’s theological concepts inform and affect each other) and the historical development of Christian thought. Depending on your needs, it may be better to begin with historical theology and then do contemporary work, or it may make sense to first establish a sense of the nature and task of theology and then go back and see how it has developed. You will be considered competent in theology when you can fulfill the standards of learning III.C, with attention being paid to the capacity to explain the relevance of thinking critically about one’s theological beliefs and the ability to demonstrate how one’s theological beliefs impact how one engages in more “practical” disciplines such as pastoral care, preaching, and ethics.

1. *Being Christian and Being Disciples*, Williams

The two Williams texts are preferred because Williams writes with the explicit purpose of introducing theology from an Anglican perspective.

2. *Sacraments as God’s Self Giving*, White
3. *A History of Christian Theology*, Placher

Placher provides a good introduction to the development of Christian thinking.

## **Christian Ethics**

So long as you have demonstrated a command of theology, this area should not take as long as others. Christian Ethics, while not exactly “applied theology,” in many ways fills out the more theoretical framework developed in the previous area. Thus, you can expect to take four weeks studying Christian ethics. If the study of Christian ethics proves to be a considerable challenge, this may indicate that more work needs to be done in theology. You will demonstrate competence in Christian Ethics and Moral Theology when you can fulfill the standards of learning in III.H. While you need to demonstrate that you understand how your system of ethics impacts your behavior, it is vital that you understand that ethics and moral theology are not merely a set of rules dictating good and bad behavior.

*Ethics After Easter*, Holmgren  
or *The Christian Moral Life*, Sedgwick

## **UNIT TWO**

### **Church History**

While history includes dates, names, and events, having a good grasp of history means much more than this. Truly engaging in history, particularly for the good of the Church, is about understanding the cultural and temporal contexts in which certain events happened; it is about getting a sense of what caused people to behave the way they did and why certain events happened and others did not; it is about seeing our contemporary world as part of the stream of history and understanding that what has come before us continues to shape who we are today. Most importantly, from a Christian standpoint, the study of history is about engaging with a living reality, not merely events that are “in the past.” It is about building relationships with the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us but continue to be parts of our lives by getting to know the contexts that shaped them – just as real relationship with our contemporaries requires that we know their stories and cultural contexts. Ultimately, history is important because we worship a God who, while beyond time, has chosen to be known in and through the particular lives and events of people in history.

Successfully meeting the standards of learning for history will mean being able to explain and interpret the events and figures described in III.B. It will also require an awareness of how the study of history is

important in our contemporary Christian lives and can explain how the study of history impacts the current practice of ministry.

1. *Why Study the Past?* Williams

This is an exceptional (and required) text by theologian and former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams that will provide a foundation for how one should approach the study of history as a part of theological education and of the importance of history for the contemporary Church.

2. *A Brief History of Christianity*, Lindberg

3. *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction*, Chapman

Provides a good overview of the history of Anglicanism in England.

4. *\*An Introduction to the Episcopal Church*, Bernardin, or *\*Welcome to the Episcopal Church*, Webber

5. *That They May Have Life*, Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve

+ *Early Christian Tradition*, Lyman (CTS)

+ *Church History in Plain Language*, Shelley

+ *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought*, Wilken

+ *Greek East and Latin West*, Louth

Our curriculum necessarily has to limit itself and unfortunately this means spending less time on the development of Eastern Orthodoxy. For students who wish to look more deeply at the forces that led to the early division between the Western and the Eastern churches, this is one of the best available.

+ *The English Reformation*, Dickens

## **Spirituality & Prayer**

It is expected that by the time you have gotten this are of the course of study, you will already have developed a regular practice of devotional biblical reading as well as a habit of regular prayer and meditation. The purpose of this unit is *not* to introduce you to practices of piety. Instead, the focus should be on deepening their understanding of the nature of Christian spirituality and being introduced to a range of devotional practices and spiritual disciplines so that they may best help the members of their congregations find appropriate spiritual disciplines and spirituality practices. This area should also help equip students to do some degree of spiritual direction with their congregants.

The length of time you spend in this area will be determined in large part by how many different spiritual disciplines and devotional practices they have tried in the past. One can therefore expect a fairly large range of times, from six to eight weeks, depending upon the particularities of the student.

**NOTE:** This area should not take longer because you have not yet developed any personal spiritual practices. If it becomes apparent at this point that you have no familiarity with spiritual disciplines or devotional practices, this should be flagged as highly problematic and will warrant a reevaluation of whether you should remain in the ordination process.

Competency in this area will be demonstrated when you can show familiarity with a variety of spiritual disciplines, be able to give an account in their own words of how they understand Christian spirituality its role in the life of faith, and can propose a course of spiritual practices in response to different hypothetical congregants' needs.

1. *The Practice of Prayer*, Margaret Guenther (CTS)

2. *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*, Rolheiser

3. *Spiritual Direction*, Nouwen

+ *Prayer*, Foster

+ *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina*, Casey

This book should be considered highly recommended, and will be required if the student does not have any familiarity with devotional bible reading.

+ *Approaches to Prayer*, ed. Morgan

- + *The Ignatian Workout*, Muldoon  
An excellent contemporary introduction to the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola.
- + *Praying Our Days*, Griswold  
A selection of prayers, mostly from the Prayer Book, with some commentary, for use in individual prayer.
- + *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church*, Decapopoulos
- + *Spiritual Friend*, Edwards

## **Liturgy & Worship**

It is expected that prior to even entering the ordination process one will already have practice serving in various liturgical capacities in one's congregation and will be familiar with the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. Therefore, working through this material should not, in most cases, mean beginning from scratch. However, there is also the possibility that precisely because of one's familiarity with one's local worshiping styles and practices, coming to understand when these practices may need some correction or to appreciate the diversity of worship styles and liturgical theologies may add more time to this unit. A reasonable expectation is six weeks of work in this area, and during this time there should be, in addition to the required practicum, greater engagement in one's worshiping community as well as greater critical engagement with one's worship style. This time will require more physical contact time you and your mentor. You may even need to take time to participate in your mentor's worshiping community during this time in a kind of "apprenticeship."

You will be considered competent in worship and liturgy when they can fulfill the standards of learning in III.D and parts of E. Specific attention should be given to recognizing the range of liturgical and sacramental theologies that are present among Christians and how these compare to the range that is generally considered appropriate within the Episcopal Church. Furthermore, emphasis should be given to learning a variety of worship styles in order to fit one's worship leadership to the piety of one's congregation.

1. *The 1979 Book of Common Prayer*
2. *The Book of Common Prayer: A Biography*, Jacobs  
An extremely accessible, well researched, and fair analysis of the development and use of the Book of Common Prayer in the Anglican world.
3. \**Liturgy*, Burns
  - + *Opening the Prayer Book*, by Jeffrey Lee (CTS)
  - + *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*, Hatchett
  - + *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer*  
A very good collection of essays on the history, development, and worldwide variety of Books of Common Prayer.
  - + *Praying Shapes Believing*, Mitchell  
A liturgical theology of prayer book worship
  - + *A Priests Handbook*, Michno  
A detailed look at additional practices, such as manual acts and how to lead processions or use incense in a congregation. However, one must be careful with the use and authority of this work. While it gives options for how to lead prayer book worship, it often portrays practices that are truly optional as though they are rubrical. It may be important to own this work if for no other reason than because some priests will present information from this book as though it were necessitated from the BCP and it will be helpful to reference this to see if that is the case in any given situation (liturgical colors are a good example of this phenomenon).
  - + *Elements of Rite*, Kavanagh
  - + *Book of Occasional Services*, Church Publishing
  - + *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral*, Long

An extremely valuable theological exploration of the nature of the Christian funeral from one probably the preeminent homiletician of the last 20 years. It is highly recommended that this be used as at least as a reference.

- + *A Theology of Worship*, Weil (CTS)
- + *Christian Worship in North America*, White

## **Preaching**

While it can often be neglected in Episcopal churches in favor of an emphasis on the service of the Table, the proclamation of the Word is just as important in our services. It is therefore expected that students will become competent in preparing the content of a sermon and in delivering that sermon.

Competency in preaching will be established when the mentor, in consultation with the MTLM, believes that you can appropriately exegete a passage of Scripture for preaching, craft a sermon with a clear central message, and deliver it clearly and confidently. It is likely that you will not only need to prepare a manuscript (along with an explanation of your preparation), but will need to provide either a recording of a sermon or arrange for an opportunity for the MTLM or the Bishop to observe your preaching.

1. *\*The Witness of Preaching*, Long  
or *\*Preaching*, Craddock

Both of these are standard texts for teaching the craft of homiletics and take a student through the whole process of preparing, crafting, and delivering a sermon. Assuming a student has successfully completed their exegesis component, the main focus in using these texts should be on the specific nature of a sermon as a means of communication. Craddock's book is older than Long's but it also may be more accessible. Both Craddock and Long are some of the most important and influential homileticians of the last 50 years.

2. *Patterns of Preaching*, Allen

This collection of sermons provides detailed explanations of the various structures that a sermon can take and explains how they can most appropriately be employed.

3. Installation Sermon of Presiding Bishop Curry
4. Sermons That Work: <http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/?menu=menu7285>  
+ *The Homiletical Plot*, Lowry  
+ *Preaching from Memory to Hope*, Long

## **UNIT THREE**

### **Theory & Practice of Ministry**

While everything undertaken in the course of study is “practical” in that everything should be done with an eye to how it impacts the practice of ministry, the last two units turn to explicitly imparting the practices necessary for effective ministry. One may also consider these areas to be those that are most explicitly related to the practices specific to work as an ordained minister (while ordained ministers should have a sufficient understanding of theology, the bible, history, and ethics to help lead their congregations to deeper appreciations of these things, these are areas of knowledge that all Christians really have a responsibility to cultivate). At the same time, there are certain areas here that are specifically related to practice, but which still remain the responsibility of all Christians (spirituality, prayer, and participation in the liturgy for instance), even if the ordained minister may play specific roles in these areas.

One may think of this specific area, Theory & Practice of Ministry, as the place in which the theory and practice of specifically Christian leadership and administration of the church as an institution is undertaken. One should expect around eight weeks to go through all four sub-areas, although this may be shorter or longer depending on the student and does not necessarily have to be split up evenly. **This area, particularly those aspects dealing with multi- and cross-cultural ministry, and the next unit on individual and community pastoral care are especially important for training for the diaconate.**

Since you serve as a bridge between the world and the Church, it is vitally important that you be versed in tools for communicating across various divides, providing care, and reaching out to the community.

A student will be considered competent in Theory & Practice of Ministry when he/she can fulfill the expectations of the standards of learning for III.E. Specific attention should be given to how a distinctively theological understanding of leadership, and pastoral leadership in particular, differs from how leadership may be conceived of in the secular world while also demonstrating how tools from other conceptions of leadership can be brought to bear on pastoral ministry.

### **I. Pastoral Theology and Theory**

5. *In the Name of Jesus*, Nouwen

+ *Wounded Healer*, Nouwen

One of Nouwen's most recognized and important works, it is slightly longer than *In the Name of Jesus*, and covers similar ground. However, use of this book will also constitute considerable headway in the section on spirituality.

### **II. Pastoral Leadership and Systems Theory**

1. *Leading God's People*, Beeley

Beeley's work bridges the gap between a theory of pastoral leadership and the practice of this leadership. Beeley is particularly helpful because his work shows how the study of history and theology continue to inform our conceptions of "practical ministry" and because he writes as an ordained and practicing Episcopal priest. Furthermore, this work is valuable because it can be used to work with lay leaders in helping them come to a deeper appreciation of a theologically informed conception of leadership in congregations.

+ *Never Call Them Jerks*, Boers

An excellent work for dealing specifically with conflict and difficult personalities.

+ *Holy Conversations*, Rendle and Mann

+ *The Reformed Pastor*, Baxter

Even though this is from a 17<sup>th</sup> century English theologian, it is never harmful to look to the history of congregational leadership, and it very well may provide insights that remain applicable to contemporary congregations.

### **III. Church Administration**

1. *Church Administration*, Bacher and Cooper-White

Think of this as a reference guide for how to approach the logistics of congregational ministry. Not everything will be applicable to every ministry context, but it will be important to identify what from this work *will* be needed once one enters local ministry and to gain some expertise in this area. Administration is an area consistently flagged as important but overlooked in ministerial formation, so this component should not be given short shrift.

+ *The Vestry Handbook*

### **IV. Multi-Cultural Ministry**

1. *\*Being the Church in a Multi-Ethnic Community*, McIntosh & McMahan

Even if one's primary ministerial location will be in an ethnically homogenous location, the larger church, not only in the world, but here in South Dakota, is ethnically diverse. Ethnic and cultural diversity bring many opportunities for growth and joy, but they also make ministering more complex by introducing a number of additional variables to which the minister must be sensitive. Even if one *is* primarily in an ethnically homogenous local setting, we exist as a relational and connectional church, and local congregations will be in contact with other groups that are different ethnically and culturally. While expectations like Dakota Experience and anti-racism can help with multi-cultural ministry and cultural sensitivity, being able to adapt as

necessary to changing cultures and congregations requires some knowledge of the theory behind multi-cultural ministry.

+ *Leading Cross-Culturally*, Lingenfelter

## **Pastoral Care**

While it is vitally important to recognize that deacons are not necessarily the same as licensed counselors, community developers, or public health consultants (although some may be as part of their diaconal ministry), it is also necessary to acknowledge the realities of the communities in which we are called to serve. Many of these services are unavailable or under-available. Furthermore, the difficulties faced by many members of our communities, which may include racism, economic poverty, addiction, violence, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and chronically under-treated depression and other mental illnesses make the lack of these resources that much more harmful and put greater stress on the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of our congregants. Thus, while our ordained ministers cannot be expected to completely fill the vacuum left by the lack of these other services, it does mean that pastoral care in certain communities will entail finding creative ways to help people secure these physical, emotional, and mental health resources more often than will be expected of ordained ministers in other contexts.

One can think of pastoral care in the Niobrara School Course of Study as consisting of three components. The first is traditional practices of pastoral care, such as marriage counseling, conflict management, the ability to impose church discipline, and grief counseling. The second component is self-care. While this is often not thought of as a component of pastoral care and counseling, it plays a key role. Aside from the fact that clergy who have appropriate self-care practices and keep themselves mentally, physically, and spiritually healthy are better able to do all the required tasks in their ministries, living a healthy lifestyle allows the ordained minister to model such a lifestyle for members of his or her congregation. The third component is the capacity to accurately recognize the elements that are causing physical and mental harm to people in our communities and have some capacity to point people toward solutions. This third element does not mean that clergy are expected to be experts in community development, nutrition, or mental health, but they need to know how to seek out the people or resources that can provide such expertise.

You can expect to spend between 18 weeks working through various components of pastoral care and developing the capacity to find resources for individual and community health.

You will have demonstrated competency in Pastoral Care when you meet the standards of learning associated with pastoral care. You will also need to demonstrate an awareness of your own health needs to practice proper self-care (if one's health consistently prevents one from attending required events, keeping up with one's studies, or meeting with one's mentor, this may be an indication that one is not equipped for ordained ministry). Finally, you need to demonstrate an awareness of the forces that diminish the individual and communal health of their communities and the capacity to at least point people toward resources that may diminish the power of some of those forces.

### **I. General Pastoral Care**

1. \* *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*, Gerkin  
\**Giving Counsel*, Capps  
or \**Caring for God's People*, Culbertson

Any of the above texts are excellent introductions to standard practices of pastoral care and counseling.

2. *Counseling Troubled Youth*, Dykstra

While this resource focuses on youth, it has insights that can be applied to more difficult counseling scenarios for people of all ages.

3. *Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Eating Healthy*, Willett & Skarrett  
+ *Counseling Women*, Neuger

## II. Pastoral Care: Community Health and Development

1. *Community Organizing and Community Building for Health and Welfare*, Minkler  
This reference work can help provide a starting point for entering into or beginning the conversation within one's local community about how the human and material resources already within one's community can be marshalled to help meet the needs of that community.
  2. *Toxic Charity*, Lupton  
An exploration of the ways that Church communities' good intentions can often harm the people they intend to help, as well as suggestions for avoiding harmful patterns.
- + *Worlds Apart: Politics and Poverty in Rural America*, Duncan  
+ *Hollowing Out the Middle: The Rural Brain Drain and What It Means for America*, Carr and Kefalas  
The two above resources focus mainly on rural Appalachia, the South, and New England, and so do not perfectly fit the situation in South Dakota, but they may nevertheless provide helpful insights and possible solutions.
- + *Start a Community Food Garden: The Essential Handbook*, Joy  
+ *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*, Leigh, et al.

### Deacon Studies

The ministries of those called to be permanent deacons and those called to be priests share certain similarities, but they remain distinct vocations with distinct roles within their respective communities. One can expect three to six weeks for this area.

1. *Deacons in The Liturgy*, Plater
  2. *Many Servants: An Introduction to Deacons*, Plater
  3. *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order*, Barnett
- + *The Servant Church: Diaconal Ministry and the Episcopal Church*, Booty  
+ *Deacons and the Church*, Collins  
+ *Unexpected Consequences: The Diaconate Renewed*, Epting

### Church Polity

You will demonstrate competency in the structure and governance of the Episcopal church when you can fulfill the standards for learning III.I point 1. **NOTE:** This does not mean that you need to have memorized the Constitution and Canons either of the Episcopal Church or of the Diocese, but it does mean that you should be able to give a summary, in your own words, of the structure of the church, and should know where to look to resolve questions of order and governance in the Church.

1. *Many Parts, One Body: How the Episcopal Church Works*, Dator
2. Current Constitution & Canons of the Episcopal Church
3. Current Constitution & Canons of South Dakota

# *Section Three*

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**MINISTRY  
HANDBOOK**

*for the Diocese of South Dakota*

# FEES & EXPENSES FOR NIOBRARA SCHOOL

The following costs are estimates of how much you can expect to pay per year for each item. You may find that the amount you are required to spend on textbooks is more or less than the figure below depending on which resources you use.

Textbooks	\$150
Summer Seminary	\$250
Ministry Weekends	\$100 (\$15/weekend)

Assuming a course of study that lasts between three and five years, it would be fair to assume a cost of between \$1,500 and \$2,500 for the entire course of study.

## **Additional Financial Considerations:**

Cost of travel to ministry weekends and Summer Seminary  
Cost of hotels or other lodging for ministry weekends

## **Sources of Financial Aid**

St. Mary's School Scholarship  
ECW Scholarship  
Bishop Jones Scholarship  
Your Local Congregation  
Family

# DISCERNMENT/ORDINATION CHECKLISTS

Below you will find two checklists that will help you organize and track what you have done in the formal discernment/ordination process, as well as what needs to be done. The first list applies to those who training for ordination through Niobrara School for Ministry. The second list applies to those training for ordination through a seminary. Immediately below you will find some important terms used in these checklists.

## ***Ember Day Letters***

Each Postulant and Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate or Priesthood shall communicate with Bishop (in person or by letter or by email) four times a year, in the Ember Weeks. In these communications, you should provide the bishop with reflections on your academic, human, spiritual and practical development.

## ***Background Check***

When notified, the Diocesan Office initiates this check of credit, criminal, civil, and sexual records

## ***Medical Evaluation***

By your family physician, using forms prepared for the purpose by the Church Pension Fund. Self/insurance pay. The Diocese recommends that this be part of a routine, annual physical.

## ***Psychological Evaluation***

By a professional evaluator **pre-approved by the bishop**, using forms prepared for the purpose by the Church Pension Fund. The Diocese pays for this evaluation.

## ***Mentor***

A member of the clergy, or properly educated and qualified lay-person, who will help you set a schedule of theological education and spiritual formation based on Diocesan and canonical standards, and who will support, direct, and advise you along the way.

# DISCERNMENT & ORDINATION CHECKLIST: VOCATIONAL DEACON, LOCAL FORMATION

## I. Sometime Prior to Ordination<sup>1</sup>

- Attend a Dakota Experience Ministry Weekend (only through Diocese of South Dakota)

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

- Receive Awareness and Suicide Prevention Training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training (“Safe Church”)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Safeguarding God’s Children training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Anti-Racism Training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Constitution and Canons with Title IV Disciplinary Training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Aspirancy

- With supervising minister’s approval, aspirant contacts MTLM about attending a Discernment Retreat.

- Aspirant attends discernment retreat, a call to the vocational diaconate is discerned, and aspirant signs a Ministry Formation Covenant.

Date of retreat: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of signing: \_\_\_\_\_

- Aspirant consults with bishop and determines Niobrara School for Ministry is appropriate for formation.

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

- Aspirant demonstrates local community support by returning completed form **6P2** (Letter of Congregational Support) to the MTLM and COM Secretary<sup>2</sup>. **No further steps in the formal discernment and formation process can occur until the aspirant returns this letter.**

Date sent (as indicated by date of faxing, emailing, or postmarking): \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Completed at any point prior to ordination to the diaconate.

<sup>2</sup> All forms that need to be sent to the COM Secretary should be sent to the following address:  
COM Secretary, c/o The Diocese of South Dakota, 408 N. Jefferson Ave, Pierre, SD 57501.

- Aspirant receives and takes strengths inventory for *Zuyá*.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant receives mentor for *Zuyá*.  
Mentor's name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant and MTLM, in consultation with mentor, develop personalized *Zuyá* study plan.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant's local congregation forms discernment committee.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Upon completion of *Zuyá* and when the local discernment feels comfortable endorsing the aspirant for postulancy, MTLM sends aspirant Acceptance of Nomination and Application for Postulancy (form **6P1**) and Covenant Not to Sue.  
Completion of *Zuyá* Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Endorsement Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant returns completed **6P1** (with associated documents and letter of support from supervising priest) and Covenant Not to Sue to COM Secretary. Reception of these completed forms constitutes date of acceptance of nomination by the aspirant, as understood by the postmark date.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant is interviewed by the COM and receives COM Contact Person.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ COM Contact's name \_\_\_\_\_
- COM makes recommendation to the bishop regarding whether the aspirant should be made a postulant using form **6P3**.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Diocesan Administrative Assistant sends aspirant Mental Health Questionnaire and schedules a time for mental health evaluation. This evaluation must be completed prior to the bishop admitting aspirant to postulancy.  
Date Questionnaire sent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_
- The bishop admits aspirant to postulancy using form **6P4** and sends aspirant letter of this decision (this is the date that postulancy officially begins).  
Date of admission (on letter from bishop): \_\_\_\_\_ Date letter received: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Postulancy

- Postulant develops IMFP for Niobrara School for Ministry in consultation with MTLM and mentor.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Postulant informs bishop of progress during Embertides, i.e., Ember Days Letters. There are four Embertides every Church year; record the years of postulancy and dates/manner of communication with the bishop:  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 
- 
- Postulant adequately completes *at least* 2/3 of NSM Course of Study.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - When the above requirements have been fulfilled, MTLM sends postulant forms **6C1**, **6C2**, and Medical Evaluation (Application for Candidacy).  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Postulant returns completed forms **6C1** and **6C2** to the COM Secretary.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - COM makes recommendation to the bishop regarding whether the postulant should be made a candidate using form **6C3**.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Standing Committee approves admitting the postulant to candidacy using form **6C4**.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - The bishop admits postulant to candidacy using form **6C5** and sends postulant letter of this decision.  
Date of admission (on letter from bishop): \_\_\_\_\_ Date letter received: \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. Candidacy

- Candidate informs bishop of progress during Embertides, i.e., Ember Days Letters. There are four Embertides every Church year; record the years of candidacy and dates/manner of communication with the bishop:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate returns completed Medical Evaluation (the Diocese prefers that this form be completed by a physician during your annual physical and must occur within 12 months of ordination).  
Date of Exam: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Returned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate gives permission and necessary information to MTLM for Background Check (this must occur within 12 months of ordination).  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Background Check Results: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate receives and takes Diocesan Canonical Exam from the Board of Examining Chaplains.  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Returned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate receives results and feedback from Board of Examining Chaplains and is recommended to the Commission on Ministry for ordination to the diaconate.  
Date Results Received: \_\_\_\_\_

- Candidate receives forms **6OPD1** and **6OPD2** from MTLM (Application for Ordination to the Diaconate).  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate returns completed forms **6OPD1** and **6OPD2** to the COM secretary.  
Date Returned: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received by COM: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate has MTLM complete and return form **6OPD3**.  
Date Given to MTLM: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received by COM: \_\_\_\_\_
- COM recommends candidate for ordination using form **6OPD4** and provides a copy to the Standing Committee.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Standing Committee completes form **6OPD5**, Certificate of Standing Committee for Ordination to the Diaconate, and returns completed form to the bishop.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate consults with bishop about date of ordination to the diaconate.  
Date of consultation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date set for ordination: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate is ordained a deacon  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# DISCERNMENT & ORDINATION CHECKLIST: VOCATIONAL DEACON, GRADUATE SCHOOL TRACK

## I. Sometime Prior to Ordination<sup>1</sup>

- Attend a Dakota Experience Ministry Weekend (only through Diocese of South Dakota)

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

- Receive Awareness and Suicide Prevention Training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training (“Safe Church”)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Safeguarding God’s Children training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Anti-Racism Training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receive Constitution and Canons with Title IV Disciplinary Training

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Means Fulfilled: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Aspirancy

- With supervising minister’s approval, aspirant contacts MTLM about attending a Discernment Retreat.

- Aspirant attends discernment retreat, a call to the vocational diaconate is discerned, and aspirant signs a Ministry Formation Covenant.

Date of retreat: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of signing: \_\_\_\_\_

- Aspirant demonstrates local community support by returning completed form **6P2** (Letter of Congregational Support) to the MTLM and COM Secretary<sup>2</sup>. **No further steps in the formal discernment and formation process can occur until the aspirant returns this letter.**

Date sent (as indicated by date of faxing, emailing, or postmarking): \_\_\_\_\_

- Aspirant receives and takes strengths inventory for *Zuyá*.

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

<sup>1</sup> Completed at any point prior to ordination to the diaconate.

<sup>2</sup> All forms that need to be sent to the COM Secretary should be sent to the following address:  
COM Secretary, c/o The Diocese of South Dakota, 408 N. Jefferson Ave, Pierre, SD 57501.

- Aspirant receives mentor for *Zuyá*.  
Mentor's name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant and MTLM, in consultation with mentor, develop personalized *Zuyá* study plan.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant's local congregation forms discernment committee.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant consults with bishop about appropriate form of ministerial education.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Specific School/Programs(s) Decided \_\_\_\_\_
- Upon completion of *Zuyá* and when the local discernment feels comfortable endorsing the aspirant for postulancy, MTLM sends aspirant Acceptance of Nomination and Application for Postulancy (form **6P1**) and Covenant Not to Sue.  
Completion of *Zuyá* Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Endorsement Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant returns completed **6P1** (with associated documents and letter of support from supervising priest) and Covenant Not to Sue to COM Secretary. Reception of these completed forms constitutes date of acceptance of nomination by the aspirant, as understood by the postmark date.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Aspirant is interviewed by the COM and receives COM Contact Person.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ COM Contact's name \_\_\_\_\_
- COM makes recommendation to the bishop regarding whether the aspirant should be made a postulant using form **6P3**.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Diocesan Administrative Assistant sends aspirant Mental Health Questionnaire and schedules a time for mental health evaluation. This evaluation must be completed prior to the bishop admitting aspirant to postulancy.  
Date Questionnaire sent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_
- The bishop admits aspirant to postulancy using form **6P4** and sends aspirant letter of this decision (this is the date that postulancy officially begins).  
Date of admission (on letter from bishop): \_\_\_\_\_ Date letter received: \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Postulancy

- Postulant begins graduate work.  
Graduate program attended: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of matriculation: \_\_\_\_\_
- Postulant informs bishop of progress during Embertides, i.e., Ember Days Letters. There are four Embertides every Church year; record the years of postulancy and dates/manner of communication with the bishop:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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- Postulant sends bishop and MTLM official seminary (or other graduate program) transcript copies after semester grades have been posted. Record the semester end dates and the dates the official transcripts were requested:

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- Postulant sends bishop and MTLM the Summary of Finances and Liabilities form at the beginning of each academic year. Record the dates these forms were sent:

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- Postulant sends bishop and MTLM complete copies of field education and CPE final evaluations (if applicable)

Date Field Education Evaluation Sent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date CPE Evaluation Sent: \_\_\_\_\_

- Postulant adequately (according to expectations of graduate program) completes *at least 2/3* of theological education requirements.

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

- When the above requirements have been fulfilled, MTLM sends postulant forms **6C1**, **6C2**, and Medical Evaluation (Application for Candidacy).

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

- Postulant returns completed forms **6C1** and **6C2** to the COM Secretary.

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

- COM makes recommendation to the bishop regarding whether the postulant should be made a candidate using form **6C3**.

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

- Standing Committee approves admitting the postulant to candidacy using form **6C4**.

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

- The bishop admits postulant to candidacy using form **6C5** and sends postulant letter of this decision.

Date of admission (on letter from bishop): \_\_\_\_\_ Date letter received: \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. Candidacy

- Candidate informs bishop of progress during Embertides, i.e., Ember Days Letters. There are four Embertides every Church year; record the years of candidacy and dates/manner of communication with the bishop:

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- Candidate returns completed Medical Evaluation (the Diocese prefers that this form be completed by a physician during your annual physical and must occur within 12 months of ordination).  
Date of Exam: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Returned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate gives permission and necessary information to MTLM for Background Check (this must occur within 12 months of ordination).  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Background Check Results: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate receives and takes Diocesan Canonical Exam from the Board of Examining Chaplains (this usually occurs during the January of candidate's last year in graduate school).  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Returned: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate receives results and feedback from Board of Examining Chaplains and is recommended to the Commission on Ministry for ordination to the diaconate.  
Date Results Received: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate receives forms **6OPD1** and **6OPD2** from MTLM (Application for Ordination to the Diaconate).  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate returns completed forms **6OPD1** and **6OPD2** to the COM secretary.  
Date Returned: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received by COM: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate sends final, official transcripts to the COM upon the completion of course of study.  
Date Requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received by COM: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate has Director of Studies for graduate program either complete and return form **6OPD3** *or* some equivalent certification of completion of canonical education requirements for ordination.  
Date Given to Director of Studies: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received by COM: \_\_\_\_\_
- COM recommends candidate for ordination using form **6OPD4** and provides a copy to the Standing Committee.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Standing Committee completes form **6OPD5**, Certificate of Standing Committee for Ordination to the Diaconate, and returns completed form to the bishop.  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate consults with bishop about date of ordination to the diaconate.  
Date of consultation: \_\_\_\_\_ Date set for ordination: \_\_\_\_\_
- Candidate is ordained a deacon  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE III  
MINISTRY**

**CANON 1: Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons**

**Sec. 1.** Each Diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including: Responsibility of Diocese.

(a) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places.

(b) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation.

**Sec. 2.** No person shall be denied access to the discernment process for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons. No right to licensing, ordination, or election is hereby established. Access to discernment process.

**Sec. 3.** The provisions of these Canons for the admission of Candidates for the Ordination to the three Orders: Bishops, Priests and Deacons shall be equally applicable to men and women. Equal applicability.

**CANON 2: Of Commissions on Ministry**

**Sec. 1.** In each Diocese there shall be a Commission on Ministry ("Commission") consisting of Priests, Deacons, if any, and Lay Persons. The Canons of each Diocese shall provide for the number of members, terms of office, and manner of selection to the Commission. Any Diocese may agree in writing with one or more other Dioceses to share a Commission on Ministry. Dioceses to have a Commission.

**Sec. 2.** The Commission shall advise and assist the Bishop: Duties.

(a) In the implementation of Title III of these Canons.

(b) In the determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons.

(c) In the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry, and assessment of readiness therefor.

**Sec. 3.** The Commission may adopt rules for its work, subject to the approval of the Bishop; *provided* that they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Church and of the Diocese. May adopt rules.

**Sec. 4.** The Commission may establish committees consisting of members and other persons to report to the Commission or to act on its behalf.

**Sec. 5.** The Bishop and Commission shall ensure that the members of the Commission and its committees receive ongoing education and training for their work. Education and training.

**CANON 3: Of Discernment**

	<b>Sec. 1.</b> The Bishop and Commission shall provide encouragement, training, and necessary resources to assist each congregation in developing an ongoing process of community discernment appropriate to the cultural background, age, and life experiences of all persons seeking direction in their call to ministry.
Discernment communities.	<b>Sec. 2.</b> The Bishop, in consultation with the Commission, may utilize college and university campus ministry centers and other communities of faith as additional communities where discernment takes place. In cases where these discernment communities are located in another jurisdiction, the Bishop will consult with the Bishop where the discernment community is located.
Recruiting leadership.	<b>Sec. 3.</b> The Bishop and Commission shall actively solicit from congregations, schools and other youth organizations, college and university campus ministry centers, seminaries, and other communities of faith names of persons whose demonstrated qualities of Christian commitment and potential for leadership and vision mark them as desirable candidates for positions of leadership in the Church.
Support for discernment process.	<b>Sec. 4.</b> The Bishop, Commission, and the discernment community shall assist persons engaged in a process of ministry discernment to determine appropriate avenues for the expression and support of their ministries, either lay or ordained.

**CANON 4: Of Licensed Ministries**

Selection and license.	<b>Sec. 1 (a)</b> A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist, or Catechist. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.
Member of the Armed Forces.	<b>(b)</b> The Presiding Bishop or the Bishop Suffragan for the Armed Forces may authorize a member of the Armed Forces to exercise one or more of these ministries in the Armed Forces in accordance with the provisions of this Canon. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons shall be established by the Bishop granting the license.
Terms.	<b>Sec. 2 (a)</b> The Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith may request the Ecclesiastical Authority with jurisdiction to license persons within that congregation or other community of faith to exercise such ministries. The license shall be issued for a period of time to be determined under Canon III.4.1(a) and may be renewed.

The license may be revoked by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon request of or upon notice to the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

**(b)** In renewing the license, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall consider the performance of the ministry by the person licensed, continuing education in the licensed area, and the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith in which the person is serving. Renewal.

**(c)** A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in another congregation or other community of faith in the same or another Diocese only at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority in whose jurisdiction the service will occur.

**Sec. 3.** A Pastoral Leader is a lay person authorized to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility in a congregation under special circumstances, as defined by the Bishop. Pastoral Leader.

**Sec. 4.** A Worship Leader is a lay person who regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Worship Leader.

**Sec. 5.** A Preacher is a lay person authorized to preach. Persons so authorized shall only preach in congregations under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Preacher.

**Sec. 6.** A Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Eucharistic Minister.

**Sec. 7.** A Eucharistic Visitor is a lay person authorized to take the Consecrated Elements in a timely manner following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration. A Eucharistic Visitor should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Eucharistic Visitor.

**Sec. 8.** A Catechist is a lay person authorized to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and shall function under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith. Catechist.

Evangelist. **Sec. 9.** An Evangelist is a lay person who presents the good news of Jesus Christ in such a way that people are led to receive Christ as Savior and follow Christ as Lord in the fellowship of the Church. An Evangelist assists with the community's ministry of evangelism in partnership with the Presbyter or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation, or as directed by the Bishop.

**CANON 5: Of General Provisions Respecting Ordination**

Episcopal authority. **Sec. 1 (a)** The canonical authority assigned to the Bishop Diocesan by this Title may be exercised by a Bishop Coadjutor, when so empowered under Canon III.11.9(a), and at the request of the Bishop Diocesan, by a Bishop Suffragan, or by any other Bishop of a Church in full communion with this Church who was ordained in the historic succession, at the request of the ordinand's Bishop.

**(b)** The Council of Advice of the Convocation of American Churches in Europe, and the board appointed by a Bishop having jurisdiction in an Area Mission in accordance with the provisions of Canon I.11.2(c), shall, for the purpose of this and other Canons of Title III have the same powers as the Standing Committee of a Diocese.

**(c)** In case of a vacancy in the episcopate in a Diocese, the Ecclesiastical Authority may authorize and request the President of the House of Bishops of the Province to take order for an ordination.

**Sec. 2 (a)** No Nominee, Postulant, or Candidate for ordination shall sign any of the certificates required by this Title.

Testimonials. **(b)** Testimonials required of the Standing Committee by this Title must be signed by a majority of the whole Committee, at a meeting duly convened, except that testimonials may be executed in counterparts, any of which may be delivered by facsimile or other electronic transmission, each of which shall be deemed an original.

Vestry's letter of support. **(c)** Whenever the letter of support of a Vestry is required, the letter must be signed and dated by at least two-thirds of all of the members of the Vestry, at a meeting duly convened, and by the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of the Parish, and attested by the Clerk of the Vestry. Should there be no Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the letter shall be signed by a Priest of the Diocese acquainted with the nominee and the Parish, the reason for the substitution being stated in the attesting clause.

**(d)** If the congregation or other discernment community of which the nominee is a member is not a Parish, the letter of support required by Canon III.6 or Canon III.8 shall be signed and dated by the Member of the Clergy and the council of the congregation or other community of faith, and shall be attested by the secretary of the meeting at which the letter was approved. Should there be no Member of the Clergy, the letter shall be signed and dated by a Priest of the Diocese acquainted with the nominee and the congregation or

other community of faith, the reason for the substitution being stated in the attesting clause.

(e) If the applicant is a member of a Religious Order or Christian Community recognized by Canon III.14, the letters of support referred to in Canon III.5 or Canon III.6 and any other requirements imposed on a congregation or Member of the Clergy may be given by the Superior or person in charge, and Chapter, or other comparable body of the Order or Community.

Member of a Religious Order or Community.

**Sec. 3.** An application for any dispensation permitted by this Title from any of the requirements for ordination must first be made to the Bishop, and if approved, referred to the Standing Committee for its advice and consent.

Dispensations.

**CANON 6: Of the Ordination of Deacons**

**Sec. 1.** Selection

The Bishop, in consultation with the Commission, shall establish procedures to identify and to select persons with evident gifts and fitness for ordination to the Diaconate.

Selection and nomination of Deacons.

**Sec. 2.** Nomination

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, may be nominated for ordination to the diaconate by the person's congregation or other community of faith.

(a) The Nomination shall be in writing and shall include a letter of support by the Nominee's congregation or other community of faith committing the community to

- (1) pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and
- (2) involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Diaconate.

If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight.

(b) The Nominee, if in agreement with the nomination, shall accept the nomination in writing and shall provide the following to the Bishop:

Application for admission as Postulant.

- (1) Full name and date of birth.
- (2) The length of time resident in the Diocese.
- (3) Evidence of Baptism and Confirmation.
- (4) Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any Diocese.
- (5) A description of the process of discernment by which the Nominee has been identified for ordination to the Diaconate.
- (6) The level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned, and areas of specialization, together with copies of official transcripts.

	<b>Sec. 3. Postulancy</b>
Postulancy for the Diaconate.	Postulancy is the time between nomination and candidacy and may initiate the formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Diaconate.
	(a) Before granting admission as a Postulant, the Bishop shall
	(1) determine that the Nominee is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing, and
	(2) confer in person with the Nominee,
Application review.	(b) If the Bishop approves the Nominee proceeding into Postulancy, the Commission, or a committee of the Commission, shall meet with the Nominee to review the application and prepare an evaluation of the Nominee's qualifications to pursue a program of preparation for ordination to the Diaconate. The Commission shall present its evaluation and recommendations to the Bishop.
Previous refusal or cessation.	(c) No Bishop shall consider accepting as a Postulant any person who has been refused admission as a Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate in any other Diocese, or who, having been admitted, has afterwards ceased to be a Candidate, until receipt of a letter from the Bishop of the Diocese refusing admission, or in which the person has been a Candidate, declaring the cause of refusal or of cessation.
Admission to Postulancy.	(d) The Bishop may admit the Nominee as a Postulant for ordination to the Diaconate. The Bishop shall record the Postulant's name and date of admission in a Register kept for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Postulant, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the Postulant's program of preparation, of the fact and date of such admission.
Ember Weeks.	(e) Each Postulant for ordination to the Diaconate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Postulant's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.
Removal.	(f) Any Postulant may be removed as a Postulant at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Postulant and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the program of preparation.
	<b>Sec. 4. Candidacy</b>
Definition of Candidacy.	Candidacy is a time of education and formation, in preparation for ordination to the Diaconate, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee and the congregation or other community of faith.
	(a) A person desiring to be considered as a Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate shall apply to the Bishop. Such application shall include the following:
	(1) the Postulant's date of admission to Postulancy, and

- (2) a letter of support by the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith. If it be a congregation the letter shall be signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and by the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

(b) Upon compliance with these requirements, and receipt of a written statement from the Commission attesting to the continuing formation of the Postulant, and having received approval in writing of the Standing Committee who shall have interviewed the Postulant and who shall have had an opportunity to review the documentation relating to the application of the Postulant, the Bishop may admit the Postulant as a Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate. The Bishop shall record the Candidate's name and date of admission in a Register kept for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Candidate, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the Dean of the seminary the Candidate may be attending or proposes to attend, or the director of the Candidate's program of preparation, of the fact and date of such admission.

Admission to Candidacy.

(c) A Candidate must remain in canonical relationship with the Diocese in which admission has been granted until ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon, except, for reasons acceptable to the Bishop, the Candidate may be transferred to another Diocese upon request, provided that the Bishop of the receiving Diocese is willing to accept the Candidate.

Transfers to another Diocese.

(d) Any Candidate may be removed as a Candidate, at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Candidate and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the program of preparation.

Candidate may be removed.

(e) If a Bishop has removed the Candidate's name from the list of Candidates, except by transfer, or the Candidate's application for ordination has been rejected, no other Bishop may ordain the person without readmission to Candidacy for a period of at least twelve months.

**Sec. 5. Preparation for Ordination**

(a) The Bishop and the Commission shall work with the Postulant or Candidate to develop and monitor a program of preparation for ordination to the Diaconate in accordance with this Canon to ensure that pastoral guidance is provided throughout the period of preparation.

(b) The Bishop may assign the Postulant or Candidate to any congregation of the Diocese or other community of faith after consultation with the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

Assignment.

- Formation. (c) Formation shall take into account the local culture and each Postulant or Candidate's background, age, occupation, and ministry.  
 (d) Prior education and learning from life experience may be considered as part of the formation required for ordination.  
 (e) Wherever possible, formation for the Diaconate shall take place in community, including other persons in preparation for the Diaconate, or others preparing for ministry.
- Competencies. (f) Before ordination each Candidate shall be prepared in and demonstrate basic competence in five general areas:  
 (1) Academic studies including, The Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church.  
 (2) Diakonia and the diaconate.  
 (3) Human awareness and understanding.  
 (4) Spiritual development and discipline.  
 (5) Practical training and experience.
- Training. (g) Preparation for ordination shall include training regarding  
 (1) prevention of sexual misconduct.  
 (2) civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.  
 (3) the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV thereof.  
 (4) the Church's teaching on racism.
- Ember Weeks. (h) Each Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.
- Evaluation of progress. (i) During Candidacy each Candidate's progress shall be evaluated from time to time, and there shall be a written report of the evaluation by those authorized by the Commission to be in charge of the evaluation program. Upon certification by those in charge of the Candidate's program of preparation that the Candidate has successfully completed preparation and is ready for ordination, a final written assessment of readiness for ordination to the Diaconate shall be prepared as determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission. This report shall include a recommendation from the Commission regarding the readiness of the Candidate for ordination. Records shall be kept of all evaluations, assessments, and the recommendation, and shall be made available to the Standing Committee.
- Examinations and evaluations. (j) Within thirty-six months prior to ordination as a Deacon, the following must be accomplished  
 (1) a background check, according to criteria established by the Bishop and Standing Committee.  
 (2) medical and psychological evaluation by professionals approved by the Bishop, using forms prepared for the purpose by The Church Pension Fund, and if desired or necessary, psychiatric referral.

(k) Reports of all investigations and examinations shall be kept permanently on file by the Bishop and remain a part of the permanent diocesan record.

**Sec. 6. Ordination to the Diaconate**

(a) A person may be ordained Deacon:

- (1) after at least eighteen months from the time of written acceptance of nomination by the Nominee as provided in III.6.2(b), and
- (2) upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age.

(b) The Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:

Ordination papers.

- (1) an application from the Candidate requesting ordination as a Deacon under this Canon.
- (2) a letter of support from the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.
- (3) written evidence of admission of the Candidate to Postulancy and Candidacy, giving the dates of admission.
- (4) a certificate from the seminary or other program of preparation showing the Candidate's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Candidate's other personal qualifications for ordination together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.
- (5) a certificate from the Commission giving a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.

(c) On the receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, if a majority of all members consent, shall certify that the Canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon have been met, that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination. The Standing Committee shall evidence such certification, by a testimonial, addressed to the Bishop in the form specified below and signed by the consenting members of the Standing Committee.

Standing Committee to consent.

**To the Right Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, Bishop of \_\_\_\_\_ We, the Standing Committee of \_\_\_\_\_, having been duly convened at \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_, do testify that A.B., desiring to be ordained to the Diaconate under Canon III.6 has presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons indicating A.B.'s preparedness for ordination to the Diaconate under Canon III.6; and we certify that all canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate under Canon III.6 have been met; and we find no sufficient objection**

to ordination. Therefore, we recommend A.B. for ordination. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this day of \_\_\_\_\_, in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

Declaration of conformity.

(d) The testimonial having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the Bishop may ordain the Candidate to the Diaconate under this Canon; and at the time of ordination the Candidate shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution.

#### **CANON 7: Of the Life and Work of Deacons**

**Sec. 1.** Deacons serve directly under the authority of and are accountable to the Bishop, or in the absence of the Bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.

Community of Deacons.

**Sec. 2.** Deacons canonically resident in each Diocese constitute a Community of Deacons, which shall meet from time to time. The Bishop may appoint one or more of such Deacons as Archdeacon(s) to assist the Bishop in the formation, deployment, supervision, and support of the Deacons or those in preparation to be Deacons, and in the implementation of this Canon.

Council on Deacons.

**Sec. 3.** The Bishop may establish a Council on Deacons to oversee, study, and promote the Diaconate.

Rights and responsibilities.

**Sec. 4.** The Bishop, after consultation with the Deacon and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, may assign a Deacon to one or more congregations, other communities of faith or non-parochial ministries. Deacons assigned to a congregation or other community of faith act under the authority of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight in all matters concerning the congregation.

(a) Subject to the Bishop's approval, Deacons may have a letter of agreement setting forth mutual responsibilities in the assignment, and, if such a letter exists, it is subject to renegotiation with the Vestry/Bishop's Committee after the resignation of the Rector or the Priest-in-Charge.

(b) Deacons shall report annually to the Bishop or the Bishop's designee on their life and work.

(c) Deacons may serve as administrators of congregations or other communities of faith, but no Deacon shall be in charge of a congregation or other community of faith.

(d) Deacons may accept chaplaincies in any hospital, prison, or other institution.

(e) Deacons may participate in the governance of the Church.

(f) For two years following ordination, new Deacons shall continue a process of formation authorized by the Bishop.

Mentors.

(g) The Bishop or the Bishop's designee, in consultation with the Commission, shall assign each newly ordained Deacon a mentor

Deacon where a suitable mentor Deacon is available. The mentor and Deacon shall meet regularly for at least one year to provide guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about diaconal ministry.

**Sec. 5.** The Bishop and Commission shall require and provide for the continuing education of Deacons and keep a record of such education. Continuing education.

**Sec. 6 (a)** A Deacon may not serve as Deacon for more than two months in any Diocese other than the Diocese in which the Deacon is canonically resident unless the Bishop of the other Diocese shall have granted a license to the Deacon to serve in that Diocese. License to serve in another Diocese.

**(b)**

(1) A Deacon desiring to become canonically resident within a Diocese shall request a testimonial from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Deacon is canonically resident to present to the receiving Diocese, which testimonial, if granted, shall be given by the Ecclesiastical Authority to the applicant, and a duplicate thereof may be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese to which transfer is proposed. The testimonial shall be in the following words: Letters Dimissory.

**I hereby certify that A.B., who has signified to me the desire to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Authority of \_\_\_\_\_, is a Deacon of \_\_\_\_\_ in good standing, and has not, so far as I know or believe, been justly liable to evil report for error in religion or for viciousness of life, for the last three years.**

**(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_**

- (2) Such testimonial shall be called Letters Dimissory. If the Ecclesiastical Authority accepts the Letters Dimissory, the canonical residence of the Deacon so transferred shall date from the acceptance of the Letters Dimissory, of which prompt notice shall be given both to the applicant and to the Ecclesiastical Authority from which it came.
- (3) Letters Dimissory not presented within six months from the date of transmission to the applicant shall become void.
- (4) A statement of the record of payments to The Church Pension Fund by or on behalf of the Deacon concerned shall accompany Letters Dimissory.

**Sec. 7.** On reaching the age of seventy-two years, a Deacon shall resign from all positions of active service in this Church, and the resignation shall be accepted. The Bishop may, with the consent of the Deacon, assign a resigned Deacon to any congregation, other Resignation.

community of faith or ministry in another setting, for a term not to exceed twelve months, and this term may be renewed.

**Sec. 8.** Release and Removal from the Ordained Ministry of this Church

Release and removal of a Deacon.

If any Deacon of The Episcopal Church shall express, in writing, to the Bishop of the Diocese in which such Deacon is canonically resident, an intention to be released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church and from the obligations attendant thereto, including those promises made at Ordination in the Declaration required by Article VIII of the Constitution of the General Convention, it shall be the duty of the Bishop to record the matter. The Bishop, being satisfied that the person so declaring is acting voluntarily and for causes which do not affect the person's moral character, and is neither the subject of information concerning an Offense that has been referred to an Intake Officer nor a Respondent in a pending disciplinary matter as defined in Title IV of these Canons, shall lay the matter before the Standing Committee, and with the advice and consent of a majority of the Standing Committee the Bishop may pronounce that the person is released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church and from the obligations attendant thereto, and is deprived of the right to exercise in The Episcopal Church the gifts and spiritual authority as a Minister of God's Word and Sacraments conferred in Ordination. The Bishop shall also declare in pronouncing and recording such action that it was for causes which do not affect the person's moral character, and shall, at the person's request, give a certificate to this effect to the person so released and removed from the ordained Ministry.

In disciplinary cases.

**Sec. 9.** If a Deacon submitting the writing described in Section 8 of this Canon be the subject of information concerning an Offense that has been referred to an Intake Officer or a Respondent in a pending disciplinary matter as defined in Title IV of these Canons, the Ecclesiastical Authority to whom such writing is submitted shall not consider or act upon the written request unless and until the disciplinary matter shall have been resolved by a dismissal, Accord, or Order and the time for appeal or rescission of such has expired.

Declaration.

**Sec. 10.** In the case of the release and removal of a Deacon from the ordained Ministry of this Church as provided in this Canon, a declaration of release and removal shall be pronounced by the Bishop in the presence of two or more Members of the Clergy, and shall be entered in the official records of the Diocese in which the Deacon being released and removed is canonically resident. The Bishop who pronounces the declaration of release and removal as provided in this Canon shall give notice thereof in writing to every Member of the Clergy, each Vestry, the Secretary of the Convention and the Standing Committee of the Diocese in which the Deacon was canonically resident; and to all Bishops of this Church, the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese of this Church, the

Presiding Bishop, the Recorder of Ordinations, the Secretary of the House of Bishops, the Secretary of the House of Deputies, The Church Pension Fund, and the Board for Transition Ministry.

**Sec. 11.** Return to the Ordained Ministry of this Church after Release and Removal.

**(a)** When a Deacon who has been released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church under Canon III.7.8 desires to return to that Ministry, the person shall apply in writing to the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Deacon was last canonically resident, attaching the following: Return to ordained Ministry.

- (1) Evidence of previous ordination in The Episcopal Church;
- (2) Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and anti-racism trainings;
- (3) A statement from no less than two members of the clergy known to the applicant in support of the application;
- (4) A statement of the reasons for seeking to return to the ordained Ministry of this Church.

**(b)** If the Bishop so chooses, the Bishop may give permission for the Deacon to continue the process toward reinstatement, which may include the following:

- (1) Active participation in a congregation for a period of time at the Bishop's discretion;
- (2) Regular contact with the Bishop or the Bishop's designee during the course of the process;
- (3) Evaluation by a licensed mental health professional of the Bishop's choosing for the purposes of evaluation and of determining fitness for resumption of ordained ministry in this church;
- (4) Two references from those who are able to discuss the Deacon's former ministry;
- (5) Meeting with the Standing Committee, who shall have the benefit of the materials above and who shall provide to the Bishop its recommendation regarding reinstatement.

**(c)** Before the person may be permitted to return to the ordained Ministry of this Church, the Bishop shall require the Deacon seeking to return to the ministry to sign a written declaration as required in Article VIII of the Constitution, without recourse to any other ecclesiastical jurisdiction and execute such declaration in the presence of the Bishop and two or more members of the clergy of this Church.

**(d)** Thereafter the Bishop, taking into account the facts and circumstances surrounding the Deacon's removal and release, may

permit, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, the return of the Deacon into the ordained Ministry of this Church.

(e) The provisions of this Canon III.7.11 shall not be applicable to any Deacon who has been removed, released, or deposed from their ministry as the result of any proceeding of Title IV of these Canons.

(f) Notice of the Deacon's return to the ordained Ministry of this Church shall be provided in writing to the same persons and entities receiving notice under Canon III.7.10.

### **CANON 8: Of the Ordination of Priests**

#### **Sec. 1. Selection**

Selection and nomination to the Priesthood.

The Bishop, in consultation with the Commission, shall establish procedures to identify and select persons with evident gifts and fitness for ordination to the Priesthood.

#### **Sec. 2. Nomination**

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing may be nominated for ordination to the Priesthood by the person's congregation or other community of faith.

Application for admission to Postulancy.

(a) The Nomination shall be in writing and shall include a letter of support by the Nominee's congregation or other community of faith committing the community to:

- (1) pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and
- (2) involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Priesthood.

If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight.

(b) The Nominee, if agreeing, shall accept the nomination in writing, and shall provide the following to the Bishop:

- (1) Full name and date of birth.
- (2) The length of time resident in the Diocese.
- (3) Evidence of Baptism and Confirmation.
- (4) Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any Diocese.
- (5) A description of the process of discernment by which the Nominee has been identified for ordination to the Priesthood.
- (6) The level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned and areas of specialization, together with copies of official transcripts.

#### **Sec. 3. Postulancy**

Postulancy for the Priesthood.

Postulancy is the time between nomination and candidacy and may initiate the formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Priesthood.

- (a) Before granting admission as a Postulant, the Bishop shall
    - (1) determine that the person is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing.
    - (2) confer in person with the Nominee.
    - (3) shall consult with the Nominee regarding financial resources which will be available for the support of the Postulant throughout preparation for ordination. During Postulancy and later Candidacy, the Bishop or someone appointed by the Bishop shall review periodically the financial condition and plans of the Postulant.
  - (b) If the Bishop approves proceeding, the Commission, or a committee of the Commission, shall meet with the Nominee to review the application and prepare an evaluation of the Nominee's qualifications to pursue a program of preparation for ordination to the Priesthood. The Commission shall present its evaluation and recommendations to the Bishop. Application review.
  - (c) No Bishop shall consider accepting as a Postulant any person who has been refused admission as a Candidate for ordination to the Priesthood in any other Diocese, or who, having been admitted, has afterwards ceased to be a Candidate, until receipt of a letter from the Bishop of the Diocese refusing admission, or in which the person has been a Candidate, declaring the cause of refusal or of cessation. Previous removal or cessation.
  - (d) The Bishop may admit the Nominee as a Postulant for ordination to the Priesthood. The Bishop shall record the Postulant's name and date of admission in a Register kept for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Postulant, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the Dean of the seminary the Postulant may be attending or proposes to attend, or the director of Postulant's program of preparation, of the fact and date of such admission. Admission to Postulancy.
  - (e) Each Postulant for ordination to the Priesthood shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Postulant's academic experience and personal and spiritual development. Ember Weeks.
  - (f) Any Postulant may be removed as a Postulant at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Postulant and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the program of preparation. Removal.
- Sec. 4. Candidacy**
- Candidacy is a time of education and formation in preparation for ordination to the Priesthood, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the congregation or other community of faith. Definition of Candidacy.

- Application for Candidacy.      **(a)** A person desiring to be considered as a Candidate for ordination to the Priesthood shall apply to the Bishop. Such application shall include the following:
- (1) the Postulant's date of admission to Postulancy, and
  - (2) a letter of support by the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith. If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and by the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.
- Admission to Candidacy.      **(b)** Upon compliance with these requirements, and receipt of a statement from the Commission attesting to the continuing formation of the Postulant, and having received approval in writing of the Standing Committee who shall have interviewed the Postulant and who shall have had an opportunity to review the documentation relating to the application of the Postulant, the Bishop may admit the Postulant as a Candidate for ordination to the Priesthood. The Bishop shall record the Candidate's name and date of admission in a Register kept for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Candidate, the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight of the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the Dean of the seminary the Candidate may be attending or proposes to attend, or the director of the Candidate's program of preparation, of the fact and date of such admission.
- Transfer to another Diocese.      **(c)** A Candidate must remain in canonical relationship with the Diocese in which admission has been granted until ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon, except, for reasons acceptable to the Bishop, the Candidate may be transferred to another Diocese upon request, provided that the Bishop of the receiving Diocese is willing to accept the Candidate.
- Candidate may be removed.      **(d)** Any Candidate may be removed as a Candidate at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Candidate and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the Dean of the seminary the Candidate may be attending or the director of the program of preparation.
- (e)** If a Bishop has removed the Candidate's name from the list of Candidates, except by transfer, or the Candidate's application for ordination has been rejected, no other Bishop may ordain the person without readmission to Candidacy for a period of at least twelve months.

**Sec. 5. Preparation for Ordination**

- (a)** The Bishop and the Commission shall work with the Postulant or Candidate to develop and monitor a program of preparation for ordination to the Priesthood and to ensure that pastoral guidance is provided throughout the period of preparation.

- (b) If the Postulant or Candidate has not previously obtained a baccalaureate degree, the Commission, Bishop, and Postulant or Candidate shall design a program of such additional academic work as may be necessary to prepare the Postulant or Candidate to undertake a program of theological education. Pre-theological education.
- (c) Formation shall take into account the local culture and each Postulant or Candidate’s background, age, occupation, and ministry. Formation.
- (d) Prior education and learning from life experience may be considered as part of the formation required for the Priesthood.
- (e) Whenever possible, formation for the Priesthood shall take place in community, including other persons in preparation for the Priesthood, or others preparing for ministry.
- (f) Formation shall include theological training, practical experience, emotional development, and spiritual formation.
- (g) Subject areas for study during this program of preparation shall include: Theological education.
- (1) The Holy Scriptures.
  - (2) History of the Christian Church.
  - (3) Christian Theology.
  - (4) Christian Ethics and Moral Theology.
  - (5) Christian Worship according to the use of the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal, and authorized supplemental texts.
  - (6) The Practice of Ministry in contemporary society, including leadership, evangelism, stewardship, ecumenism, interfaith relations, mission theology, and the historical and contemporary experience of racial and minority groups.
- (h) Preparation for ordination shall include training regarding Training.
- (1) prevention of sexual misconduct.
  - (2) civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.
  - (3) the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV thereof.
  - (4) the Church’s teaching on racism.
- (i) Each Postulant or Candidate for ordination to the Priesthood shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate’s academic experience and personal and spiritual development. Ember Weeks.
- (j) The seminary or other formation program shall provide for, monitor, and report on the academic performance and personal qualifications of the Postulant or Candidate for ordination. These reports will be made upon request of the Bishop and Commission, but at least once per year. Evaluation of progress.
- (k) Within thirty-six months prior to ordination as a Deacon under this Canon, the following must be accomplished Examinations and evaluations.
- (1) a background check, according to criteria established by the Bishop and Standing Committee.

- (2) medical and psychological evaluation by professionals approved by the Bishop, using forms prepared for the purpose by The Church Pension Fund, and if desired or necessary, psychiatric referral.

(l) Reports of all investigations and examinations shall be kept permanently on file by the Bishop and remain a part of the permanent diocesan record.

**Sec. 6.** Ordination to the Diaconate for those called to the Priesthood

Ordination of Deacons with a call to the Priesthood.

Ordination papers.

(a) A Candidate must first be ordained Deacon before being ordained Priest.

(b) To be ordained Deacon under this Canon, a person must be at least twenty-four years of age.

(c) The Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:

- (1) an application from the Candidate requesting ordination as a Deacon under this Canon.
- (2) a letter of support from the Candidate’s congregation or other community of faith, signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.
- (3) written evidence of admission of the Candidate to Postulancy and Candidacy, giving the date of admission.
- (4) a certificate from the seminary or other program of preparation showing the Candidate’s scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Candidate’s other personal qualifications for ordination together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.
- (5) a certificate from the Commission giving a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.

Standing Committee to consent and certify Candidates.

(d) On the receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, a majority of all the members consenting, shall certify that the canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon have been met and there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination, by a testimonial addressed to the Bishop in the form specified below and signed by the consenting members of the Standing Committee.

**To the Right Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, Bishop of \_\_\_\_\_ We, the Standing Committee of \_\_\_\_\_, having been duly convened at \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_, do testify that A.B., desiring to be ordained to the Diaconate and Priesthood under Canon III.8 has presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons indicating A.B.’s preparedness for ordination to**

the Diaconate under Canon III.8; and we certify that all canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate under Canon III.8 have been met; and we find no sufficient objection to ordination. Therefore, we recommend A.B. for ordination. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this day of \_\_\_\_\_, in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_.

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

(e) The testimonial having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the Bishop may ordain the Candidate to the Diaconate under this Canon; and at the time of ordination the Candidate shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution. Declaration of conformity.

**Sec. 7. Ordination to the Priesthood**

(a) A person may be ordained Priest:

- (1) after at least six months since ordination as a Deacon under this Canon and eighteen months from the time of acceptance of nomination by the Nominee as provided in III.8.2(b), and Ordination requisites.
- (2) upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age, and
- (3) if the medical evaluation, psychological evaluation, and background check have taken place or been updated within thirty-six months prior to ordination as a Priest.

(b) The Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee: Ordination papers.

- (1) an application from the Deacon requesting ordination as a Priest, including the Deacon's dates of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy and ordination as a Deacon under this Canon,
- (2) a letter of support from the Deacon's congregation or other community of faith, signed by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight,
- (3) evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy, including dates of admission, and ordination to the Diaconate,
- (4) a certificate from the seminary or other program of preparation, written at the completion of the program of preparation, showing the Deacon's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Deacon's other personal qualifications for ordination together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Priesthood, and
- (5) a statement from the Commission attesting to the successful completion of the program of formation designed during Postulancy under Canon III.8.5, and

proficiency in the required areas of study, and recommending the Deacon for ordination to the Priesthood.

Standing Committee to consent and certify for ordination to Priesthood.

(c) On the receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, a majority of all the members consenting, shall certify that the canonical requirements for ordination to the Priesthood have been met and there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination, by a testimonial addressed to the Bishop in the form specified below and signed by the consenting members of the Standing Committee.

**To the Right Reverend \_\_\_\_\_, Bishop of \_\_\_\_\_ We, the Standing Committee of \_\_\_\_\_, having been duly convened at \_\_\_\_\_, do testify that A.B., desiring to be ordained to the Priesthood, has presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons indicating A.B.'s preparedness for ordination to the Priesthood have been met; and we certify that all canonical requirements for ordination to the Priesthood have been met, and we find no sufficient objection to ordination. Therefore, we recommend A.B. for ordination. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, in the year of our Lord \_\_\_\_\_.**

**(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_**

Declaration of conformity.

(d) The testimonial having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the Bishop may ordain the Deacon to the Priesthood; and at the time of ordination the Deacon shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution.

Exercise of office before ordination.

(e) No Deacon shall be ordained to the Priesthood until having been appointed to serve in a Parochial Cure within the jurisdiction of this Church, or as a Missionary under the Ecclesiastical Authority of a Diocese, or as an officer of a Missionary Society recognized by the General Convention, or as a Chaplain of the Armed Services of the United States, or as a Chaplain in a recognized hospital or other welfare institution, or as a Chaplain or instructor in a school, college, or other seminary, or with other opportunity for the exercise of the office of Priest within the Church judged appropriate by the Bishop.

Deacons called to the Priesthood.

(f) A person ordained to the Diaconate under Canon III.6 who is subsequently called to the Priesthood shall fulfill the Postulancy and Candidacy requirements set forth in this Canon. Upon completion of these requirements, the Deacon may be ordained to the Priesthood.

**CANON 9: Of the Life and Work of Priests**

Continuing education.

**Sec. 1.** The Bishop and Commission shall require and provide for the continuing education of Priests and keep a record of such education.

**Sec. 2. Mentoring for Newly Ordained Priests**

Each newly ordained Priest, whether employed or not, shall be assigned a mentor Priest by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. The mentor and new Priest shall meet regularly for at least a year to provide guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about priestly ministry. Mentors.

**Sec. 3. The Appointment of Priests**

**(a) Rectors.**

- (1) When a Parish is without a Rector, the Wardens or other officers shall promptly notify the Ecclesiastical Authority in writing. If the Parish shall for thirty days fail to provide services of public worship, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall make provision for such worship. Parish without a Rector.
- (2) No Parish may elect a Rector until the names of the proposed nominees have been forwarded to the Ecclesiastical Authority and a time, not exceeding sixty days, given to the Ecclesiastical Authority to communicate with the Vestry, nor until any such communication has been considered by the Vestry at a meeting duly called and held for that purpose. Election of a Rector.
- (3) Written notice of the election of a Rector, signed by the Wardens, shall be forwarded to the Ecclesiastical Authority. If the Ecclesiastical Authority is satisfied that the person so elected is a duly qualified Priest and that such Priest has accepted the office to which elected, the notice shall be sent to the Secretary of the Convention, who shall record it. Race, color, ethnic origin, sex, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise specified by these Canons, shall not be a factor in the determination of the Ecclesiastical Authority as to whether such person is a duly qualified Priest. The recorded notice shall be sufficient evidence of the relationship between the Priest and the Parish. Written notice to Ecclesiastical Authority.
- (4) Rectors may have a letter of agreement with the Parish setting forth mutual responsibilities, subject to the Bishop's approval. Agreement.

**(b) Priests-in-Charge.**

After consultation with the Vestry, the Bishop may appoint a Priest to serve as Priest-in-Charge of any congregation in which there is no Rector. In such congregations, the Priest-in-Charge shall exercise the duties of Rector outlined in Canon III.9.6 subject to the authority of the Bishop. Priests-in-Charge.

**(c) Assistants.**

A Priest serving as an assistant in a Parish, by whatever title designated, shall be selected by the Rector, and when required by the Canons of the Diocese, subject to the approval of the Vestry, and Rector to select assistants.

- shall serve under the authority and direction of the Rector. Before the selection of an assistant the name of the Priest proposed for selection shall be made known to the Bishop and a time, not exceeding sixty days, given for the Bishop to communicate with the Rector and Vestry on the proposed selection. Upon resignation by the Rector, death of the Rector, or in the event of the dissolution of a pastoral relationship between the Rector and the Vestry, an assistant may continue in the service of the Parish if requested to do so by the Vestry under such conditions as the Bishop and Vestry shall determine. An assistant may continue to serve at the request of a new Rector. Assistants may have a letter of agreement with the Rector and the Vestry setting forth mutual responsibilities and containing a clearly articulated dissolution clause, subject to the Bishop's approval.
- In case of vacancy.
- Endorsement of Chaplains.
- Active duty Chaplains.
- Areas of service.
- Non-parochial Priests.
- (d) Chaplains.
- (1) A Priest may be given ecclesiastical endorsement for service as a Chaplain in the Armed Forces of the United States of America or any other Federal Ministries including the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, by a Bishop Suffragan elected pursuant to Article II.7 of the Constitution, subject to the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident.
  - (2) Any Priest serving as a Chaplain in an active duty, Reserve or National Guard capacity with the Armed Forces or employed as a Chaplain in the Department of Veterans' Affairs or the Federal Bureau of Prisons shall retain the Priest's canonical residence and shall be subject to the ecclesiastical authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident, even though the Priest's work as a Chaplain shall be subject to the ecclesiastical supervision of the Bishop Suffragan elected pursuant to Article II.7 of the Constitution; *provided, however*, that in the event of a vacancy the charge thereof shall devolve upon the Presiding Bishop, with the power of appointing some other Bishop as the substitute in charge until the vacancy is filled by the House of Bishops.
  - (3) Any Priest serving as a Chaplain on a military installation, Department of Veterans' Affairs Medical Center, or Federal Bureaus of Prisons Correctional Institution shall not be subject to Canons III.9.3.(e)(1) or III.9.4.(a). When serving other than on a military installation, Department of Veterans' Affairs Medical Center or Federal Bureau of Prisons Correctional Institution, a Chaplain shall be subject to these Sections.
- (e) Employment of Priests in Other Settings.
- (1) Any Priest who has left a position in this Church without having received a call to a new ecclesiastical position and

who desires to continue the exercise of the office of Priest shall notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident and shall advise the Bishop that reasonable opportunities for the exercise of the office of Priest exist and that use will be made of such opportunities. After having determined that the person will have and use opportunities for the exercise of the office of Priest, the Bishop, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, may approve the Priest's continued exercise of the office on condition that the Priest report annually in writing, in a manner prescribed by the Bishop, as provided in Canon I.6.2.

- (2) (a) A Priest not in parochial employment moving to another jurisdiction shall report to the Bishop of that jurisdiction within sixty days of such move. Moving to another jurisdiction.
- (b) The Priest:
- (i) May officiate or preach in that jurisdiction only under the terms of Canon III.9.7(a).
  - (ii) Shall provide notice of such move, in writing and within sixty days, to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident.
  - (iii) Shall forward a copy of the report required by Canon I.6.2 to the Ecclesiastical Authority to whose jurisdiction the Priest has moved.
- (c) Upon receipt of the notice required by Canon III.9.3(e)(2)(b)(ii), the Ecclesiastical Authority shall provide written notice thereof to the Ecclesiastical Authority into whose jurisdiction the person has moved.
- (3) If the Priest fails to comply with the provisions of this Canon, such failure may be considered a breach of Canon IV.4.1(h)(3) occurring in the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident. Failure to comply.

**Sec. 4. Letters Dimissory**

(a) A Priest desiring to become canonically resident within a Diocese shall present to the Ecclesiastical Authority a testimonial from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of current canonical residence, which testimonial shall be given by the Ecclesiastical Authority to the applicant, and a duplicate thereof may be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese to which transfer is proposed. The testimonial shall be accompanied by a statement of the record of payments to The Church Pension Fund by or on behalf of the Priest concerned and may include a portfolio Testimonial for transfer.

of training, continuing education and exercise of ministries. The testimonial shall be in the following form:

**I hereby certify that A.B., who has signified to me the desire to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Authority of \_\_\_\_\_, is a Priest of \_\_\_\_\_ in good standing, and has not, so far as I know or believe, been justly liable to evil report, for error in religion or for viciousness of life, for the last three years.**

**(Date)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Signed)** \_\_\_\_\_

Acceptance of Letters Dimissory.

**(b)** Such a testimonial shall be called Letters Dimissory. If the Ecclesiastical Authority accepts the Letters Dimissory, the canonical residence of the Priest transferred shall date from such acceptance, and prompt notice of acceptance shall be given to the applicant and to the Ecclesiastical Authority issuing the Letters Dimissory.

Voided letters and nonacceptance.

**(c)** Letters Dimissory not presented within six months of their date of receipt by the applicant shall become void.

**(d)** If a Priest has been called to a Cure in a congregation in another Diocese, the Priest shall present Letters Dimissory. The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese shall accept Letters Dimissory within three months of their receipt unless the Bishop or Standing Committee has received credible information concerning the character or behavior of the Priest concerned which would form grounds for canonical inquiry and proceedings under Title IV. In such a case, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident and need not accept the Letters Dimissory unless and until the Priest shall be exculpated. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall not refuse to accept Letters Dimissory based on the applicant's race, color, ethnic origin, sex, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age.

Certificate of transfer.

**(e)** A Priest shall not be in charge of any congregation in the Diocese to which the person moves until obtaining from the Ecclesiastical Authority of that Diocese a certificate in the following form:

**I hereby certify that A.B. has been canonically transferred to my jurisdiction and is a Priest in good standing.**

**(Date)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Signed)** \_\_\_\_\_

In case of previous refusal.

**(f)** No person who has been refused ordination or reception as a Candidate in any Diocese, and is thereafter ordained in another Diocese, shall be transferred to the Diocese in which such refusal has occurred without the consent of its Ecclesiastical Authority.

Transfer of canonical residency.

**Sec. 5. Transfer to Churches in Communion with This Church**

**(a)** A Priest desiring to become canonically resident within a Diocese or equivalent jurisdiction of a Church in Full Communion (as identified in Canon I.20) or Church in Communion with This Church (as identified by Canon III.10.2.(a)(3)) shall request a testimonial from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of

current canonical residence, which testimonial shall be given by the Ecclesiastical Authority to the applicant, and a duplicate thereof may be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese or equivalent jurisdiction to which transfer is proposed. The testimonial may include a portfolio of training, continuing education, and exercise of ministries. The testimonial shall be in the following form or in the form specified by the receiving Diocese or equivalent jurisdiction:

**I hereby certify that A.B., who has signified to me the desire to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Authority of \_\_\_\_\_, is a Priest of the Diocese of \_\_\_\_\_ of the Episcopal Church in good standing, and has not, so far as I know or believe, been justly liable to evil report, for error in religion or for viciousness of life, for the last three years.**

**(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_**

**(b)** If the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese or equivalent jurisdiction of the Church in Full Communion or Church in Communion with This Church accepts the testimonial, the canonical residence of the Priest transferred shall date from such acceptance, and notice of acceptance shall be promptly forwarded by the Priest to the Ecclesiastical Authority in the sending Diocese. Such notification from the receiving Ecclesiastical Authority may be in the following form:

**I hereby certify that A.B. has been canonically transferred to my jurisdiction and is a Priest in good standing.**

**(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_**

Upon receipt of said acceptance, the Ecclesiastical Authority of the sending Diocese shall notify the Church Pension Fund and the Recorder of Ordinations of the priest's departure from the Episcopal Church.

**(c)** This provision shall not be used for Priests who seek to enter Churches Not in Communion with This Church or for those who seek transfer to another Province of the Anglican Communion while remaining geographically within the boundaries of the Episcopal Church. In such cases the provisions of Canon III.8.6 shall be followed. Limitations.

**Sec. 6. Rectors and Priests-in-Charge and Their Duties**

**(a)**

- (1) The Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall have full authority and responsibility for the conduct of the worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the Parish, subject to the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the Constitution and Canons of this Church, and the pastoral direction of the Bishop. Authority and responsibility.
- (2) For the purposes of the office and for the full and free discharge of all functions and duties pertaining thereto, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall at all times be Control of buildings.

entitled to the use and control of the Church and Parish buildings together with all appurtenances and furniture, and to access to all records and registers maintained by or on behalf of the congregation.

- (b)
- Instruction in faith and ministry.
- (1) It shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to ensure all persons in their charge receive Instruction in the Holy Scriptures; in the subjects contained in An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism; in the doctrine, discipline, and worship of this Church; and in the exercise of their ministry as baptized persons.
- Christian stewardship.
- (2) It shall be the duty of Rectors or Priests-in-Charge to ensure that all persons in their charge are instructed concerning Christian stewardship, including:
- (i) reverence for the creation and the right use of God's gifts;
  - (ii) generous and consistent offering of time, talent, and treasure for the mission and ministry of the Church at home and abroad;
  - (iii) the biblical standard of the tithe for financial stewardship; and
  - (iv) the responsibility of all persons to make a will as prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer.
- Preparing persons for Baptism.
- (3) It shall be the duty of Rectors or Priests-in-Charge to ensure that persons be prepared for Baptism. Before baptizing infants or children, Rectors or Priests-in-Charge shall ensure that sponsors be prepared by instructing both the parents and the Godparents concerning the significance of Holy Baptism, the responsibilities of parents and Godparents for the Christian training of the baptized child, and how these obligations may properly be discharged.
- Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation.
- (4) It shall be the duty of Rectors or Priests-in-Charge to encourage and ensure the preparation of persons for Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and to be ready to present them to the Bishop with a list of their names.
- Duty to announce and inform the Bishop.
- (5) On notice being received of the Bishop's intention to visit any congregation, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall announce the fact to the congregation. At every visitation it shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge and the Wardens, Vestry or other officers, to exhibit to the Bishop the Parish Register and to give information as to the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal, in such categories as the Bishop shall have previously requested in writing.

- (6) The Alms and Contributions, not otherwise specifically designated, at the Administration of the Holy Communion on one Sunday in each calendar month, and other offerings for the poor, shall be deposited with the Rector or Priest-in-Charge or with such Church officer as the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall appoint to be applied to such pious and charitable uses as the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall determine. When a Parish is without a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Vestry shall designate a member of the Parish to fulfill this function. Alms and Contributions.
  - (7) Whenever the House of Bishops shall publish a Pastoral Letter, it shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to read it to the congregation on some occasion of public worship on a Lord's Day, or to cause copies of the same to be distributed to the members of the congregation, not later than thirty days after receipt. Duty to read Pastoral Letters and Position Papers.
  - (8) Whenever the House of Bishops shall adopt a Position Paper, and require communication of the content of the Paper to the membership of the Church, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall so communicate the Paper in the manner set forth in the preceding section of this Canon.
- (c)**
- (1) It shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to record in the Parish Register all Baptisms, Confirmations (including the canonical equivalents in Canon I.17.1(d)), Marriages and Burials. Parish Register.
  - (2) The registry of each Baptism shall be signed by the officiating Member of the Clergy.
  - (3) The Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall record in the Parish Register all persons who have received Holy Baptism, all communicants, all persons who have received Confirmation (including the canonical equivalents in Canon I.17.1(d)), all persons who have died, and all persons who have been received or removed by letter of transfer. The Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall also designate in the Parish Register the names of (1) those persons whose domicile is unknown, (2) those persons whose domicile is known but are inactive, and (3) those families and persons who are active within the congregation. The Parish Register shall remain with the congregation at all times. Records to be entered in the Register.

**Sec. 7. Licenses**

- (a)** No Priest shall preach, minister the Sacraments, or hold any public service, within the limits of any Diocese other than the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident for more than two months without a license from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest desires to so officiate. No Priest shall be License to officiate in a Diocese.

denied such a license on account of the Priest's race, color, ethnic origin, sex, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age, except as otherwise provided in these Canons. Upon expiration or withdrawal of a license, a priest shall cease immediately to officiate.

Consent of Rector.

**(b)** No Priest shall preach, read prayers in public worship, or perform any similar function, in a congregation without the consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge of that congregation, except as follows:

Exceptions.

- (1) In the absence or impairment of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, and if provision has not been made for the stated services of the congregation or other community of faith, a Warden may give such consent.
- (2) If there be two or more congregations or Churches in one Cure, as provided by Canon I.13.3(b), consent may be given by the majority of the Priests-in-Charge of such congregations, or by the Bishop; *provided* that nothing in this Section shall prevent any Member of the Clergy of this Church from officiating, with the consent of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, in the Church or place of public worship used by the congregation of the consenting Rector or Priest-in-Charge, or in private for members of the congregation; or in the absence of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge, with the consent of the Wardens or Trustees of the congregation; *provided further*, that the license of the Ecclesiastical Authority provided in Canon III.9.7(a), if required, be obtained.
- (3) This Canon shall not apply to any Church, Chapel, or Oratory, which is part of the premises of an incorporated institution created by legislative authority; *provided* that such place of worship is designated and set apart for the convenience and use of such institution, and not as a place for public or parochial worship.

Evidence required to officiate.

**(c)** No Rector or Priest-in-Charge of any congregation of this Church, or if there be none, no Wardens, Members of the Vestry, or Trustees of any congregation, shall permit any person to officiate in the congregation without sufficient evidence that such person is duly licensed and ordained and in good standing in this Church; *provided*, nothing in these Canons shall prevent:

Proviso.

- (1) The General Convention, by Canon or otherwise, from authorizing persons to officiate in congregations in accordance with such terms as it deems appropriate; or

Bishop may authorize other officiants.

- (2) The Bishop of any Diocese from giving permission
  - (i) To a Member of the Clergy of this Church, to invite Clergy of another Church to assist in the Book of Common Prayer Offices of Holy Matrimony or of the Burial of the Dead, or to

- read Morning or Evening Prayer, in the manner specified in Canon III.9.5; or
- (ii) To Clergy of any other Church to preach the Gospel, or in ecumenical settings to assist in the administration of the sacraments; or
- (iii) To godly persons who are not Clergy of this Church to address the Church on special occasions.
- (iv) To the Member of the Clergy or Priest-in-Charge of a congregation or if there be none, to the Wardens, to invite Clergy ordained in another Church in communion with this Church to officiate on an occasional basis, *provided* that such clergy are instructed to teach and act in a manner consistent with the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church.

(d) If any Member of the Clergy or Priest-in-Charge, as a result of impairment or any other cause, shall neglect to perform regular services in the congregation, and refuse, without good cause, to consent to any other duly qualified Member of the Clergy to perform such services, the Wardens, Vestry, or Trustees of the congregation shall, upon providing evidence to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of such neglect or refusal and with the written consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority, have the authority to permit any duly qualified Member of the Clergy to officiate.

Neglect of services or refusal to officiate.

(e) Any Priest desiring to officiate temporarily outside the jurisdiction of this Church but in a Church in communion with this Church, shall obtain from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the person is canonically resident, a testimonial which shall set forth the person's official standing, and which may be in the following form:

Officiating outside the Church's jurisdiction.

**I hereby certify that A.B., who has signified to me the desire to be permitted to officiate temporarily in churches not under the jurisdiction of The Episcopal Church, yet in communion with this Church, is a Priest of \_\_\_\_\_ in good standing, and as such is entitled to the rights and privileges of that Order.**

**(Date)\_\_\_\_\_ (Signed) \_\_\_\_\_**

Such testimonial shall be valid for one year and shall be returned to the Ecclesiastical Authority at the end of that period. The Ecclesiastical Authority giving such testimonial shall record its issuance, the name of the Priest to whom issued, its date and the date of its return.

**Sec. 8. Resignation**

On reaching the age of seventy-two years, a Priest shall resign from all positions in this Church, and the resignation shall be accepted. Thereafter, the Priest may accept any position in this Church, including, with the permission of the Ecclesiastical

Resignation at age seventy-two.

Proviso.	<p>Authority, the position or positions from which resignation pursuant to this Section has occurred; <i>provided</i>,</p> <p>(a) tenure in the position shall be for a term of not more than twelve months, which term may be renewed from time to time,</p> <p>(b) service in the position shall have the express approval of the Bishop of the Diocese in which the service is to be performed, acting in consultation with the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident.</p> <p>(c) Anything in this Canon to the contrary notwithstanding, a Priest who has served in a non-stipendiary capacity in a position before resignation may, at the Bishop's request, serve in the same position for a term not to exceed twelve months thereafter, and this term may be renewed.</p>
Release and removal of a Priest.	<p><b>Sec. 9.</b> Release and Removal from the Ordained Ministry of this Church</p> <p>If any Priest of The Episcopal Church shall express, in writing, to the Bishop of the Diocese in which such Priest is canonically resident, an intention to be released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church and from the obligations attendant thereto, including those promises made at Ordination in the Declaration required by Article VIII of the Constitution of the General Convention, it shall be the duty of the Bishop to record the matter. The Bishop, being satisfied that the person so declaring is acting voluntarily and for causes, which do not affect the person's moral character, and is neither the subject of information concerning an Offense that has been referred to an Intake Officer nor a Respondent in a pending disciplinary matter as defined in Title IV of these Canons, shall lay the matter before the Standing Committee, and with the advice and consent of a majority of the Standing Committee the Bishop may pronounce that the person is released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church and from the obligations attendant thereto, and is deprived of the right to exercise in The Episcopal Church the gifts and spiritual authority as a Minister of God's Word and Sacraments conferred in Ordination. The Bishop shall also declare in pronouncing and recording such action that it was for causes which do not affect the person's moral character, and shall, at the person's request, give a certificate to this effect to the person so removed and released from the ordained Ministry.</p>
Request for release.	<p><b>Sec. 10.</b> A Priest who could under this Canon be released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church, and who desires to enter into other than ecclesiastical employment, may express in writing to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident a desire to be released and removed from the obligations of the office and a desire to be released and removed from the exercise of the office of Priest. Upon receipt of such writing, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall proceed in the same manner as prescribed in Section 8 of this Canon.</p>

**Sec. 11.** If a Priest submitting the writing described in Section 8 or 9 of this Canon be the subject of information concerning an Offense that has been referred to an Intake Officer or a Respondent in a pending disciplinary matter as defined in Title IV of these Canons, the Ecclesiastical Authority to whom such writing is submitted shall not consider or act upon the written request unless and the disciplinary matter shall have been resolved by a dismissal, Accord, or Order and the time for appeal or rescission of such has expired.

In disciplinary cases.

**Sec. 12.** In the case of the release and removal of a Priest from the ordained Ministry of this Church as provided in this Canon, a declaration of release and removal shall be pronounced by the Bishop in the presence of two or more Priests, and shall be entered in the official records of the Diocese in which the Priest being released and removed is canonically resident. The Bishop who pronounces the declaration of release and removal as provided in this Canon shall give notice thereof in writing to every Member of the Clergy, each Vestry, the Secretary of the Convention and the Standing Committee of the Diocese in which the Priest was canonically resident; and to all Bishops of this Church, the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese of this Church, the Presiding Bishop, the Recorder of Ordinations, the Secretary of the House of Bishops, the Secretary of the House of Deputies, the Church Pension Fund, and the Board for Transition Ministry.

Declaration.

**Sec. 13.** Return to the Ordained Ministry of this Church after Release and Removal.

(a) When a Priest who has been released and removed from the ordained Ministry of this Church under Canon III.9.8 desires to return to that Ministry, the person shall apply in writing to the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Priest was last canonically resident, attaching the following:

Return to ordained Ministry.

- (1) Evidence of previous ordination in The Episcopal Church;
- (2) Evidence of appropriate background checks, certifications and proof of completion of applicable trainings including abuse prevention and anti-racism trainings;
- (3) A statement from no less than two members of the clergy known to the applicant in support of the application;
- (4) A statement of the reasons for seeking to return to the ordained Ministry of this Church.

(b) If the Bishop so chooses, the Bishop may give permission for the Priest to continue the process toward reinstatement, which may include the following:

- (1) Active participation in a congregation for a period of time at the Bishop's discretion;
- (2) Regular contact with the Bishop or the Bishop's designee during the course of the process;

- (3) Evaluation by a licensed mental health professional of the Bishop's choosing for the purposes of evaluation and of determining fitness for resumption of ordained ministry in this church;
- (4) Two references from those who are able to discuss the Priest's former ministry;
- (5) Meeting with the Standing Committee, who shall have the benefit of the materials above and who shall provide to the Bishop its recommendation regarding reinstatement.

(c) Before the Priest may be permitted to return to the ordained Ministry of this Church, the Bishop shall require the Priest seeking to return to the ministry to sign a written declaration as required in Article VIII of the Constitution, without recourse to any other ecclesiastical jurisdiction and execute such declaration in the presence of the Bishop and two or more members of the clergy of this Church.

(d) Thereafter the Bishop, taking into account the facts and circumstances surrounding the Priest's removal and release, may permit, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, the return of the person into the ordained Ministry of this Church.

(e) The provisions of this Canon III.9.13 shall not be applicable to any Priest who has been removed, released, or deposed from their ministry as the result of any proceeding of Title IV of these Canons.

(f) Notice of the Priest's return to the ordained Ministry of this Church shall be provided in writing to the same persons and entities receiving notice under Canon III.9.12.

**Sec. 14. Reconciliation of Disagreements Affecting the Pastoral Relation**

Petitions to reconcile.

When the pastoral relationship in a parish between a Rector and the Vestry or Congregation is imperiled by disagreement or dissension, and the issues are deemed serious by a majority vote of the Vestry or the Rector, either party may petition the Ecclesiastical Authority, in writing, to intervene and assist the parties in their efforts to resolve the disagreement. The written petition shall include sufficient information to inform the Ecclesiastical Authority and the parties involved of the nature, causes, and specifics of the disagreements or dissension imperiling the pastoral relationship. The Ecclesiastical Authority shall initiate such proceedings as are deemed appropriate under the circumstances for that purpose by the Ecclesiastical Authority, which may include the appointment of a consultant or licensed mediator. The parties to the disagreement, following the recommendations of the Ecclesiastical Authority, shall labor in good faith that the parties may be reconciled. Whenever the Standing Committee is the Ecclesiastical Authority, it shall request the Bishop of a neighboring Diocese to perform the duties of the Ecclesiastical Authority under this Canon.

**Sec. 15. Dissolution of the Pastoral Relation**

(a) Except upon mandatory resignation by reason of age, a Rector may not resign as Rector of a parish without the consent of its Vestry, nor may any Rector canonically or lawfully elected and in charge of a Parish be removed there from by the Vestry against the Rector's will, except as hereinafter provided. Resignation or removal of a Rector.

(b) If for any urgent reason a Rector or majority of Vestry based on a vote in a duly-called meeting, desires a dissolution of the pastoral relation, and the parties cannot agree, either party may give notice in writing to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese with a copy available to the Rector or Vestry. Such notice shall include sufficient information to inform the Ecclesiastical Authority and all parties involved of the nature, causes, and specifics requiring the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. If the parties have participated in mediation or consultation processes under III.9.14, a separate report from the mediator or consultant will be submitted to the Ecclesiastical Authority with copies available to the Rector and Vestry. Whenever the Standing Committee is the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, it shall request the Bishop of another Diocese to perform the duties of the Bishop under this Canon. Notice to Ecclesiastical Authority.

(c) Within sixty days of receipt of the written notice, the Bishop Diocesan or the Bishop exercising authority under this canon may initiate further mediation and reconciliation processes between Rector and Vestry in every way which the Bishop deems proper. The Bishop may appoint a committee of at least one Presbyter and one Lay Person, none of whom may be members of or related to the Parish involved, to interview the Rector and Vestry and report to the Bishop on the cooperation and responsiveness of the parties involved in the processes required by the Bishop. A copy of this report shall be available to the Vestry and Rector. Bishop to mediate.

(d) If the differences between the parties are not resolved after completion of mediation or other reconciliation efforts or actions prescribed by the Bishop, the Bishop shall proceed as follows: Procedures for settling differences.

- (1) The Bishop shall give written notice to the Rector and Vestry that a godly judgment will be rendered in the matter after consultation with the Standing Committee and that either party has the right within ten days to request in writing an opportunity to confer with the Standing Committee before it consults with the Bishop. The Bishop's written notification shall inform the Standing Committee and the parties involved of the nature, causes, and specifics of the unresolved disagreements or dissension imperiling the pastoral relationship.
- (2) If a timely request is made, the President of the Standing Committee shall set a date for the conference, which shall be held within thirty days.

- (3) At the conference, each party shall be entitled to attend, be represented, and present its position fully.
- (4) Within thirty days after the conference or after the Bishop's notice if no conference is requested, the Bishop shall confer with and receive the recommendation of the Standing Committee; thereafter the Bishop, as final arbiter and judge, shall render a written godly judgment.
- (5) Upon the request of either party, the Bishop shall explain the reasons for the judgment. If the explanation is in writing, copies shall be delivered to both parties. Either party may request the explanation be in writing.
- (6) If the pastoral relation is to be continued, the Bishop shall require the parties to agree on definitions of responsibility and accountability for the Rector and the Vestry.
- (7) If the relation is to be dissolved:
  - (i) The Bishop shall direct the Secretary of the Convention to record the dissolution.
  - (ii) The judgment shall include such terms and conditions including financial settlements as shall seem to the Bishop just and compassionate.
- (8) In either event, the Bishop shall offer appropriate supportive services to the Priest and the Parish.

Noncompliance with judgment.

**(e)** In the event of the failure or refusal of either party to comply with the terms of the judgment, the Bishop may impose such penalties as may be set forth in the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese; and in default of any provisions for such penalties therein, the Bishop may act as follows:

- (1) In the case of a Rector, suspend the Rector from the exercise of the priestly office until the Priest shall comply with the judgment.
- (2) In the case of a Vestry, invoke any available sanctions including recommending to the Convention of the Diocese that the Parish be placed under the supervision of the Bishop as a Mission until it has complied with the judgment.

**(f)** For cause, the Bishop may extend the time periods specified in this Canon, *provided* that all be done to expedite these proceedings. All parties shall be notified in writing of the length of any extension.

Nondiscoverable and inadmissible statements.

**(g)** Statements made during the course of proceedings under this Canon are not discoverable nor admissible in any proceedings under Title IV *provided* that this does not require the exclusion of evidence in any proceeding under the Canons which is otherwise discoverable and admissible.

Diocesan Canons apply.

**(h)** Sections 14 or 15 of this Canon shall not apply in any Diocese whose Canons are otherwise consistent with Canon III.9.

**CANON 10: Of Reception of Clergy from other Churches**

**Sec. 1.** Prior to reception or ordination, the following must be provided

- (a) a background check, according to criteria established by the Bishop and Standing Committee, and
- (b) medical and psychological evaluation by professionals approved by the Bishop, using forms prepared for the purpose by The Church Pension Fund, and if desired or necessary, psychiatric referral. If the medical examination, psychological examination, or background check have taken place more than thirty-six months prior to reception or ordination they must be updated. Examinations and evaluations.
- (c) evidence of training regarding
  - (1) prevention of sexual misconduct. Evidence of training.
  - (2) civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.
  - (3) the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV thereof.
  - (4) training regarding the Church’s teaching on racism.
- (d) Reports of all investigations and examinations shall be kept permanently on file by the Bishop and remain a part of the permanent diocesan record. Diocesan records.
- (e) Prior to reception or ordination each clergy person shall be assigned a mentor Priest by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. The mentor and clergy person shall meet regularly to provide the clergy person an opportunity for guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about ministry in the Episcopal Church. Mentors.

**Sec. 2.** Clergy Ordained by Bishops of Churches in Communion with This Church

- (a)
  - (1) A Member of the Clergy, ordained by a Bishop of another Church in communion with this Church, or by a Bishop consecrated for a foreign land by Bishops of this Church under Article III of the Constitution, shall, before being permitted to officiate in any Congregation of this Church, exhibit to the Member of the Clergy in charge, or, if there be no Member of the Clergy in charge, to the Vestry thereof, a certificate of recent date, signed by the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese that the person’s letters of Holy Orders and other credentials are valid and authentic, and given by a Bishop in communion with this Church, and whose authority is acknowledged by this Church; and also that the person has exhibited to the Ecclesiastical Authority satisfactory evidence of (i) moral and godly character and of (ii) theological qualifications. Certificate required to officiate.

- Letters Dimissory or equivalent credentials.
- (2) Before being permitted to take charge of any Congregation, or being received into any Diocese of this Church as a Member of its Clergy, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall receive Letters Dimissory or equivalent credentials under the hand and seal of the Bishop with whose Diocese the person has been last connected, which letters or credentials shall be delivered within six months from the date thereof. Before receiving the Member of the Clergy the Bishop shall require a promise in writing to submit in all things to the Discipline of this Church, without recourse to any foreign jurisdiction, civil or ecclesiastical; and shall further require the person to subscribe and make in the Bishop's presence, and in the presence of two or more Presbyters, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution. The Bishop and at least one Presbyter shall examine the person as to knowledge of the history of this Church, its worship and government. The Bishop also being satisfied of the person's theological qualifications, may then receive the person into the Diocese as a Member of the Clergy of this Church.
- Churches in full communion.
- (3) The provisions of this Section 1 shall be fully applicable to all Members of the Clergy ordained in any Church in the process of entering the historic episcopal succession with which The Episcopal Church is in full communion as specified in Canon I.20, subject to the covenant of the two Churches as adopted by the General Convention.
- (i) those duly constituted Dioceses, Provinces, and regional Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury,
  - (ii) the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht,
  - (iii) the Philippine Independent Church, and
  - (iv) the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar
  - (v) the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- Deacons.
- (b)** A Member of the Clergy who is a Deacon shall not be ordered Priest until having resided within the jurisdiction of this Church at least one year and all the requirements for ordination to the Priesthood as required by Canon III.8 have been satisfied.
- Mentors.
- (c)** Following reception each clergy person shall be assigned a mentor Priest by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. The mentor and clergy person shall meet regularly to provide the clergy person an opportunity for guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about ministry in the Episcopal Church.

**Sec. 3. Clergy Ordained by Bishops in Churches in the Historic Succession but Not in Communion with This Church**

**(a)** When a Priest or Deacon ordained in a Church by a Bishop in the Historic Succession but not in communion with this Church, the regularity of whose ordination is approved by the Presiding Bishop as permitted by I.16.3, desires to be received as a Member of the Clergy in this Church, the person shall apply in writing to a Bishop, attaching the following:

Procedures for making application.

- (1) Evidence that the person is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Congregation of this Church.
- (2) Evidence of previous Ministry and that all other credentials are valid and authentic.
- (3) Evidence of moral and godly character; and that the person is free from any vows or other engagements inconsistent with the exercise of Holy Orders in this Church.
- (4) Transcripts of all academic and theological studies.
- (5) A certificate from at least two Presbyters of this Church stating that, from personal examination or from satisfactory evidence presented to them, they believe that the departure of the person from the Communion to which the person has belonged has not arisen from any circumstance unfavorable to moral or religious character, or on account of which it may not be expedient to admit the person to Holy Orders in this Church.
- (6) Certificates in the forms provided in Canon III.8.6 and III.8.7 from the Rector or Member of the Clergy in charge and Vestry of a Parish of this Church.
- (7) A statement of the reasons for seeking to enter Holy Orders in this Church.

**(b)** The provisions of Canon III.8.5(a) shall be applicable.

**(c)** If the person has exercised a ministry in the previous Church with good repute and success and if the person furnishes evidence of satisfactory theological training in the previous Church, then the applicant shall be examined by the Commission and show proficiency in the following subjects:

Evidence of proficiency.

- (1) Church History: the history of the Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church.
- (2) Doctrine: the Church's teaching as set forth in the Creeds and in An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism.
- (3) Liturgics: the principles and history of Anglican worship; the contents of the Book of Common Prayer.
- (4) Practical Theology:
  - (i) The office and work of a Deacon and Priest in this Church.
  - (ii) The conduct of public worship.

	(iii) The Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and of the Diocese in which the applicant is resident.
	(iv) The use of voice in reading and speaking.
	(5) The points of Doctrine, Discipline, Polity, and Worship in which the Church from which the applicant has come differ from this Church. This portion of the examinations shall be conducted, in part at least, by written questions and answers, and the replies kept on file for at least three years.
	(d) The Commission may, with the consent of the Bishop, and with notice to the applicant, examine the latter in any other subject required by Canon III.6.5(f) and (g) or III.8.5(g) and (h).
Candidate to receive endorsements.	(e) Prior to being examined pursuant to Sec. 3(c) of this Canon, the applicant shall have received certificates from the Bishop and from the Standing Committee that the applicant is acceptable as a Member of the Clergy of this Church, subject to the successful completion of the examination.
Declaration of conformity.	(f) Before the person may be ordained or received into Holy Orders in this Church, the Bishop shall require a promise in writing to submit in all things, to the Discipline of this Church without recourse to any other ecclesiastical jurisdiction or foreign civil jurisdiction, and shall further require the person to subscribe and make in the presence of the Bishop and two or more Presbyters the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution.
Reception, confirmation, or ordination.	(g) Thereafter the Bishop, being satisfied of the person's theological qualifications and successful completion of the examination specified in Sec.3(c) of this Canon and soundness in the faith, shall: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Receive, with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, the person into this Church in the Orders to which already ordained by a Bishop in the historic succession; or</li> <li>(2) Confirm and make the person a Deacon and, no sooner than four months thereafter, ordain as Priest, if the person has not received such ordination; or</li> <li>(3) Ordain as a Deacon and no sooner than six months thereafter, ordain the person a Priest conditionally (having baptized and confirmed the person conditionally if necessary) if ordained by a Bishop whose authority to convey such orders has not been recognized by this Church.</li> </ol>
Special prefaces authorized.	(h) In the case of an ordination under this Canon, the Bishop shall, at the time of such ordination, read this preface to the Service: <p><b>The Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese is satisfied that A.B. accepts the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church and now desires to be ordained a Deacon (or ordained a Priest) in this Church. We are about to confer upon A.B. the</b></p>

grace and authority of Holy Orders as this Church has received them and requires them for the exercise of the ministry of a Deacon (or a Priest).

The certificates of ordination in such cases shall contain the words:

**Acknowledging the ministry which A.B. has already received and hereby adding to that commission the grace and authority of Holy Orders as understood and required by this Church for the exercise of the ministry of a Deacon (or a Priest).**

(i) In the case of a conditional ordination pursuant to this Canon, the Bishop shall at the time of such ordination, read this preface to the service: Conditional ordination.

**The Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese has been satisfied that A.B., who has been ordained by a Bishop whose authority has not been recognized by this Church, accepts the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church, and now desires conditional ordination. By this service of ordination, we propose to establish that A.B. is qualified to exercise the ministry of a Deacon (or a Priest).**

(j) No one shall be ordained or received as a Deacon or Priest until age twenty-four. Limitations.

(k) A Deacon received under this Canon, desiring to be ordained to the Priesthood must satisfy all the requirements for ordination as set forth in Canon III.8.

(l) No one shall be received or ordained under this Canon less than twelve months from the date of having become a confirmed communicant of this Church.

(m) Following reception or ordination each clergy person shall be assigned a mentor Priest by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. The mentor and clergy person shall meet regularly to provide guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about ministry in the Episcopal Church. Mentors.

**Sec. 4. Clergy Ordained in Churches Not in the Historic Succession**

(a) If a person ordained or licensed by other than a Bishop in the Historic Succession to minister in a Church not in communion with this Church desires to be ordained,

- (1) The person must first be a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a Congregation of this Church;
- (2) The Commission shall examine the applicant and report to the Bishop with respect to:
  - (i) Whether the applicant has served in the previous Church with diligence and good reputation and has stated the causes which have impelled the applicant to leave the body and seek ordination in this Church,
  - (ii) The nature and extent of the applicant's education and theological training,Procedures for making application.

- Exceptions to canonical requirements.
- (iii) The preparations necessary for ordination to the Order(s) to which the applicant feels called;
- (3) The provisions of Canon III.5,6, and 8 shall be followed except that the minimum period of Candidacy need not apply, if the Bishop and the Standing Committee at the recommendation of the Commission judge the Candidate to be ready for ordination to the Diaconate earlier than twelve months; the applicant shall be examined by the Commission and show proficiency in the following subjects:
- Proficiencies.
- (i) Church History: the history of the Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church in the United States of America,
- (ii) Doctrine: the Church's teaching as set forth in the Creeds and in An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism;
- (iii) Liturgics: the principles and history of Anglican worship; the contents of the Book of Common Prayer;
- (iv) Practical Theology:
- (a) The office and work of a Deacon and Priest in this Church,
- (b) The conduct of public worship,
- (c) The Constitution and Canons of the General Convention, and of the Diocese in which the applicant is resident,
- (d) The use of voice in reading and speaking;
- (v) The points of Doctrine, Discipline, Polity, and Worship in which the Church from which the applicant has come differs from this Church. This portion of the examinations shall be conducted, in part at least, by written questions and answers, and the replies kept on file for at least three years.
- Special prefaces authorized.
- (4) If all the requirements of this Canon have been fulfilled, the Bishop may ordain the Candidate a Deacon, but may do so no sooner than twelve months after the Candidate became a confirmed communicant of this Church. No sooner than six months thereafter, the Candidate may be ordained a Priest at the Bishop's discretion. At the time of such ordination the Bishop shall read this preface following the signing of the declaration of conformity:
- The Ecclesiastical Authority of this Diocese is satisfied that A.B. accepts the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church and now desires to be ordained a Deacon (or ordained a Priest) in this Church. We are about to confer**

**upon A.B. the grace and authority of Holy Orders as this Church has received them and requires them for the exercise of the ministry of a Deacon (or a Priest).**

In such cases, the ordination certificate shall contain the words:

**Acknowledging the ministry which A.B. has already received and hereby adding to that commission the grace and authority of Holy Orders as understood and required by this Church for the exercise of the ministry of a Deacon (or a Priest).**

- (5) Following reception or ordination each clergy person shall be assigned a mentor Priest by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. The mentor and clergy person shall meet regularly to provide the clergy person an opportunity for guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about ministry in the Episcopal Church. Mentors.

*Section Four*  
**STANDARDS OF LEARNING**

**MINISTRY  
HANDBOOK**

*for the Diocese of South Dakota*

# **STANDARDS OF LEARNING**

## **A COVENANT FOR MINISTRY FORMATION**

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIOCESAN TRAINED MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

The following sets forth minimum criteria and standards for the preparation of persons for ordination to locally trained ordained ministries under the provisions of Title III Ministry canons.

#### I. Spiritual Formation and Self-Care

A person called to a ministry under this covenant shall:

- Develop a spiritual discipline which could include life habits of daily prayer, and the reading of and reflection upon Scripture, under the guidelines of the Book of Common Prayer.
- Seek out spiritual direction.
- Strive to live a life that evidences a proper balance between commitments to family, work, and recreation, and emotional, physical and mental health.

#### II. Required Practical Ministry Training. A person contemplating ministry under this Covenant shall

- Attend a Dakota Experience.
- Be familiar with the variety of cultural customs and traditions within the local community and diocese.
- Be familiar with the theology and practical application of Mutual Ministry.
- Be familiar with general causes, symptoms and treatment of drug, alcohol and other addictions.
- Attend a Sexual Misconduct Awareness Training Program
- Attend Anti-racism training.
- Understand the authority of the Bishop and the polity of the Episcopal Church.

III. Specific Education: Persons called to ordained ministries should demonstrate adequate knowledge (deacon) or proficiency (priest) in the following areas, which will all be covered in your course work.

#### A. Holy Scripture

##### 1. General introduction to Holy Scripture:

- Be able to use an exegetical (analytical or interpretive) method in your use of Scripture
- Be able to discuss the authority of Scripture as understood by the Episcopal Church
- To reflect a knowledge and understanding of the content of the Bible.
- To apply and evaluate the Bible's message in relationship to life situations, contemporary issues and challenges.

##### 2. Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures)

- Understand the major structure and themes of the OT.

- Describe the significance of Torah.
- Describe the importance of the Exodus.
- Describe the history of the Exile, and what it tells us about God.
- Tell several of the stories found in the Old Testament in your own words and explain what those stories have to say about God, human beings, sin, judgment and redemption.
- Explain how God is described in the Old Testament and what images are used for God.
- Have a general idea of the chronology of events in the lives of the Hebrew people, how they came to be a people.

### 3. New Testament (Christian Scriptures):

- Outline the major divisions of the New Testament.
- Have a general idea of the order in which the various books of the New Testament were written.
- List the Synoptic Gospels and describe how they differ from the Gospel According to John.
- Explain why we have four versions of the gospels.
- Describe the difference between Gospel and the gospels.
- Describe major theological themes in each of the gospels.
- Explain the significance of Paul in terms of the development of his major theological concepts.
- Discuss some of the major themes in the Epistles.
- Be able to identify some of the major figures in the New Testament.
- Describe how God is perceived in the New Testament?
- Describe what the New Testament has to do with Jesus.

### B. Church History

- An understanding and working knowledge of the history of the local congregation and/or region.
- An understanding and working knowledge of the history of the Episcopal Church in South Dakota, including D/Lakota culture and tradition.
- Identify and describe major events and movements within the history of Christianity and explain their importance for the development of Christianity in general and the Episcopal Church in particular.
- An understanding and working knowledge of Anglican Church History with particular attention to:
  - The Early Church
  - Spread of Christianity
  - Medieval Church History
  - A basic understanding of the Protestant Reformation
  - Henry VIII, Thomas Cranmer, the development of the Book of Common Prayer
  - The “three-legged stool”, or Scripture, Tradition and Reason
  - The Elizabethan settlement and “via media.”

- The Anglican Communion
  - An understanding and working knowledge of the history of the Episcopal Church in this country with particular attention to:
    - Events surrounding the establishment of the Episcopal Church and House of Bishops and the adoption of the American Book of Common Prayer.
    - A basic grasp of the spread of the Episcopal Church from the colonies westward.
    - A basic grasp of recent church history.
- C. Theology: Church's Teaching as set forth in the Creeds and in *An Outline of the Faith*, commonly called the Catechism.

- Display an accurate knowledge of the basic theological concepts and doctrines of the Christian faith.
- Know how and why the Apostles' and Nicene creeds were formed.
- Be able to explain the major ideas contained in the creeds. For example: "One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church", "Resurrection of the Body," Jesus Christ, God's only Son our Lord", the doctrine of the Trinity, etc.
- Know the content of the Catechism.
- Understand the concept *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi* which means "what we pray is what we believe." Give examples from the Book of Common Prayer about what the Episcopal Church believes.
- Explain how Baptism undergirds the church's liturgy and mission
- Explain the theology of Incarnation, Fall and Redemption, Salvation

D. Knowledge of the Book of Common Prayer.

- Know what "common prayer" is and why it is important to the Episcopal Church.
- Understand fully the content of the Book of Common Prayer, its structure, order, specific liturgies, the lectionary, daily office, historical documents, etc.
- Explain what a rubric is and why it is important to understand them. Give several examples of rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer.
- Explain the use of the Psalms in liturgical worship.
- Be familiar with liturgical resources, i.e. Holy Women, Holy Men; Book of Occasional Services; Burial Service Book; Enriching our Worship I and II, etc.

E. Theory and Practice of Ministry

- Understand and describe how contemporary cultures affect the practice of ministry in particular situations.
- Identify the theological, pastoral, and practical issues and methods pertinent to the contemporary practice of ministry in specified situations.
- Illustrate and analyze the issues and challenges for ministry, applying them in a response to a contemporary situation.
- An Understanding of the Office and Work of a Deacon and of a Priest
- Define "sacrament" and explain why we think of ourselves as a sacramental church.

- List and explain the meaning of the seven sacraments of the church.
- Discuss the Baptismal Covenant and its implications
- Explain the ministry of various orders of the church, e.g. laity, bishop, priest, and deacon.

#### F. The Work and Ministry of a Deacon

- Help identify, train and encourage the ministry of all the baptized in the community.
- Be able to explain the ministry of the Deacon in the world.
- Know and understand a Deacon's role in worship to include Holy Eucharist, baptisms, wakes, funerals, marriages, and the major functions of Diaconal ministry, both in and out of the church.
- Drawing on Scripture and tradition, be able to explain why the church needs deacons today.
- Be able to describe your own servant ministries in the community.
- Be able to connect the ministries of other church members with the needs of the community.
- Be able to prepare the altar for Eucharist, do ablutions, etc.
- Be able to properly introduce the gospel.
- Know the proper use of voice in public speaking.
- Be able to plan a baptism and funeral in accord with the BCP.
- Know the theology of and the proper administration of unction.
- Know the proper use of "Communion Under Special Circumstances."
- Be able to help train worship leaders and Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors.
- Be equipped with basic pastoral care skills, e.g. hospital, shut-in visitation, death and dying.
- Be able to prepare and preach a sermon.
- Know how to do a deacon's distribution and when it is permissible to do it.
- Know the Guidelines for Deacons in the Diocese.

#### G. The Work and Ministry of a Priest

- Identify, train and encourage the ministry of all the baptized in the community.
- Supervise and utilize all licensed lay ministers.
- Know and understand the role of the Priest in the church's liturgy and in the congregation.
- Know how to properly celebrate the Eucharist including
  - Instruction and rubrics
  - Parts and order of the service
  - Gestures and reading style
  - How to administer the sacrament.
- Know the appropriate use of deacons and other ministers in a service.
- Know how to prepare candidates and sponsors for Baptism and Confirmation.
- Know how to properly celebrate a Baptism
  - Instruction and rubrics
  - Parts and order of the service

- Gestures and reading style
  - How to administer the sacrament
- Know how to properly prepare couples for marriage particularly as to the nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony.
- Know the canonical requirements for the solemnization of Holy Matrimony.
- Know the legal requirements for Holy Matrimony.
- Know how to properly conduct a wedding
  - Same as in Eucharist and Baptism but including:
  - How to conduct a wedding rehearsal
  - Appropriate music, readings, participants
  - Cultural issues
- Know how to properly conduct a funeral
  - Instruction and rubrics.
  - Order of the service.
  - Wakes.
  - Working with families, funeral directors, musicians.
  - Being aware of cultural issues.
  - Being able to talk about issues surrounding death and dying.
- Know how to do healing prayers and the proper use of unction.
- Know how to conduct a service of the Reconciliation of a Penitent.
- Know how to prepare and preach a sermon.
- Know responsibilities concerning record keeping, parochial reports, and other pertinent administrative matters.
- Be equipped with basic pastoral care skills, including crisis ministry.
- Be familiar with the authorized hymnals, including the Dakota Hymnal, and how to choose appropriate music for liturgies.
- Be equipped to teach matters of faith and doctrine from the Catechism, Creeds and other resources including the New Church's Teaching Series.
- Have a general understanding of the ministry of Christian Education.
- Have a general understand of how to lead a Vestry or Mission Council, including ability to resolve conflict.

#### H. Ethics and Moral Theology in Contemporary Society

- Demonstrate an informed awareness about how Christian ethics and moral theology apply the structure and content of faith to intentional preparation for, and reflection upon, individual and community living.
- Be able to apply Scripture, Tradition and Reason to the making of moral judgments.
- Choose a specific ethical situation and apply a basic moral teaching.
- Know what positions the Episcopal Church has taken, including abortion, capitol punishment, homosexuality, economics, racism, war, the environment.
- Be aware of basic ethics of Christian living, e.g. respect, honor, etc.
- Analyze contemporary issues of society, conflicts, or mission priorities facing local congregations, communities, and the diocese.

- Demonstrate how our faith can be lived out across cultural similarities and differences.

I. Other Matters

- Be familiar with the Constitution & Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of South Dakota, specifically reviewing the Table of Contents, and discuss why the Constitution and Canons are important.
- Be able to discuss a theology of stewardship and its application
- Know the Diocesan Mission and Vision statements.