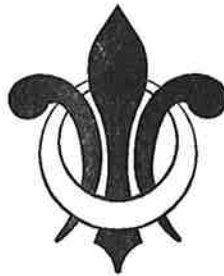


Roles and Responsibilities of Elected Leaders

**Roles and Responsibilities of
Vestries, Mission/Bishop's Committees, Regional Councils
or other congregational governing boards**



Servants Called to Leadership

Roles and Responsibilities of Elected Leaders

Elected Congregational Leaders

Congregations in the Episcopal Church are led by the clergy person-in-charge and an elected or appointed group of laity. In a parish this group is called the vestry; in a mission congregation they are generally called the mission committee or the bishop's committee. Two or more congregations who conduct their business affairs jointly may call this group "the council" or "the ministry team." In any case, the congregation's governing board has responsibilities assigned to it by laws of incorporation, state and federal laws, by-laws adopted by the congregations from time to time and by church canons (church law is called *canon law*; congregations in the Episcopal church are governed by both national and diocesan canons).

The Vestry

Parishes are governed by Vestries elected by the congregation. A parish is a self-sustaining congregation which has been granted parish status by the diocese where the congregation is located.

The word *vestry* originally defined a room attached to a church where the vestments and vessels required for worship were kept and where the clergy put on their vestments for services. Because this room was

commonly used for meetings of parishioners conducting parish business, the word came to refer to the group who transacted this business (The word *sacristy* has largely supplanted the use of *vestry* to define the room). Traditionally, and by canon law, the vestry, consisting of the rector, wardens and vestry members, is the legal representative of the Parish "in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy," except as may be provided by state law or diocesan canons (see Canon I.14.2).

The Mission Committee or The Bishop's Committee

Mission congregations function under the authority of a bishop. The priest or deacon in charge of the congregation (generally called a "vicar") has the same prerogatives as a rector "subject to the authority of the Bishop" (III.14.1.d). The regulations and traditions governing the roles and responsibilities of elected members of the mission or bishop's committee vary from diocese to diocese. In some places, this group is elected by the congregation; in others they are appointed. In some dioceses they function in the same manner as vestries. In others their role is more limited.

Regional Councils

A variety of new and innovative team ministries are being developed in the Episcopal Church along with the long-standing tradition of “yoked congregations” or area clusters. In some cases these multiple congregations have joint governing boards which make all the decisions traditionally made by a vestry. In other cases the responsibilities are divided between the council and the vestries of the participating congregations. Diocesan canons and congregational by-laws are generally the best source for determining the legal responsibilities of the various groups. The operating norms (informal rules and traditions governing who does what) are often found in handbooks, minutes of meetings or oral tradition!

The Cathedral Chapter

Many Cathedrals have a Cathedral Chapter which functions instead of or in addition to the congregation’s vestry. The roles and responsibilities of the Chapter are usually defined by diocesan canon and/or the Cathedral by-laws. The Cathedral Chapter, which includes both members of the congregation and members of the diocese, is concerned with the residential worshipping community *and* with the larger role of Cathedral in the diocese. When there are two bodies, the vestry generally focuses on congregational life (education, program, pastoral care) and the Chapter focuses on buildings and

diocesan or community program.

Variations are normal!

Because the vestry is the group most clearly defined in the canons and the variation in the other groups is so great, this chapter will take the vestry as the basis of the discussion. If your congregation fits one of the other models you will need to do a bit of homework to see how your situation is similar to or different from that of a vestry. Of course, the variation in vestries is also great so it is always best to check local canons, by-laws and tradition.

Ten Basic Responsibilities of Vestries

Congregations are led by governing groups which have certain responsibilities. Some, defined by church canons, are discussed below. But there are general responsibilities that apply to the governing groups of most, if not all, organizations.¹

Define the congregation’s mission and purpose

While the mission of the Church is established and stated in the Book of Common Prayer, the vestry or

¹The following is based on information in *Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards* by Richard T. Ingram, published by the National Center for Nonprofit Boards, © 1988. Copies of this and other booklets in the Governance Series are available from the Center, 800-883-6262.

mission/bishop's committee is responsible for defining how that general mission is uniquely implemented in this congregation. This does not mean that the vestry or mission/bishop's committee does this apart from the congregation. Rather it means they are responsible for seeing that the mission is defined, communicated clearly and consistently, reviewed and updated regularly. A statement of the congregation's mission and purpose should include goals, the ways it will accomplish those goals and who is being served. It needs to answer the questions: What makes us different from all other organizations like ours? It make a compelling case for why anyone should be a part of the church and contribute their time, talent and treasure to it.

Elect the rector

One of the most important tasks of any governing board is to select the organization's primary leader. The vestry may delegate the selection process to a calling committee, but in the end it is the vestry that elects the rector. An understanding of the congregation's strengths and needs, a clear job description and a good search process go a long ways towards helping a congregation select an appropriate leader. The church has and should use the added benefit of spiritual discernment that can help it elect a rector who will help lead the congregation in the way God is calling them to go.

Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards

- 1 Define the congregation's mission and purpose**
- 2 Select the executive director**
- 3 Support the executive director**
- 4 Ensure effective organizational planning**
- 5 Ensure adequate resources**
- 6 Manage resources effectively**
- 7 Establish and monitor the congregation's programs and services**
- 8 Communicate with the wider community**
- 9 Serve as a court of appeal**
- 10 Assess its own performance**

There is a corollary responsibility to electing a rector which is that the vestry is also responsible for intervening when a rector's is inappropriate or damaging to self or others and to work with the rector and diocese to remove a rector, should that become necessary.

Support the rector

The vestry, mission/bishop's committee or other governing group in a congregation are the primary group who support the rector in his or her work. While that is often delegated to one or both wardens, it remains a key group responsibility. The vestry needs to make sure that the rector is introduced to people in the congregation and community and invited to important social functions. They ensure that he or she receives regular, constructive feedback, is

complimented for exceptional work and that his or her performance is assessed in relation to the vestry's performance. The vestry needs to encourage the rector to pay attention to clergy wellness issues: rest, spiritual and personal renewal, continuing education, personal and family needs. And they need to support the rector when members unduly criticise, attack, gossip about the rector or misunderstanding the rector's roles and responsibilities. They also need to support the rector when congregation members abuse power, overstep boundaries, become inappropriately demanding or dominating.

Ensure effective organizational planning

The vestry needs to be actively engaged in short-term and especially long-range planning. It needs to review the congregation's mission and purpose, its current programs, staff and facilities and plan for how the church will develop its mission and ministry in the coming years. Again, the development of a strategic plan can be delegated to a sub-group and staff, but ultimately it is the vestry that makes sure that such planning occurs and that the plan is formally adopted and supported by the vestry. They also ensure that it is reviewed regularly and communicated clearly to all members.

Ensure adequate resources

A congregation needs resources to accomplish its mission. The vestry plays

a key role in gathering those resources. Vestry members must be active participants in giving of their time, talent and treasure if they expect members to do so as well. What the leaders model generally determines what members do. If the congregation's leaders are unenthusiastic and uncommitted, why should the members work and give? We can talk about giving to God, rather than the organization, but in the end, we still need to have leaders who are committed. Vestry members need to be present and congregational events, willing to pitch in and lend a hand and prepared to give to the support of the work God has called this congregation to do. In addition, they need to be willing to invite others to give. The Stewardship Committee's job is to organize the stewardship education and fund raising efforts but the vestry needs to be visible and involved in their work.

Manage resources effectively

The vestry has the legal and moral responsibility to manage the congregation's finances, property and human resources. This requires the vestry to have safeguards in place, to study and exercise prudent judgement about investments, insurance, etc. Much of this is defined by canon law or outlined in the *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs* which gives detailed guidance on these matters (see below). In addition to this fiduciary responsibilities, the vestry is responsible for the care of paid and

volunteer personnel ensuring that they receive adequate compensation and benefits, that they have what they need to do the job they are asked to do and that they receive adequate training and support.

Establish and monitor the congregation's programs and services

Part of the vestry's oversight function is deciding what activities best enable the congregation to fulfill its mission and ministry. This includes the development of new programs, events or services and the more difficult task of deciding to discontinue existing ones. Regular, disciplined evaluation of existing programs, how they fit the mission and what they are accomplishing, will assist the vestry in carrying out this responsibility. A periodic assessment of the needs of the congregation and wider community are also key components.

Communicate with the wider community

The vestry is responsible for the congregation's presence in the wider community. This ranges from publicity to communications with the diocese. What does the congregation's ad in the newspaper or its sign on the street say about the congregation? How are events promoted on radio, TV or newspaper? What message does the bulletin, brochures or materials for visitors or new members communicate? All of these vehicles can create an

image of a congregation. It is best to have a clear, consistent message that creates an accurate picture of your congregation and attracts others to it. Another place where an accurate picture is important is in communications with the diocese, especially the bishop. The rector and vestry are required, by canon, to meet with the bishop at his or her visit and present an accounting of the congregation's life and ministry. This is an opportunity to help the bishop learn about the congregation and for the congregation to learn about the diocese and ways the two might support one another.

Serve as a court of appeal

While most personnel issues will be handled by the rector and wardens, there are times when difficulties may require the assistance of a larger group. The wise rector will know when to seek the vestry's judgment in resolving disputes or in developing policies and procedures for previously unaddressed areas. While this should be extremely rare, the vestry does have the responsibility to be this final court of appeal when the rector's judgment is challenged and he or she needs their wisdom and support. It is also a safeguarding role if, for some reason, the rector should exercise his or her personnel management responsibilities in an inappropriate manner.

Assess its own performance

Finally, the vestry needs to reflect

periodically on its own work and how well it is meeting its own responsibilities. There is a temptation, especially in churches, to assume that everything that goes wrong is the fault of the paid staff (ie. the clergy and lay employees). Yet, often the difficulties encountered by the staff are at least exacerbated by the actions or lack of action by the vestry. Regular assessment of its own work can help a vestry address and correct this problem. On the other hand, an assessment, led by a trained, objective person, can also affirm the vestry and staff in what they are doing well and thus build up and encourage them in the work they are doing. In most cases, an assessment will identify both strengths and weaknesses which can be celebrated and addressed and thus improve the effectiveness of the vestry's leadership. An overnight retreat is often used as a way to accomplish this. Combining objective assessment with prayerful reflection on God's call can help a vestry make an honest assessment of its work and inspire them to offer their best to God and each other.

Individual Member's Responsibilities

In addition to the group's responsibilities there are some general responsibilities that need to be carried out by individual members if the vestry or mission/bishop's committee is to be effective.

General Responsibilities:

- Know the church's mission, purpose, goals, policies, programs, services, activities, strengths and needs
- Learn about the work of the congregation, diocese and national church; read diocesan and national periodicals; seek information about what is happening

Meetings:

- Prepare for and participate in meetings and church activities
- Ask substantive questions, be honest about what you think, speak for yourself ("I think" rather than "they say")
- Suggest agenda items that are appropriate for vestry-level discussion
- Maintain confidentiality on sensitive topics or closed meetings
- Maintain a sense of humor

Relationship with staff

- Avoid asking for special favors, requests for information especially without checking with the rector or committee head to ensure that it is do-able.
- Offer support, information and suggestions to the rector in difficult situations

Regarding conflicts:

- Serve the congregation as a whole rather than any specific group
- Avoid making judgments on the basis of individual complaints and

encourage those with complaints to talk directly with the person(s) involved; offer to go with them, if necessary; inform the rector or senior warden if the complaint is significant

- Avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest
- Maintain independence and objectivity, avoid taking sides in disputes, do what fairness, ethics and personal integrity dictate
- Do not accept or offer gifts or favors to anyone who does business with the church

Fiduciary responsibilities:

- Exercise care in control and transfer of funds
- Make sure appropriate safeguards are in place
- Study and understand the financial statements; ask questions if you don't understand something or if it doesn't make sense; don't accept evasive or unclear explanations

Stewardship:

- Identify potential leaders for the vestry or other leadership positions
- Take on leadership roles or other tasks willingly and enthusiastically
- Contribute to the congregation, preferably at the level of a tithe or moving towards a tithe of your income
- Assist in stewardship education and in asking others to give of their time, talent and treasure

While these lists give a general outline of the responsibilities of vestries or bishop/mission committees, there are some responsibilities that are specifically assigned by canon law. Many of these overlap with the responsibilities faced by all governing boards of nonprofit organizations, but it may be helpful to see what the church has identified as necessary for its life.

Canonical Responsibilities and Authority of Rectors, Wardens and Vestries

One of the basic principles of good management tells us that no group or individual should be assigned responsibility for a task without the authority to accomplish that task. Responsibility and authority go hand in hand. Based on this principle, we need to consider what authority is assigned *by law* to the congregation's elected leaders.

A word of caution is in order before attempting to define the prerogatives of individual members (rector, wardens, vestry members) of the vestry. A wise old seminary professor, lecturing a class of clergy-in-training on the finer points of canon law, remarked on those canons dealing with clergy prerogatives and authority: "It is well to have some understanding of these canons. They will help you to learn what is expected of you. But, *never forget*, if you are consulting the canons to win a point in debate with your vestry, you have already lost the battle." This advice applies equally well to the laity on the

vestry. The canons are useful in helping to define the traditional and legal roles of individual members of the vestry, but they should be a *starting point*, not the end of the discussion. And, keep in mind that the discussion which follows is based solely on *national* canons. Diocesan canons and state laws may add additional responsibilities or authority.

Canonical Responsibilities of the Vestry

The canons of the church actually have very little to say about the roles and responsibilities of vestries except to say that the vestry, consisting of the rector, wardens and vestry members, is the legal representative of the Parish “in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy,” except as may be provided by state law or diocesan canons (see Canon I.14.2). Broadly speaking these responsibilities can be identified as financial management and property management with two other areas overlapping with clergy responsibilities: personnel management and program oversight and development. The specific tasks in each of these areas will vary from congregation to congregation based on many factors. It would take several books to detail all the possibilities, and even a detailed outline of some of the tasks common to almost all congregations would fill pages.²

²The Diocese of Maine, for example, provides its congregations with a 150 page *Church Handbook* prepared by staff members and lay leaders of the diocese,

Title I, Canon 7, of the national canons, entitled “Of Business Methods in Church Affairs,” details some expectations in the areas of the vestry’s responsibility for financial and property management:

- Funds and securities must be deposited in a bank or agency approved by the diocese; withdrawals must require two signatures
- Appropriate accounting books and records of all funds must be kept
- Those with responsibility for funds over \$500 at any time must be bonded
- All accounts must be audited annually by a CPA, LPA or someone approved by the diocese and must be reported to the bishop
- All buildings and contents must be adequately insured
- The diocesan finance committee may require reports and report to Diocesan Convention
- The fiscal year shall begin January 1

A group of church treasurers and finance committee members has assembled a *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs* available from the national church which gives detailed guidance on these matters. In addition, a series of checklists is provided in this resource to assist you in reviewing financial, property and personnel management concerns.

which covers in detail many of the business affairs of congregations.

Canonical Responsibilities of the Rector

While little is said in the national canons about prerogatives of the vestry *per se*, the roles and responsibilities of the clergy, that is, the rector or the priest-in-charge, are clearly stated. Canon III.14.1 (full text at end of chapter) says that the priest-in-charge of a congregation is responsible for:

- Worship and spiritual life
- Selection and oversight of all assisting clergy
- Use and control of all buildings and furnishings

Section 2 of this same canon provides us with an insight into the duties “of the Clergy in charge of a cure of souls” on which these prerogatives are based. For the priest-in-charge, these include:

- Education of all ages in the Scriptures, the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church and in the exercise of their ministry
- Stewardship education for all ages
- Preparation for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation preparation
- *With the Warden and Vestry* to announce the Bishops visit and give the Bishop information about the congregation’s spiritual and temporal state
- Applying “open plate” offerings from one Eucharist a month to charitable uses
- Reading communications from the House of Bishops at worship
- Recording all baptisms, marriages,

confirmations and burials in the parish register.

In summary, the canons assign virtually all responsibility for the pastoral/spiritual charge of the parish, together with the necessary authority to accomplish this, to the clergy, that is, to the rector or the priest-in-charge.

According to the canons, assisting clergy, whether known as curate, assistant, associate or any other title, have no canonical or legal authority or prerogatives. They serve at the pleasure of the rector or priest-in-charge.

Authority must be granted to assisting clergy by the rector.

Canonical Requirements and Common Practices

There is nothing in the canons which prevents the clergy from assuming some level of responsibility for temporal affairs—or, indeed, total charge of such affairs should the vestry as a whole so delegate the authority—since as members of the vestry, they are charged with at least a partial role in temporal matters. It is worth noting, however, that very little, if any, seminary training is devoted to such “temporal” matters, although many members of the clergy have acquired such training through schooling or experience, or, indeed, by on-the-job training in parish settings.

There is also nothing in the canons which prevents the laity from assuming major roles or responsibility in the pastoral and spiritual life of the

congregation. Title III, Canon 3, "Of Licensed Lay Persons," provides for the licensing, by the bishop or ecclesial authority of a diocese, of lay readers, pastoral leaders, lay preachers, lay eucharistic ministers and catechists, at the request and with the recommendation of the member of the clergy in charge of a congregation. Additionally lectors may be appointed without a license; they will, of course, serve under the guidance and direction of the clergy-in-charge. Clergy can, and do, appoint liturgical or worship committees which generally function as a committee of advice. Some clergy delegate full authority of decision making in matters of liturgy and worship to this committee but the canons still require them to be accountable for the committee's actions. For this reason, most committees operate as advisory or in partnership with the clergy. Visiting committees, welcoming committees, lay eucharistic ministers, etc., may carry a significant part of the burden of pastoral care in a parish. Education committees, youth ministers, licensed catechists, directors of Christian education, etc., can assume many of the responsibilities of instructing in Scripture, the Catechism, and the doctrine and discipline of the Church. However, as we have noted a frequent lack of training in temporal matters for the clergy, we must also note that most lay persons have not received much training in such matters. Seminary-trained lay people are the exception, not the rule.

The canons require training for the licensing of lay persons, and many dioceses have established excellent training programs. Several Episcopal seminaries now offer training for laity either on the campus or through a variety of extension programs. And many lay persons have developed knowledge and skills through study, mentoring, workshops and congregational training programs. What is important for both clergy and lay leaders is that they are trained and given the resources they need to do the work they are given.

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By and large most of the leadership roles in parish life, depending on circumstance, training and individual interest and ability can, to some degree, be assumed by both clergy and laity. Clergy should seldom be so "otherworldly" that they are totally uninvolved and ignorant of the parish's temporal affairs. Vestries should seldom be so "pragmatic" as to ignore their own pastoral and spiritual development and that of the parish as a whole. It is not enough to provide a place and money and leave the rest to the clergy.

Who is in charge?

In the final analysis, the rector or the priest-in-charge is *the* leader of the parish. The canons make this quite clear in assigning major responsibility for the life of the congregation and the use of the buildings to the priest-in-charge. In addition, only an ordained presbyter may serve as celebrant of the Eucharist, and she or he is seen, week by week, month by month and year by year, front and center, *leading* the parish in its worship. Whatever the individual's leadership "style" or abilities, however much leadership may be delegated or shared, "the buck stops here." The old saying, *lex orandi, lex credendi*, usually translated, "as we pray, so we believe," comes to mind. We also believe what we see of leadership in the liturgy.

In a parish with two or more members of the clergy and a variety lay leaders on the paid or volunteer staff, liturgical leadership may be shared. It may even be shared to such an extent that parish leadership is not focused on a single individual. Whether or not this is desirable is dependent on circumstances, the personality of the rector or priest-in-charge and the tradition of the congregation. The increased tendency for laity to assume roles traditionally held by clergy changes the dynamics from those set forth in our current canons. This is because practice generally precedes the formation of canons. So it is likely that our canons may change in the future to reflect the shift in roles and

responsibilities—assuming current trends continue and are affirmed by the church as a whole.

Changing Nature of Congregations and Their Leaders

In the past, the leadership of most congregations was divided fairly strictly between the clergy who tended to spiritual matters and the vestry members who tended to temporal matters. While there were some matters that were shared (and some notable exceptions to the rule) the general practice was for the vestry members to focus on buildings and grounds, fund-raising, budgets and finances. Vestry member rarely, if ever, were involved in matters relating to pastoral care, theology or spiritual formation. Only when conflicts arose between the congregation and clergy would the vestry become involved. Conflicts within the congregation were usually the clergy person's responsibility as was the day-to-day management of the congregation's life and ministry.

In recent years changes in the life of the Church have begun to change the way clergy and the congregation's leaders work together. A significant factor is our understanding of ministry created by the Baptismal Covenant in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* and the dedicated work of key church leaders. The resultant rise in lay ministry has led to laity seeking more participation in and taking more responsibility for spiritual leadership in

congregations. This trend is reinforced by financial and membership factors (rising costs and fewer members, especially large donors) which often result in fewer clergy or clergy hours available in the congregation. Cultural phenomena such as the rejection of authority figures, the rise of a “do-it-yourself” philosophy, and the decline of clerical power and status in society also contribute to this.

At the same time, awareness of fiduciary responsibilities for all boards of directors is increasing. Corporate directors face increasing risk of lawsuits as do directors of not-for-profit organizations. Governing boards of churches and other organizations have understood their role as trustees on behalf of the larger group more clearly. These changes have also helped both clergy and lay leaders become more aware of the need to exercise their fiduciary responsibilities with care. This means that keeping separate domains of clergy and lay responsibilities is less desirable and increased inter-responsibility becomes an important way of operating.

Meanwhile, the place of the Church in society is changing. Loren Mead in his

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book, *The Once and Future Church*,³ describes this as a shift from the original Apostolic Paradigm (Church “called out” of and separate from the world) to the Christendom Paradigm (Church and “the empire” were synonymous) to the currently emerging paradigm where we are again conscious that the Church is different from the world. Mead identifies the ministry of the laity as a key change precipitated by this paradigm shift. When the Church and “the empire” were synonymous, being a good citizen was all it took to be a good Christian. When the world is no longer seen as an extension of or embodiment of the Church, then the laity have a ministry—a responsibility—to bring Christ to the world.

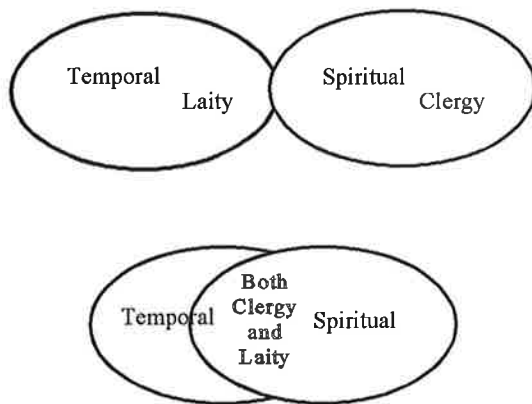
This shift is clearly reflected in the BCP which says, “The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ,” and then states that this mission is carried out by *all* its members. The ministry of the laity, in particular, is identified as carrying on “Christ’s work of reconciliation *in the world*” (italics added) as well as taking their place in the life, worship and governance of the Church. (BCP 855)

All of these changes impact the type of leadership needed and the way that leadership is exercised. Today, clergy and vestry members need to exercise

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both temporal and spiritual leadership. Rather than operating in two separate spheres with minimal overlap, the total leadership of congregational needs to be centered in the tension between the two.

Both clergy and laity need to be involved in the temporal affairs of the



church: buildings, finances, legal matters and the like. Improved management of programs and facilities, increased use of modern technologies, clearly defined policies and procedures, or the establishment of personal and financial accountabilities are examples of shared temporal responsibilities. Many of these management issues are fairly easy to identify and address, and there is a host of resources available to assist the congregation's leaders. Building a partnership between clergy and laity requires an attitude shift and a willingness to work and learn together.

Building a clergy-lay partnership on the spiritual side is often a bit more complex. Many laity feel ill equipped to participate in spiritual leadership and are, perhaps, intimidated by the clergy person's education and training. Many clergy are accustomed to *doing* the spiritual work, rather than *participating in* it, much less training laity to do it. Finding ways to discern and develop the knowledge, skills and experience of the laity so they can be partners in ministry with clergy is one of the important challenges facing congregations today. Finding ways for clergy and laity to work as partners is one of the important challenges facing the congregation's leaders.

Today many congregations are moving towards a "shared ministry" concept where clergy and laity function as part of an interdependent team and seek to engage a large number of people in a variety of appointed leadership roles. This allows for the best use of everyone's gifts and skills and often strengthens the overall leadership of the congregation. It also is effective in preventing exhaustion and the negative consequences that result from being a lonely leader at the top. Too often exhausted Senior Wardens disappear after their term of office is complete or clergy engage in misconduct or leave the ministry. Leading a congregation in an increasingly secular world is difficult and requires the support and efforts of many. It also requires a faithful dependence of God's guidance and power.

Spiritual Responsibilities

In addition to the legal roles and responsibilities there is the spiritual responsibility of leading a congregation. The Book of Common Prayer says that the mission of the church is “to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ” (p. 855). The elected leaders, lay and ordained, have a responsibility to model that mission in their work and to lead the congregation in fulfilling that mission. Someone must tend to the business affairs of even the smallest congregation. But beyond being the stewards the treasure, there is the wider arena of leading God people to become ever more faithful disciples of Christ.

While canon and laws do not require it, congregations need a team of leaders who are committed to providing spiritual leadership. Many vestries are moving from being organized along task lines with committees to accomplish certain job to being organized by ministries with ministry groups responsible for areas of ministry. This engages the entire leadership team, not just the clergy, in overseeing the spiritual well-being of the congregation. It also tends to move the leadership from a corporate model to a more community-building model. This way of operating is both ancient and new, so congregations and vestries often experiment with different ways of doing things until they find ways that best meet their needs and their vision.

In order to provide effective spiritual leadership it is crucial that clergy and

vestries develop a corporate spiritual life that nourishes them as individuals and inspires them as a leadership team. In addition to all the business and programmatic responsibilities it is easy to lose sight of the most important role of providing spiritual leadership.

Most vestries provide a time of retreat that may focus on some business issues but also provides a time of spiritual renewal. Many vestries begin their meetings with a time of worship and/or Bible study. Many congregations expect that vestry members will be regular in their worship and will participate actively in adult education.

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Some vestries have chosen to make their decisions by consensus or use a process of spiritual discernment taking time to pray before and during a decision and deferring action until they discern a clear leading of the Spirit. Others establish prayer teams to seek God’s guidance in their work. There are hundreds of ways the leadership team can develop their skills in how to work together effectively, how to discern God’s ways, how to grow in faith. Serving as a congregation’s leader can be a time of service and of growth

as individuals and as a group. Paying attention to these issues is as important as carrying out the “letter of the law.”

Function or Vocation?

Any discussion of the roles of members of the vestry, including clergy and wardens, by its very nature involves “functions,” that is, what does this person or that person *do* in the congregation? Some clergy see themselves defined primarily in this way—as professionals bringing certain skills to an occupation. Some vestries view clergy in this manner and relate to the congregation’s clergy as their “employees.” Other clergy and congregations see their priesthood as a matter of *who they are*, not what they do. These clergy see themselves as “being priest” no matter where they are or what they happen to be doing at the moment. Their priesthood is their vocation. Congregations and vestries with this perspective are less likely to relate to the clergy as employees and rather see themselves as supporting the presence of a priest in the congregation and community.

This chapter is not intended to “take a side” in this debate. When we look at “functions” we are looking at tasks to be done and the best and most efficient way of doing them. If we speak of clergy as “employees” of the parish (as in the checklists below), we are concerned with the tax

ramifications of salary vs. stipends⁴, not a theology of the priesthood. Secular life today, the tentativeness of lifetime employment, tax laws and government regulations may make it difficult to maintain a purely “vocational” perspective of the clergy role. So, most of us end up doing a combination of function (doing) and vocation (being).

By the same token, we must recognize that many lay church employees—musicians, parish administrators, secretaries, DREs etc.—are faced with many of the same issues as clergy. Most regard their work as more than “just a job.” For many such lay people their employment is also their ministry, and parish leadership must be especially sensitive to this and to “make provision for the development and affirmation [of such] ministry.”⁵ This includes providing adequate compensation for their work and ensuring that they have the benefits they need. Some are tempted to assume that if clergy or lay employees are doing their work as ministry, as a vocation, they need not be paid as much as one would pay someone for comparable skills. This

⁴A salary is a wage given for specific services rendered; a stipend is a “living,” an allowance given to allow someone to “live” and be who they are. For example, a stipend might be given by a patron to an artist enabling that person to paint without having to worry about whether the paintings sold.

⁵From Title III, Canon 1, “Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons.” Membership in the National Network of Lay Professionals in the Episcopal Church could be worthwhile for lay professional employees. Contact Ruth Schmidt, Executive Director, 2401 Bristol Ct. SW, Olympia, WA 98502 for further information. (Phone 360-352-1127, Fax 360-754-4240.)

perspective assumes that those doing ministry have “given us worldly things” and work just for the love of the Lord. While this may be true, it is no excuse for inadequate compensation. Clergy and lay employees have families and needs, just like anyone else. It is just and fair to compensate them at a level comparable to what other organizations pay for similar skills, experience and responsibilities.

The question vocation concerns lay people who are not employed by the church as well as employees. Many lay people today have a sense of their ministry as being outside the walls of the church building. When we restrict our use of the term “ministry” employees or to the tasks done to maintain the spiritual and temporal life of the congregation, we overlook the ministries of many members whose primary ministry arena may be at home, work, school or in the community. Members of the church are called to “represent Christ and his Church ...wherever they may be” and especially to “carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world.” (BCP 855) While lay people may “take their place in the life, worship and governance of the Church,” it is important to recognize that they too have a vocation.

The Care of Church Leaders

While on the topic of function vs vocation, it is probably timely to consider the need for boundaries. Even a priest whose being is defined by

ordination has roles other than the priesthood. He or she may be husband or wife, parent or child, friend or student, musician or mountain climber. Even the cleric whose profession is defined by its function is inclined to let those functions take more and more hours each week. Many parishioners see the clergy functioning only in the Sunday morning role and are inclined to see this as a one-day-a-week job. Lay members of the vestry must share with the clergy the responsibility of providing adequate leisure, study, family and recreational time. This is simply a matter of good stewardship. Clergy who do not take adequate personal time are prone to exhaustion.

The burden of lay leadership in a parish is frequently carried by a small corp of lay leaders who often have families, full-time occupations and other responsibilities in addition to their church roles. Over involvement in “church work” can cause as many problems for lay people as it can for the clergy. The clergy and vestry should keep this in mind and watch for symptoms of burn-out among lay volunteers and employees. As a pastoral concern, they should be aware that over involvement in “church work” may also be a symptom of family or other problems for lay people and clergy alike.

There are several ways to prevent exhaustion and to help people develop their gifts, skills and ministries. One is to provide clear job descriptions that outline responsibilities, accountabilities,

length of appointment (including rotation or sabbatical systems) and the availability of supervision or support. Providing people with the training and resources they need to do the job is important. Appropriate recognition and appreciation for their work is another key element.

In addition to these suggestions, clergy and vestry members can support volunteers and employees by openly acknowledging the need for boundaries—limits that preserves a healthy balance between self and others, home, work or school, church and recreation. Identifying the setting of limits as an act of stewardship helps people understand that living a balanced life is part of who God has created us to be. Practicing that balance in all aspects of our life is part of our Christian witness.



Discussion Guide

The following questions and suggestions are provided to assist you in discussing the material in this chapter. You could take the first fifteen minutes of each vestry or mission/bishop's committee meeting to explore one area or you might schedule a more informal discussion over coffee and donuts after worship one Sunday a month. Another way to use this material is during the annual retreat (see sample design). Or you might pull out a section whenever a specific occasion seems to warrant it.

Elected Leaders of Congregations

- How do the ten basic responsibilities of organizations fit us? How are we fulfilling them?
- How are we fulfilling our individual responsibilities?
- How are we fulfilling the canonical regulations regarding financial and property management? If we are not fulfilling one or more items, what do we want to do about that?
- How are the items for which the canons assign the accountability to clergy (Canon III.14) being addressed in our congregation?
- Who is in charge in our congregation?
- How are we working together as clergy and laity to provide leadership in this congregation? Do we maintain separate domains? Or have we developed a partnership model? If not, how might we move towards a partnership model?
- How are we exercising our spiritual responsibilities?
- Do we see our roles in terms of functions or as a vocation?
- How are we caring for each other and other congregational leaders?

Canons About Clergy and Vestry Roles

Taken from The Constitution and Canons of
the Episcopal Church

Canon III.14.1

(a). The authority of and responsibility for the conduct of the worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the Parish are vested in the Rector, subject to the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the Constitution and Canons of the Church, and the pastoral direction of the Bishop.

(b) All assistant Clergy by whatever title they may be designated, shall be selected by the Rector, subject to the approval of the vestry when required by Diocesan Canons, and shall serve under the authority and direction of the Rector. Before the selection of an assistant the name of the Member of the Clergy proposed for selection shall be made known to the Bishop and sufficient time, not exceeding thirty days, shall be given for the Bishop to communicate with the Rector and Vestry on the selection. Any assistant selected shall serve at the discretion of the Rector but may not serve beyond the period of service of the Rector except that, pending the call of a new Rector, the assistant may continue in the service of the Parish if requested to do so by the Vestry of the Parish and under such conditions as the Bishop and Vestry shall determine.

(c). For the purpose of the office and for the full and free discharge of all functions and duties pertaining thereto, the Rector shall, at all times, be entitled to the use and control of the Church and Parish buildings with the appurtenances and furniture thereof.

(d). In a Missionary Cure, the control and responsibility belong to the Priest who has been duly appointed to the charge thereof, subject to the authority of the Bishop.

Canon III.14.2

(a). ensuring that "children, youth and adults

receive instruction in the Holy Scriptures, in the ... Catechism, and in the doctrine, discipline and worship of [the] Church, and in the exercise of their ministry as baptized persons;"

(b). instructing all persons in their charge concerning Christian stewardship;

(c). preparing persons for Baptism;

(d) preparing persons for Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal vows and presenting them to the bishop;

(e). announcing the intention of the Bishop to visit the Congregation and, at such visitation, *together with the Wardens, Vestry or other officers*, exhibiting to the Bishop the Parish Register and giving information on the state of the Congregation, spiritual and temporal; [italics added]

(f). applying non-designated offerings received at the Eucharist one Sunday each month to "such pious and charitable uses as shall be thought fit by the Member of the Clergy (*When a parish is without a Rector the Vestry shall appoint a responsible person to serve as Almoner*);"

(g). reading Pastoral Letters or Position Papers from the House of Bishops to the Congregation on some occasion of public worship;

Section 3: recording in the Parish Register all Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages and Burials.

Canon I. Title 7: Of Business Methods in Church Affairs

Sec. 1: In every Diocese, Parish, Mission, and Institution, connected with this church, the following standard business methods shall be observed:

(1). Funds held in trust, endowment and other permanent funds, and securities represented by physical evidence of ownership or indebtedness,

shall be deposited with a National or State Bank, or a Diocesan Corporation, or with some other agency approved in writing by the Finance Committee or the Department of Finance of the Diocese, under a deed of trust, agency or other depository agreement providing for at least two signatures on any order of withdrawal of such funds or securities.

But this paragraph shall not apply to funds and securities refused by the depositories named as being too small for acceptance. Such small funds and securities shall be under the care of the persons or corporations properly responsible for them.

This paragraph shall not be deemed to prohibit investments in securities issued in book entry form or other manner that dispenses with the delivery of a certificate evidencing the ownership of the securities or the indebtedness of the issuer.

(2). Records shall be made and kept of all trust and permanent funds showing at least the following:

- (a) Source and date.
- (b) Terms governing the use of principal and income.
- (c) To whom and how often reports of condition are to be made.
- (d) How the funds are invested.

(3). Treasurers and custodians, other than banking institutions, shall be adequately bonded; except treasurers of funds that do not exceed five hundred dollars at any one time during the fiscal year.

(4). Books of account shall be so kept as to provide the basis for satisfactory accounting.

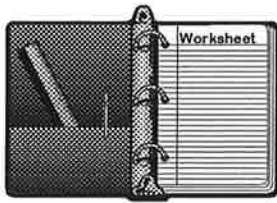
(5). ... All accounts of Parishes, Missions or other institutions shall be audited annually by an independent Certified Public Accountant, or independent Licensed Public Accountant, or such audit committee as shall be authorized by the Finance Committee, Department of Finance, or other appropriate diocesan authority.

All reports of such audits, including any memorandum issued by the auditors or audit committee regarding internal controls or other accounting matters, together with a summary of action taken or proposed to be taken to correct deficiencies or implement recommendations contained in any such memorandum, shall be filed with the Bishop of Ecclesiastical Authority not later than 30 days following the date of such report, and in no event, not later than September 1 of each year, covering the financial reports of the previous calendar year.

(6). All buildings and their contents shall be kept adequately insured.

(7). The Finance Committee or Department of Finance of the Diocese may require copies of any or all accounts described in this Section to be filed with it and shall report annually to the Convention of the Diocese upon its administration of this Canon.

(8). The fiscal year shall begin January 1.



Financial Management Checklist

Notes

- How are financial management tasks assigned to vestry members? (Usually the treasurer or accounting warden has the heaviest role in this area.)
 - How does the vestry assure that persons responsible for financial management have training or ability in this area? Are such persons chosen from the vestry as a whole?
 - Are professionals (such as a bookkeeper) hired for this task? Is a treasurer with known professional ability appointed to serve *ex officio*? Is there a vestry committee which oversees this area of management?
- Audits
 - What provisions have been made for auditing the Vestry's accounts? Are these provisions in accord with canons and state law? When was the last audit report? Has this been reviewed by the vestry?
 - Have provisions been made for an audit of *all* other parish accounts (e.g. discretionary fund, women's, men's and youth organizations, any other parish organization? This is required for *all* parish funds, not just those maintained by the vestry!)
- Accounting Practices and Controls
 - The *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs* may be obtained from Episcopal Parish Services, Philadelphia Office of The Episcopal Church, 1201 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 10107-4101 (800-903-5544).
 - What type of bookkeeping system is used? Forms that follow the manual above are also available from Episcopal Parish Services and will simplify the preparation of the parish's annual report.
 - Who can sign checks on the vestry's accounts? Does this provide adequate control?
 - If a petty cash fund is maintained, who is responsible for it? Who approves withdrawals? Are signed receipts required?
 - Offerings: Who is assigned to secure and count the

offerings? Is this task rotated so that the same persons don't always make the count? Are offerings secured between services? Are at least two people involved in the counting? Are funds deposited immediately in a night depository? Who makes the report to the treasurer?

- Categories of Funds: Do our accounts provide adequately for the type of fund accounting we need? The following categories should be considered:
 - Unrestricted (general operating budget) funds may be used for any purpose designated by the vestry.
 - Reserve funds set aside by the vestry for specific purposes, but subject to change by vestry action.
 - Restricted funds which donors have designated for specific purposes and which *must* be used for the designated purpose. Such funds may include contributions which the parish has raised with the assurance that they will be used only for a specific purpose (e.g. a building fund or a cemetery fund) and may include capital from which only the income is used.
 - Endowment funds in which a donor requires that principal is to be maintained (inviolable and in perpetuity) and only the income from investments used. (Such income may be restricted or unrestricted.)
- Savings accounts are often used for special or restricted funds. It is usually a good practice to transfer income to these accounts from a single "general fund" checking account as a "nonexpense disbursements" and "nonincome transfers." Are such accounts in the name of the church and not the name of the treasurer? Who may sign for withdrawals from these accounts? Are bank signature cards up to date with current signatories?
- Taxes—Although taxes will be primarily the responsibility of the treasurer or the accounting warden, all members of the vestry should be familiar with the general requirements if for no other reason, than to appreciate the amount of work required by the treasurer!
 - Congregations of the Episcopal Church are tax-exempt organizations which are organized and

operated exclusively for religious purposes, and are covered under a blanket exemption granted to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, Inc. (The Society). Most congregations, however, will have to report and pay employment taxes. This checklist is intended to bring some of these items to your attention, and it is not intended to be either comprehensive or legal or accounting advice. Confer with the appropriate professionals regarding your particular situation.

- Does your parish have an Employer Identification Number (EIN)? This is used to report employment taxes and give out tax statements to all employees. If not, use Internal Revenue Service Form SS-4, "Application for Employer Identification Number."
- Employee or Self-Employed?
 - Clergy are considered self-employed *for social security tax purposes*. They must, therefore, complete form 1040 SE return with their federal income taxes, and pay the self-employment tax. If they have exempted themselves from the Social Security system on the basis of conscientious objection to government-funded insurance, they may be excluded from this requirement.
 - *For income tax purposes*, most clergy are considered employees if they meet the "common law employee" adopted by the Treasury Department. The IRS provides a "20 Question" Common Law Employee Test. Benefits such as insurance, medical coverage, pensions, vacations, etc., cannot be provided tax free to self-employed persons.
 - Employees such as an organist, secretary, sexton, etc., are considered employees whether they work full time or only part time. They are therefore subject to both Social Security tax (if the employee earns more than \$100 per year) and income tax withholding even if their schedule is only part time. (Claimed exemptions may be high enough, or salary low enough as to eliminate this requirement, but this should be checked with IRS

Circular E, Publication 15, "Employers Tax Guide.") Note that Social Security tax is now paid as two separate items, "Social Security" and "Medicare."

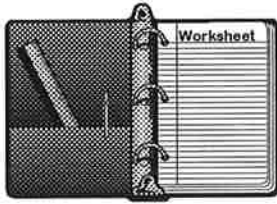
- Depositing withheld taxes: After you have applied for and received your EIN, you will be sent a "Federal Tax Deposit Coupon Book," Form 8109. These must be used to make deposits of the money withheld from employees for withholding tax and Social Security payments, as well as the congregation's share of the Social Security payments.
- Discretionary Funds
 - Has the parish established a discretionary fund? Canon III.14.2.f., noted above, *requires* the establishment of what is usually called "The Rector's Discretionary Fund," to be used for "pious and charitable uses...." This suggests that such funds are *not* intended for the business and professional expenses of the clergy, and such expenses should be funded elsewhere in the parish budget.
 - Is this fund used exclusively for gifts to the poor, charities, etc.?
 - Are business and professional expenses of the clergy provided elsewhere in the budget?
 - The canon continues that in the absence of a rector, "the Vestry shall appoint a responsible person to serve as Almoner," thus suggesting that such a fund should be the property of the parish, not the individual.
 - Is the fund in the name of the congregation?
 - Are checks signed by the rector (and other clergy if such funds are provided for) thus maintaining confidential records?
 - Gifts by individuals to the discretionary fund, or any other church fund, are tax deductible contributions for the individual giving the gift *if the fund is in the name of the congregation*. If the fund is in the name of an individual (e.g., the rector), such gifts are to the individual and are not tax deductible.
 - Are provisions made for an annual audit of this fund?

Although this must be done in such a way as to maintain confidentiality, this fund must be audited along with other parish funds.

- **Budgets**
 - Does the vestry prepare an annual budget? Is the budget prepared before or after the every member canvass? If before, what provision is made for a shortfall on pledge income?
 - Does the vestry as a whole participate in the preparation of a budget, not simply leaving it to the treasurer? While the treasurer may reasonably predict fixed expenses, the vestry as a whole should participate in overall management of the budget.
 - Are the persons in charge of various program areas encouraged to present budgets to the vestry? Good management practice suggests that such persons be encouraged to participate in budget preparation.
- **Stewardship/Every Member Canvass**
 - Although stewardship education is primarily the responsibility of the rector of a parish (according to Canon III.14.2.(b).), the vestry as a whole must consider this a major concern because income from pledges usually constitutes a major portion of the parish income for operating expenses. The vestry cannot prepare a responsible operating budget without an estimate of pledge income for the coming year.
 - When are pledges solicited each year? Does this occur early enough to allow the vestry time to prepare a budget after the results of the solicitation?
 - Who is in charge of the every member canvass? What kind of training is provided for persons doing the canvass? Do vestry members participate in the canvass? How are results evaluated? How are parishioners informed about parish financial needs?
 - How does the vestry deal with the oft heard complaint "the only time we hear from or are visited by the Church is when you want money?" (If true, it is a fair complaint!)
 - **Confidentiality**
 - It is usually a good idea to restrict the knowledge of the amount of each individual's or family's

pledge to as few persons as possible. Few of us can be entirely immune to allowing more "power" to attach itself to the opinions or voice of a major contributor.

- Records of contributions must be kept. New tax laws require written receipts for contributions in excess of \$250 per year. Who keeps such records? Treasurer? stewardship chairman? special "envelope" treasurer? Are quarterly or annual statements mailed to the persons making the pledge? The tax-receipt issue makes such statements far more important than a simple "dunning" letter.



Property Management Checklist

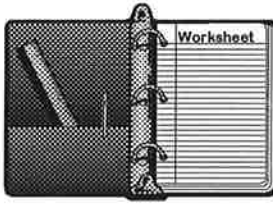
Notes

- How does the vestry assign property management functions? Is this the responsibility of one or both of the wardens? Is there a committee that oversees property management? Do the persons involved in property management have expertise, training or special abilities in this area?
- Insurance
 - Are all buildings (and their contents) owned by the congregation properly insured as required by the national canons?
 - Who maintains insurance records, where are they kept, who makes certain that these are kept up to date?
 - Who is the insurer? (Most Episcopal congregations use the Church Insurance Company.)
 - Who is responsible for filing claims?
- Building Maintenance
 - Who is responsible for building maintenance? How does this person know when something needs attention?
 - Are provisions made for long-term maintenance? How are these expenses funded? Is money set aside in a maintenance fund? The following are some examples, but all such maintenance expenses should be detailed for each building and kept up to date:
 - Painting exterior 4-6 years
 - Painting interior 5-7 years
 - Roofs 15-25 years
 - Furnishings
 - How does the parish contract for repairs and maintenance of buildings? Are bids received? Who selects the contractor? Who oversees the work? (Someone must usually be free during normal business hours to do this.)
 - What provisions are made for emergency repairs (plumbing, electrical, etc.)? Is a list posted of who to

- contact? Who authorizes emergency repairs?
 - Who is responsible for building upkeep and cleaning? If there is a sexton, who is responsible for overseeing the sexton's work? Who sets the "standards?"
 - Who is responsible for grounds maintenance? Has provision been made for snow removal during the winter? If this work is contracted, who authorizes payment?
- Building Rentals and Use of Buildings by Other Organizations
 - Most congregations permit some use of parish buildings for nonparish functions or meetings. How does your congregation decide who may use buildings and which buildings may be used? Who gives permission for the use of buildings (clergy, parish secretary, other)? Do you have written policies and procedures?
 - Does your liability insurance cover the use of buildings for noncongregational use?
 - Free use of buildings
 - Are groups such as AA or Boy or Girl Scouts permitted to use the buildings free of charge? What determines which groups are permitted free use of buildings? Is this a decision of the vestry as a whole or delegated to the clergy or property committee?
 - What responsibility does the user have for cleanup? Who is responsible for overseeing that standards are met?
 - Building Rentals
 - What groups or individuals are permitted to rent buildings? For what type of functions (for example, wedding receptions, group meetings, etc.) are buildings rented?
 - Is there an established fee schedule? Is the rate the same for parishioners and nonparishioners?
 - Who is responsible for cleanup after a function? Who oversees that standards are met?
 - Who agrees to the use of buildings? Is there a standard contract form which must be completed?
 - What effect, if any, will building rentals have on your tax-free status? What effect will such rentals

have on your liability insurance?

- If buildings are used for pre-school groups there may be special fire and safety requirements. Have these been investigated? Do your buildings meet these standards?
- Do you have established policies for alcohol use or smoking in buildings? If so, where may individuals smoke and what types of alcohol (beer, wine or spirits) may be used? Is this different for congregational functions as opposed to rentals?
- As a matter of record, two of the national canons restrict a vestry's use of buildings. These are noted below:
 - 1.7.3.: No Vestry... authorized by Civil or Canon law to hold, manage, or administer real property for any Parish, Mission, Congregation, or Institution, shall encumber or alienate the same or any part thereof without the written consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Diocese... except under such regulations as may be prescribed by the Canons of the Diocese.
 - 1.7.4.: All real and personal property held by or for the benefit of any Parish, Mission or Congregation is held in trust for this Church and the Diocese thereof in which ...[it] is a part, except under such regulations as may be prescribed by Canon of the Diocese.



Personnel Management Checklist

Notes

- Clergy
 - Although clergy may be treated as employees for purposes of income-tax withholding, they are not usually thought of as employees of the vestry, but rather as sharing a ministry with the vestry. Nevertheless, there are many elements of good personnel management which the vestry must consider with respect to clergy.
 - Financial Matters
 - Salary or Stipends
 - Is there a diocesan minimum salary? Is the diocesan minimum met or exceeded? What is the basis for determining salary increases? Is there an annual review of compensation? Who on the vestry is responsible for this (committee or the vestry as a whole)? Is this in some way related to performance, and if so, how is performance evaluated?
 - Housing or Housing Allowance
 - Housing, including furnishings and utilities, is a major benefit for clergy, as it is not subject to federal taxation as ordinary income.
 - Rectory provided by parish
 - Are all utilities paid by parish? Does this include the telephone? Does the parish or the member of the clergy pay for personal long-distance calls? How is this determined?
 - What provisions are made for repairs and maintenance of the rectory? Is there an update schedule for major appliances and for painting and decorating?
 - Is the rectory used for parish activities other than at the specific invitation of the rector and her or his family?
 - Housing Allowance (when no rectory is provided)

- How is the amount of the housing allowance determined? What is included—mortgage or rent, maintenance, furnishings? Are utilities paid separately or as part of the housing allowance?
 - If there are diocesan standards, does the congregation's housing allowance meet those standards?
- Pension Fund Payments (the amount, established by the Pension Fund, is based on salary and housing)
- Business Expenses
 - Does the parish provide an auto allowance for the use of a privately owned vehicle? Is this based on mileage, or a fixed amount? If the latter, clergy should still keep track of mileage, as income from an allowance which exceeds expense is taxable.
 - Are provisions made for other business expenses, such as professional books and magazines? If the clergy represent the parish by involvement in community groups, are these expenses reimbursed (lunches, memberships, etc.)? If the clergy are expected to entertain on behalf of the parish, are these expenses reimbursed? Are expense reports required and filed, thus protecting the clergy on income tax questions?
 - Is there a continuing education allowance? Does the vestry encourage continuing education with suggestions, ideas and time, or is this simply left to the clergy? Is this reviewed annually as a part of the compensation review?
- Discretionary Fund: See financial management checklist.
- Time of work
 - Do the vestry and clergy have a clear understanding about clergy work schedules? Are there "posted" office hours? Is there a clear understanding about time off, and is this time preserved solely for personal and family use

(except for emergencies)? Do parishioners understand which days constitute the clergy's personal time? Is there some common understanding of what constitutes an emergency (for example, are clergy to be called about an overflowing toilet in the parish house)? What is the understanding about holidays?

- What provisions are made for annual vacation? Who is responsible for arranging parish leadership and supply clergy during vacation periods?
- Are there clear understandings about continuing education time and sabbatical leave? How much is provided for each of these? How are the associated costs covered?
- Job Descriptions/Convenants/Letters of Agreement
It is common today for rector and vestry of many parishes to clarify and formalize such matters as those noted above in the form of a job description, covenants or letter of agreement.
- Lay Employees
 - Financial matters: How are salaries determined? Who is responsible for reviewing salaries? Is the position part time or full time? Who reviews performance and makes recommendations for salary adjustments? Is this done annually? Are health insurance and pension fund payments provided?⁶ Has provision been made for vacation time and sick leave? What are the vestry's policies on this (policy should be determined in advance and not "when the need arises.")?
 - Supervision: Who provides supervision for the employee? Is this someone who sees their work on a regular and ongoing basis? If supervision is not provided by the rector or a member of the vestry, how will the vestry receive this information?
 - Is there a letter of agreement or a job description for the position? Has this been prepared by the vestry, and has the person who will be supervising the

⁶ A resolution of General convention mandates that lay pensions be provided to all lay employees 21 years of age or older who work a minimum of 1,000 hours annually and have at least one year of service. According to *callings*, a national news-link for lay professionals in the Episcopal Church, Summer, 1996, almost 6,000 lay employees are now covered.

employee been a part of preparing this letter or job description?

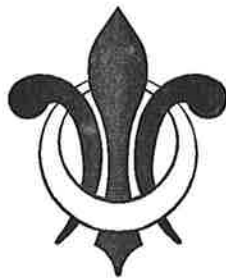
- What provisions have been made for termination of employment? Is it anticipated or required that the employee should resign if the rector leaves the parish? Is this understood by the employee? (This policy, "standard practice" in some congregations or dioceses for many years, is presently being questioned by lay professionals in the Church.)

Volunteers

- How are volunteers selected for positions? Who makes the decision? Who asks the person?
- Are there job descriptions for most or all volunteer positions? Are there stated expectations for how long someone will serve in the position? How is the person's ministry evaluated? Who is responsible for asking volunteers to leave a position if problems occurs (burn out, misconduct, ineffectiveness, etc.).
- How are volunteers trained? supported? affirmed? thanked?

Electing and Organizing the Vestry

**Nominations and Elections
The Annual Meeting
Orientation of New Members
Officers of the Vestry
Committees and Ministry Groups**



Servants Called to Leadership

Electing and Organizing the Vestry

In most cases the members of vestry, mission/bishop's committee or other governing group, no matter what it's name, will be selected in the same manner—they will be elected by the congregation. Again, there is great variation on how this is done, but it usually occurs at the annual meeting and there are some general principles that apply to most congregations.

Election of New Members

The national canons place no restrictions on how the wardens and members of the vestry are to be elected, their terms of office, their eligibility for re-election or even the number of persons who should serve as vestry members. Unless these are specified by diocesan canons (and in many cases, diocesan canons do so specify) or state law, the vestry itself is free to make such provisions in parish by-laws. In keeping with the democratic and representative principles on which the Episcopal Church was founded, most parish vestries are elected by the parish as a whole, usually at the annual meeting, and serve for limited terms of office.

Mission or bishop's committees are either appointed by the bishop upon recommendation of the vicar or, more commonly, are elected by the congregation at an annual meeting which, while it may not have the legal obligations of a parish annual meeting,

may function in much the same manner. In some dioceses the annual meeting is held during the bishop's visitation and is part of the bishop's oversight of the mission.

Most state laws and/or congregational by-laws governing parishes require that

- notice for the annual meeting must be given (often for two Sundays prior to the day of the meeting)
- the rector is the presiding officer; or in the absence of a rector one of the church wardens elected for that purpose by a majority of the duly qualified voters present
- persons of eighteen years of age or more who have been baptized, are regular attendants at worship, and contribute to the support of the congregation for at least twelve months prior to the election are qualified to vote (the age requirement may range from sixteen, if legal in that state, to twenty-one)
- the polls need to be open for one hour or longer
- a majority vote is needed to pass any matter
- some may designate terms of offices for the officers and vestry members

Beyond the legal obligations the annual meeting is also an important time to re-affirm the partnership in ministry between the elected leadership and the congregation. Most successful

annual meetings do the following:

- Present and vote on choices for vestry membership
 - the nominating committee does its work of reviewing potential leadership for the vestry and puts together a slate of persons with leadership skills and/or other specific skills that are needed on the leadership team and that to represent the diverse backgrounds and opinions within the congregation or
 - the members of the congregation identifies and nominates prospective members and the vestry, a subgroup of the vestry or a group appointed by the vestry prepares a list of persons to stand for election
- Clearly communicate what is happening in the congregation in a way that invites involvement
 - When people make reports about activities and programs they share their own enthusiasm and celebrate the contributions of whomever else was involved
 - Instead of reading reports, they hand out a written statement and talk about the most interesting highlights
- Hear opinions and concerns about what has happened in the congregation over the past year by:
 - having a short response and question period at the end of each report
 - having a free-style forum after

the reports

- forming small groups with continuing vestry members convening each small group and gathering input for later discussion by the vestry
- Help people to understand the administrative and financial needs of the congregation and each member's role in supporting the congregation.
- Accomplish all of the above in two hours!

Many congregations use the annual meeting as a time to build community. A meal may be included with fun events for children during the meeting portion. A "ministry fair" might be included with every organization, project and group in the congregation hosting a booth describing their ministry and inviting others to join. Presentations may include more lighthearted offerings such as entertainment by the choir, youth group or children. Some congregations use annual meeting day as a time to visit each other in homes or include a social event such as spending the afternoon at a local park. Small congregations may choose to use the annual meeting as a planning time, inviting the entire congregation into a process of setting goals or making program choices for the next year. Annual meetings have certain legal and formal obligations that must be met. But they are not restricted to those obligations. Creativity and imagination can make an annual meeting effective and enjoyable.

Size of the Vestry

There is no standard number for vestry membership. The Vestry should not be so small as to limit the number of persons who provide parish leadership to a mere handful, nor so large as to become unwieldy and constitute a mini parish meeting. Nine to fifteen members, including the wardens is typical of the size of most vestries throughout the Church. In planning the size of the vestry, it may be helpful to remember that eight to ten is an ideal small group size. This size enables maximum participation and ease in decision making. Larger congregations may desire broader representation and choose to do preparatory work in subgroups which will foster the same type of dialog as is possible in a smaller group. This serves two functions: to spread leadership among a larger group and to provide a training ground on the committees for potential vestry members.

Terms of Office

The term of office of Vestry members, if not specified by diocesan canons or state law, may be determined by the parish by-laws. Although all members of the Vestry could be elected each year (or each alternate year as is done with the US House of Representatives,) it does, perhaps, make better sense to stagger the elections as is done with the Senate. If, for example, the term of office is three years, one-third of the Vestry could be elected each year. This ensures a regular influx on new

members while keeping an experience base in place. On the other hand, some congregations have found that the constant change in group dynamics makes it difficult for the vestry to work effectively as a team and thus have moved to electing the new members every other year (this may require a change in by-laws or other legal documents). When a vacancy occurs it is either filled by the vestry or at the next annual meeting depending on the by-laws of the local congregation or the diocesan canons

Whether or not Wardens and Vestry Members are eligible for re-election after serving one or more terms of office may be determined by parish by-laws if not specified by diocesan canons or state law. To prevent burn-out and expand the leadership base, it is advisable that vestry members serve only two consecutive terms and wardens serve only three terms before taking some "time off."

Vestry Leaders

The national canons (I.14.3) stipulate that the **Presiding Officer** of the vestry is the rector or a member of the vestry designated by the rector (except in states or dioceses that have laws to the contrary). The role of the Presiding Officer is to conduct the meetings and serve as a communication link by informing the vestry about diocesan and national church issues, concerns, and events.

Most parishes have two **Wardens**, thus

preserving a tradition in the Church of England which dates back to 1604, in which two *churchwardens* (one word) were selected by the rector and the parishioners, or, if they failed to agree, one was appointed by the rector and the other by the people. National canons assign only one duty to the wardens (as distinct from other members of the vestry): if, because of absence or disability, the member of the clergy in charge of a congregation is unable to give consent to another member of the clergy to officiate at "the stated services of the congregation," one of the wardens may give this consent (Canon III.14.4).

The commonly used terms of "senior" warden and "junior" warden are not mentioned in the canons. Traditionally the title senior warden has been used to designate the member of the vestry who can convene and chair vestry meetings when there is no rector. Often the junior warden has a particular responsibility for the church buildings. Other titles such as rector's warden and people's warden (harking back to tradition in the Church of England) are sometimes used. Some parishes make use of the title "accounting warden," perhaps in acknowledgment of the unusually heavy burden which may fall upon the parish treasurer.

What wardens do is defined more by the traditions and particular needs of the congregation. In many congregation the senior warden serves as an advisor to the rector and takes

special care for the personal well-being of the rector and his or her family. Sometimes this role is taken by both wardens. The rector and wardens may meet weekly to discuss concerns and plan events. These meetings can serve as a support group for rector and wardens. When the congregation does not have a rector, the wardens function as the communication link with the Diocese, preside at the vestry meetings, make provisions for Sunday worship, are responsible for the administration and direction of the parish properties, act as custodians of the parish registers and records, and convene the vestry meetings.

Each vestry has also a **Treasurer** and a **Secretary or Clerk**. Both of these positions are not necessarily elected vestry members. In fact, in order to preclude conflicts of interest and to involve more people in the leadership circle, many vestries choose these officers from other members of the congregation. The **Treasurer** deposits and disburses the funds and oversees the record keeping for all of the congregation's financial transactions. This person and all others who handle more than \$500 at one time must be bonded. The **Secretary** keeps and publishes the minutes from each vestry meeting. The minutes can be a list of all the topics discussed and decisions made, or a summary narrative of what occurred at the meeting. Also, the Secretary gives notice to the congregation of all annual elections and special meetings and keeps all the documents and records of the vestry.

Some vestries have also an **Executive Committee** made up of the rector and wardens and possibly the treasurer and committee chairs. The executive committee meets between vestry meetings to oversee the actions called for by previous meetings and to plan the agenda for the coming meeting.

Unless diocesan canons or parish by-laws assign specific duties, a vestry is free to prepare job descriptions for the offices of warden, secretary or clerk, treasurer or any other officers and to incorporate these into the by-laws.

Committees

Many vestry meetings go on for hours because the vestry discusses an issue as a committee of the whole. A more effective method is to have vestry committees which conduct the detailed discussion of a topic and then present a written report to the vestry with recommended actions. The reports could have the following outline:

- First Page
 - Name of committee
 - List of the members
 - The issues/topics discussed
 - Action recommended to vestry or action taken by committee for vestry information
- Succeeding Pages (if any)
 - Background information that will be helpful for understanding a proposed decision

- Charts, graphs, statistical data
- An outline of the pros and cons identified by the committee
- A more detailed report of the committee's activities

Depending upon the size of the congregation and the potential leadership, the vestry could choose a variety of ways to organize itself.

1. A small congregation can have two standing committees: Buildings and Grounds, Planning and Budget (or Finance Committee); then form ad hoc and temporary task forces, study groups, or committees as needed. The chair of each standing committee would be a vestry member chosen by the Rector and Wardens. The membership of the standing committees and the ad hoc groups could be made up of vestry members and other members of the congregation chosen by the chair in consultation with the Rector and Wardens.
2. Small to mid-size congregations with at least two to three ongoing ministries or programs may have standing committees for Buildings and Grounds, Planning and Budget (or Finance Committee), and a ministry oversight committee or one for each of the ministry areas that have been identified as important focuses for the congregation (e.g. Christian education, evangelism, fellowship, social action, etc.). The chair and members of these committees would be chosen as

outlined above. There would also be ad hoc groups, and the membership of the committees and ad hoc groups would be both vestry and other members of the congregation who are working in that area.

3. Mid-size to large congregations with multiple short and long term programs may have the two standing committees for Buildings and Grounds, Planning and Budget, and ad hoc groups whose membership is both vestry and other members of the congregation. Chair and membership would be chosen as above. There would most likely be committees for important aspects of the congregation's life: Christian Education, Fellowship, Evangelism, Social Action, etc. Their membership is primarily the people who are working in that area. The chairs of these committees meet on a regular basis with each other and at least one vestry member to coordinate their work. This group of committee chairs is sometimes called the parish or program council. The vestry member(s) who is part of that group acts as the communication link with the vestry.

Ministry Groups

Many congregations are replacing committees with ministry groups. While some may function in the same areas of responsibility, the name change signals a different expectation.

Ministry groups seek to engage people with a commitment to a specific ministry within or outside of the church in a common mission. Ministry groups often provide group members with training and support in their ministry area. Their meetings may include Bible study, book discussions, speakers, prayer, discussions of ministry experience as well as more traditional "committee tasks." While they may plan and implement programs and events, they generally are more focused on the exercise of a specific ministry rather than a specific event.

A vestry seeking to organize itself in ministry groups might choose the following:

1. A small congregation might have a Stewardship Ministry Group which focused on developing the congregation's stewardship of its personal and corporate resources. This group could be responsible for the traditional items of buildings, grounds, budgeting and planning as well as year-round stewardship education for all ages and ministry discernment for all members. This combines time, talent and treasure in one group, setting it within a ministry context. A second group might be the Discipleship Ministry Group responsible for fostering whatever the congregation does that develops people as disciples of Christ.
2. A small to mid-sized congregation might have a Stewardship Ministry

Group along with several others that focus on key areas. A Christian Formation Team would look at the faith development of all members. A Worship Ministry Team comprised of lay readers, altar guild members, acolytes, choir members, etc. and a Pastoral Care Team comprised of lay eucharistic ministers, prayer group members and visitation teams might be included. An Apostolic Ministry Team might support people in their ministries in their daily lives and be the focus for community ministries.

3. A larger congregation might divide into smaller ministry groups. So, for example, the Music Ministry Team might form a sub-group of the Worship Ministry Team and there might be a Lay Eucharistic Ministers Team. The life and work of these ministry teams not only have to be coordinated, much as with traditional committees, but they need to have general oversight and support. Because much of the work of Christian formation and skill development is done in the ministry groups traditional education, especially for adults, may supplemented by helping people grow as Christians within these ministry groups. This means that those involved in Christian formation need to know about and support what is happening in the ministry groups, perhaps assisting in identifying resources, training ministry group leaders in how to create a learning environment, etc.

While ministry groups may, on the surface, look like committees they are not. The clergy, vestry and ministry teams need to discuss the concept and seek to find ways to broaden the scope of what the teams do vs. traditional committees. Also, there is a great deal of overlap between groups that requires a great deal of engagement between the groups. The organizational chart for these teams would look more like a series of interlocking circles rather than the standard pyramid. Functioning in this environment requires different skills and considerable patience as everyone learns new ways of doing things. It can, however, be very rewarding, especially for congregations who seek to move from a focus on running programs to a focus on developing people to be faithful Christians.

Recruiting Additional Leaders

Vestry members often lead or participate in the process of identifying and recruiting other member of the congregation who might be involved in a specific task. Most of the time this process begins (and frequently ends) with asking those who have done the work before to do it again or perhaps making an announcement or two soliciting volunteers. While this is a common method of recruitment, it is one of the least effective and can contribute to significant difficulties.

Recycling former job holders tends to keep the work in the hands of the few.

These people eventually “wear out” and may even leave the parish to escape being asked to do more. It is important to allow, even encourage, people to say “no” and to avoid assuming that they will do the job again, simply because they have done it before.

Randomly asking for volunteers creates other difficulties. You may find that those who volunteer are ill-suited for the task. Since you asked for volunteers it is very difficult to turn down an offer of assistance, especially if there are few who volunteer. In addition, an open invitation to volunteer for jobs implies that specific skills, experience or knowledge are not needed or important. In essence what you are saying is “we need someone, anyone, to do this job.” This might be fine when almost anyone can, in fact, do the job (IE. we need folks to stack the chairs after the church supper). But when the task is more complicated this kind of general call for volunteers devalues the job and the person who ultimately does it.

We often use these methods of recruitment because they are traditional without considering the consequences. It is preferable to see most of the work that is done under auspices of the congregation as being ministries and the task of the congregational leaders to call people into their ministry. This requires a process of spiritual discernment rather than recruitment of volunteers. While job descriptions can still be posted the

process of spiritual discernment relies on a disciplined time of prayer and seeking. The rector, vestry members and/or other congregational leaders meet to discuss the gifts, skills and experience needed to do the job. They prayerfully read through the parish list *but do not select anyone at this time*. They then convene for a period of time (e.g. a week), covenanting to pray daily for God’s guidance. At the next meeting they review their prior work on what is needed and again consider the members of the congregation. Now names are suggested and, depending on the clarity of the decision, selected. If necessary, the group may take another week of prayer before selecting who will be invited to consider each ministry position.

When the list has been finalized, the rector and/or other members of the group arrange to meet *personally* with each person, describe the ministry position and explain why they are being asked to take up this ministry on behalf of the congregation. The person is then invited *not to respond* but rather to join the team in a period of prayer to consider if they believe God is calling them to this ministry. Do not accept a “yes” or “no” answer at this meeting. Return a week or so later and ask for the person’s response. Accept whatever response is given without trying to persuade the person otherwise. Rather, if the answer is “no,” discuss what ministry the person feels they are called to do in the church, home, work or community and pray for God’s love and power to work

through that person in that ministry.

This process of spiritual discernment honors the person and communicates that the congregation and its members seek to offer their best to God. It also openly and actively engages God in the process. And it gives people a chance

**Calling people to ministry
requires a process of
spiritual discernment rather
than recruiting volunteers
to do a job.**

to respond to a call without feeling pressured. The discernment team's job is to initiate a process of discernment, not convince people to do a job. If the team can not find anyone to do a specific task, it is time to step back and see if God is calling the congregation to refocus or reshape that ministry, it or eliminate it and focus on other ministries. Persuading someone to do something merely because you have always had someone doing that job may obscure God's leading you to new and vital ministries. And you may be surprised—when you stop doing some things, there is a subtle shift in the congregation that can generate all kinds of wonderful new directions, engage new people, uncover new gifts and skills that were previously hidden. Seek God's leading, invite people into ministry and don't worry if you need to leave a job unfilled!

Orientation of New Members

Being elected to serve on a vestry, mission or bishop's committee or any governing body of the Church is an important responsibility. Often we assume that those elected will simply join the group and "catch on" as they go along. While this may be true, the lack of an orientation time makes it more difficult for new members to participate quickly and easily and it hampers the effective exercise of their ministry. So both they and the group loses.

A easy way to remedy this situation is to plan an orientation session for new members as soon as possible after the election. It is usually best to have the clergy with the warden(s) and/or one or two vestry members lead the sessions, perhaps with the assistance of a skilled group facilitator. Many of the materials in this resource are designed to help with planning and implementing orientation process for newly elected members. Use those that best fit your situation. At a minimum, we recommend that you ask new members to read and discuss:

- Elected Congregational Leaders: Roles and Responsibilities (including a copy of the canons)
- Mission of the church and purpose of the congregation
- Fostering discipleship and apostleship in the congregation

These will give a new person an basic overview of the work of the vestry or the mission/bishop's committee. It

would also be helpful to review how your group is organized (who does what), how your meetings are conducted and what schedule you will follow for the next year (regular meetings, retreats and special meetings). For an initial meeting of 1-2 hours, this is probably about as much as anyone can absorb.

It would be helpful to distribute copies of the last year's minutes, budget and treasurer's reports, the congregation's by-laws, an organizational chart, a copy of the reports given at the last annual meeting and any other documentation that would help orient a new member. If you use a specific decision-making process, you may want to include instructions for that (e.g. Robert's Rules of Order for formal voting or Consensus Decision-making). Also, give a copy of any written norms your group uses or, if they are not written, ask the current members to generate a list. Invite them to list the open, stated norms and then encourage them to identify the "hidden" norms that exist in every group (those "rules" we all abide by even though they are never stated).

A follow up session held one or two months after the new member's first couple of meetings will allow them an opportunity to ask questions and explore concerns. This might be an informal discussion and could be a good time to talk about which committees or task groups the new members might join. Take time to discuss each person's gifts, skills and

prior experience (in church and in other aspects of life) as well as their interests before you decide who will do what. Remember to seek God's guidance as well. It is easy to simply look at the empty slots and ask for volunteers. But it is more effective to identify the job requirements and each person's skills first. Then look at the entire group and decide who is best suited to each task and whom God may be calling to do it. Whenever new members join a group, the group changes. So do not assume that what was best for the group last year is necessarily how it must be done this year. Look carefully at what needs to be done, *what can be eliminated* (probably the most difficult task) and who is available to do the task. Also, remember that many tasks can be delegated to others outside of the vestry or mission/bishop's committee. If the skills needed to do the work are not available in the vestry, a member of the vestry can serve as a "liaison" to a task group led by someone else in the congregation. That goal is establish a way that best utilizes peoples gifts and skills and best enables the congregation's ministry to be carried out.

A part of the orientation process might include establishing a mentor relationship with an continuing member or even with someone who recently has retired from the vestry or mission/bishop's committee. This enables a one-on-one relationship to develop that can support a new member during the first few months.

An integral part of that mentor relationship is prayer support. Praying for each other as we exercise the ministry of leadership in the congregation is an important part of this ministry.



Discussion Guide

The following questions and suggestions are provided to assist you in discussing the material in this chapter. You could take the first fifteen minutes of each vestry or mission/bishop's committee meeting to explore one area or you might schedule a more informal discussion over coffee and donuts after worship one Sunday a month. Another way to use this material is during the annual retreat (see sample design). Or you might pull out a section whenever a specific occasion seems to warrant it.

Electing and Organizing the Vestry

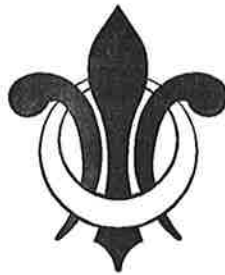
- Does our election process conform to the state laws, diocesan canons and our bylaws?
- Is the size and terms of office currently used still the best for us?
- Is the current way of organizing vestry leadership still the best for us? (That is, who conducts the meetings, roles of wardens, secretary, treasurer, presence or absence of executive group, interim planning meetings, etc.)
- What would we like to accomplish at our annual meeting? How might

we improve it?

- How do we orient new members? How might we improve our orientation process?
- What is our understanding of the difference between committees and ministry groups and what is the best way for us to structure ourselves?
- How does our congregation's size and composition effect this decision?
- How does our structure inhibit or facilitate our ability to carry out the mission of the church and of this congregation?
- How do we recruit people for various roles in the congregation? What does our process communicate to people? Is it effective? How is God made an active participant in it?

Discipleship and Apostleship

**Helping the Congregation
and It's Members
Live the Faith**



Servants Called to Leadership

Discipleship and Apostleship

Many people view the vestry, mission committee or governing body as just the business side of the Church—"The vestry is where they deal with the yearly budget or whether to repair the roof this year or next." While the vestry meetings is where many business decisions are made, the key work of the Vestry and Rector in making administrative and business decisions is to hold the congregation in trust. This means acting in what they believe are the best interests of the congregation. It also means acting with awareness of the witnesses who have gone before, the witness of the current members, and those in the future who will be affected by what is decided. As the Vestry and Rector engage in active and disciplined spiritual deepening, they can become more aware of how to hold the congregation in trust.

A Vestry or Mission Committee is a part of the mission of the Church. Being a member of the congregation's governing board is a ministry in that mission. Carrying out the ministry of serving on the Vestry deepens one's spiritual journey and sense of discipleship. It is as Jesus says in Matthew, to "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). In the Jewish world view perfection means fidelity to a relationship, particularly being faithful to God's relationship with us. That relationship is not a completed ideal but a lively interaction characterized by love, mutuality, intimacy, challenges

and change. To be perfect as God is perfect means we remain faithful, aware, attentive and responsive to God's presence in the events in our lives.

A relationship is rarely static. There are times when we feel close or apart, times when we experience tension or great comfort. Throughout our lives God maintains the covenantal relationship that calls us forward to be disciples of love, righteousness and justice. We become more aware of God's call to us as we reflect upon this relationship during our spiritual journey. When vestry or mission/bishop's committee members strive individually and as a group to be perfect—to be true to their relationship with God—they can have a profound influence on the spiritual life of the whole congregation. What people learn most from each other is the inner work each is doing.

There are many ways to do the inner work of reflecting on spiritual journeys and discerning discipleship as a congregational leadership team and as individual leaders. Congregational leaders can:

- Begin the meeting with a short worship service or Bible study
- Use Quaker-style silence at the beginning and at various decision points in the meeting. After an agreed-upon period of silence, people can individually talk about

any ideas, feelings, or concerns that occurred to them without commenting or questioning what others say. People's statements can be written on newsprint and posted as a reference point for the meeting or as the issues to be discussed before a decision can be made.

- Do a "check-in" at the beginning of the meeting. Each person has an opportunity to briefly say what has been a holy or troubling moment for them since they last met.
- At the beginning of each meeting one or two members describe key events that have shaped them and led to their current involvement in the Church. Continue this process in succeeding meetings until everyone has had an opportunity to speak. The process could be repeated giving people the chance to talk about other events.
- After an opening Bible study or worship service, each group member briefly answers: What motivates you to be at this meeting? What do you feel called to do at this meeting?
- Before an annual planning workshop or when the group is re-examining its objectives for the coming year, members spend a month choosing each day one image of suffering from the newspaper or from their daily encounters. They can meditate on the image in the following way:
 - Try to imagine yourself as that person and be in touch with what you suppose they are experiencing.

- In the midst of being the person, let God's presence come in. Be open to whatever happens.
- Step back from the person and ask yourself:
 - What is God calling me to do?
 - What is God calling us as a congregation to do?
- At the end of the month, the Vestry members can talk about what it was like for them to do this meditative practice and discuss what they think the congregation is called to do.
- When a highly contentious issue or an important decision is to be made, the vestry, mission committee or governing board could use the following process as a way to be open to God.
 - Begin with silence.
 - One person speaks for a set time limit and cannot speak again until all those who want to speak have had an opportunity to do so.
 - After each person speaks there is a period of at least thirty seconds of silence for people to take in what was said.
 - After everyone has spoken there is again a period of silence during which people reflect on: What is God calling us to do?
 - Again each person has a chance to speak.
 - After every one has spoken who cares to do so, there is an open discussion leading to a decision about what are the Vestry's next

steps.

- The governing board goes on a spiritual retreat rather than a workshop. The focus of a workshop is on the functioning of the group and making plans for the coming year. The spiritual retreat is an opportunity for prayer, meditation, discussion of personal issues and Bible study.
- Most congregations require that vestry or mission committee members be present at the Sunday services and at as many of the other services as possible.

Individually, vestry members can support one another by praying for each other, inquiring in times of ill health and crisis, encouraging the best use of their individual talents, and assisting one another in learning new skills and taking risks. A number of rectors strongly suggest that vestry members have a spiritual director or be in a group whose intent is spiritual nurture and direction. These groups range from informal prayer and Bible reflection groups to curriculum-based processes. In turn the Vestry can provide time and money for the rector to make a spiritual retreat at least once a year. Having jurisdiction over the spiritual life of the congregation, rectors need to care for their own spiritual life so that they can provide the best possible spiritual assistance.

Fostering discipleship and apostleship in the congregation

Just as the vestry, mission committee or

governing board needs to foster their own inner work so that they can be of help to others, with the Rector's direction they have the role of fostering the spiritual development and discipleship of the congregation. They do this both through the programs they help set up and through the manner in which they oversee these programs.

The Rector is responsible for the spiritual life and education of the congregation. In practice this is accomplished through a partnership with the Vestry and other congregational leaders. That partnership includes assuring that people are able and committed to carrying out the Baptismal Covenant by continuing in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, persevering in resisting evil, proclaiming by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, seeking and serving Christ in all persons, and striving for justice and peace among all people.

Within this partnership there are decisions to be made about worship, education, pastoral care, stewardship, evangelism, and community service. In order to make their decisions the Vestry can ponder the following questions as a way to foster the most appropriate ministries for the congregation:

- How did I learn the Christian story?
 - As a child?
 - As an adolescent?
 - As an adult?

- What was most important to me at each of those ages that contributed to my spiritual growth?
- How did my spiritual journey affect my career choices, the values I hold, my relationships with others, my relationship with the Church and the church activities I become involved in?
- How has this congregation fostered my spiritual journey and nurtured me in identifying and carrying out a ministry?

The following three questions can be asked, taking a different age group as the focal point each successive time, or in specially formed focus groups:

- How are (children), (youth), (adults) learning the Christian story today?
- What are the challenges to their faith?
- What support do they need to face those challenges?

Finally ask:

- What do the answers to all those questions say about how we involve people in learning the Christian story, how we foster their spiritual journey, and how we support them in finding and carrying out their ministry?

Based upon their answers to these questions, the vestry mission committee or governing board and the Rector can then begin to re-examine what they are doing in each of the

ministry areas in the congregation.

Worship

Under the canons of the Church, the rector is responsible for all worship and use of the building (Title III, 14, 1 a, c). There are a variety of ways the rector can involve the congregation in the decision and oversight of worship ministries. The Rector could establish a worship committee, team or ministry group. Or members of established groups such as the altar guild and lay readers could work as a liturgical team. In small congregations, the vestry or mission committee might be directly involved in worship decisions. In large congregations, the responsibility for oversight of the congregation's worship might be delegated to a clergy person, musicians and other paid professionals.

The functions that a team assisting the rector might fulfill include:

- Help recruit, train, schedule and oversee the acolytes, lectors, ushers, altar guild and other lay servers at the service.
- Be a group the Rector could explore the Sunday lessons with before preparing the sermon.
- Serve as a group the Rector can use to explore ideas about possible changes and additions in the worship services.
- Help coordinate and arrange the Christmas, Easter and other special services.
- Prepare the Sunday bulletin.
- Prepare the altar, arrange flowers,

- clean and repair vessels and linens (usually done by a subgroup or groups called the altar guild, flower guild or altar ministry team).
- Help decide on acquisitions for use in worship or in the sanctuary.
 - Help plan and officiate at Morning or Evening Prayer.
 - Help locate officiants when the Rector is unavailable for services.

Christian Formation

Congregations need to be learning communities as well as teaching communities. A learning congregation listens to both the affirming and challenging voices in its midst and in the larger society and provides a process for theological reflection and interpretation. A reflection process can begin with hearing the voices of those who cry out for justice and to those who challenge the community's traditions and assumptions with other values and insights. The process continues with acknowledging the tension between the accepted understandings of truth, God and social relationships. Interpretation involves asking how those understandings need to change, how those understandings may provide some insight into what is happening and how to act faithfully in response to calls for justice. A learning congregation is open to and eager to learn from its own positive and negative experience and from others. It seeks to discern God's presence in the midst of what is rewarding and what is painful, from good and evil, from success and failure, from the traditional

and what is new.

There are two primary modes of approaching Christian Education. One focuses on *information*, the other on *formation* (or, some would say, *transformation*). In the past, most congregations focused on providing children and adults with information. Today, many congregations recognize that changes in their communities require them to focus more on formation. For this reason, the use of the term "Christian Formation" has begun to replace Christian Education. While the name is not really important, this change reflects a change in what congregations seek to achieve in this arena.

Congregations can provide information about the Bible, the faith, the Church and the norms that govern Christian living. This is the task of informational-based education—helping members obtain information that enables them to make informed decisions. Information-based education is most effective in a cultural context in which members' values, world view and assumptions are shaped by their families, school and general life experience and they only need to learn factual information to round out their learning.

Congregations also can provide an identity, history, a way to bond together and a moral home. This is its task of formation—helping those who choose to be members develop into mature participants who act from a

shared sense of mission and purpose. Through word, sacrament, and actions the members of the community engage each other's moral imagination, help shape a general orientation to a moral life, and instill values that influence their relationships with one another. In a world that is increasingly secular, many congregations are seeking ways to nurture the faith development of their members that goes far beyond giving information.

Building an effective Christian formation process in the congregation includes considering:

- What are the basic beliefs and core values of the Christian community and how will we create an environment in which our members can "catch" them and make them their own?
- How will we create an environment in which people will consistently encounter the risen Christ and be transformed by him?
- Will there be a program with age groupings, mixed aged groups, or will the congregation attempt to convey the Christian story and heritage through the worship services, small groups, special events, etc.?
- If we will have a structured program, do we want to create our own curriculum or purchase one of the curriculums or educational guides that are available?
- How involved will the children in the education program be in the Sunday morning worship?
- What kind of orientation and training do we want to provide teachers and group leaders?
- What kind of ongoing support and opportunities for continued learning do we want to provide the teachers and group leaders?
- How will we develop a way to integrate what happens in education programs, worship, ministry groups, fellowship events, social action activities, etc.
- In adult programs, why do people attend and what can be offered to satisfy the variety of desires people bring to a program? The following is not a complete list but an attempt to capture some of what people look for in education programs. Very often people are seeking a combination, though one or the other is what attracts them to participate:
 - They want to learn a little about a lot of things and prefer a *smorgasbord* of offerings with minimum commitment. Six to eight sessions of 45–50 minutes on Sunday morning is often the model used to meet this need.
 - They want to get to know other people and to form a supportive relationship; they are less concerned with the content than with *fellowship* with a small group of people on a continual basis. Small-group Bible study, prayer groups and home groups meet this need.
 - They want to *study* a topic in depth. Long-term study programs, curriculums that

address a topic or book discussion groups meet this need.

- They want help with a *personal concern*; they seek to find God in what is happening in their lives and are looking for help in understanding a crisis. Small groups are best at meeting this need, especially if they are focused on particular issues or concerns and provide practical help as well as support.
- They want a way to organize and use their energy and talents; they are looking for ways to identify and develop a *ministry*. Ministry discernment programs, courses on spiritual gifts, or work with a spiritual director or spiritual friend address this need.
- They want to find a way to work through the Church on a particular *social issue*. Topical study groups or action groups with a study component meet this need.
- And in all cases, how will we know if we are actually accomplishing what we set out to do?

Finally, there is the matter of providing a process of Christian formation for the congregation's leadership. Obviously, much of that will occur when the leaders join in both teaching and learning along with the rest of the congregation. And when you spend time answering the questions about how you learned the Christian story, you most likely will discover that many

of the seemingly mundane interactions in the Church have a profound effect. With that in mind you can decide if you want to sponsor special sessions on Christian listening and Christian negotiation, conducting effective and spiritually based meetings, or discerning other skills that will help you consciously be models of what you believe.

Pastoral Care

The vestry and rector work in partnership to pastor the congregation—to care about the congregation's and its members' well-being. Most of us think of pastoral care as counseling with individuals or families. In fact, pastoral care is as much, if not more, about leading the flock to green pastures and still waters as it is taking care of individuals. Pastoral care includes binding up the wounded, but it also means keeping the congregation moving from one feeding place to the next—assessing where the congregation is and what 'food' they need and constantly nudging them, inspiring them, encouraging them to go further, reach higher, go deeper.

Good pastoral care of individuals and the congregation helps create a healthy congregation. The following list summarizes one approach to what traits mark a healthy congregation. The questions under each trait could be used to examine the current state of your congregation.

Traits of a Healthy Congregation

In a healthy congregation one will most likely find:

A clear sense of mission and a planning process to enact that mission

- How can we continue to revisit why we exist, who we serve, how we serve them, where we are, where we want to go and how we can get there?

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Commitment to being a learning community

- How we can learn from each event, crisis and challenge to further our development as a congregation?
- How can we hear and deal with the questions coming toward us from the future?

Networks of listening, connection, and appreciation

- How do we encourage honest feedback?
- How do we continue to hear what each other wants and expects?
- How do we build networks of support?
- How do we continue to be aware of the questions we need to hear?
- How do we foster a church as an open community able to discuss difficult issues such as sex and sexuality, social justice and different belief systems?

Mutual responsibility and accountability

- How do we articulate, discuss, and negotiate ethics and ground rules for conduct?
- How do we have an organizational structure that will help us act on our mission, carry out our goals and live by our ethics for conduct?
- How do we redistribute unilateral decision making and power and be clear about who has power and authority for what?
- What are our processes for working through conflicts, for supervision, for review and evaluation?
- How do we develop clear job descriptions and a way to clarify our expectations and roles?
- How do we carry (hold in our consciousness, pray and care for support) each other and the congregation?

Clear sense of boundaries and appropriate involvement

- How do we support people in declaring what is comfortable and uncomfortable for them and in clearly expressing and negotiating personal needs, beliefs, and values?
- How can we be compassionate and not enmeshed— be a companion for people rather than a rescuer in times of crisis?
- How do we encourage people to balance personal, church and other commitments?
- How do we clarify what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior?

Generativity (new life, growth)

- How can we foster energy, commitment and growth?
- How can each relationship be an opportunity to build up each other and the community?

An active apostolate

- How do we seek and serve Christ in others?
- How do we stay in touch with the realities of the larger community?
- How do we contribute to the sustainability and development of the larger community?
- How do our members carry out Christ's ministry of reconciliation in the world?

Dynamic worship

- How can we recognize and celebrate the presence of God in our struggles and accomplishments?
- How can we recognize and celebrate the dignity and gifts of all our members?
- How can we proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to any and all who seek God?

Increasing faith

- How can we foster a deepening faith in individual members and the congregation as a whole?
- How can we create an environment in which people encounter the risen Christ?
- How can we facilitate people being restored to unity with God and each other in Christ?

The clergy and vestry need to work

together in looking at these broader issues and providing pastoral leadership to the entire congregation. It is useful to spend some time each year, perhaps at an annual retreat, reflecting on each of these areas and identifying where the congregation is strong and where stronger leadership might be needed to help it grow.

Evangelism

The signs say, "The Episcopal Church welcomes you;" and usually at the Eucharist most clergy or the bulletin says that all baptized Christians are welcome to receive. The Baptismal Covenant speaks of proclaiming by word and example the Good News of God in Christ. Evangelism can involve two actions:

- inviting into an experience or a dialog
- communicating Christian beliefs and values through word and action

The second action of communication occurs through the various programs offered by the congregation, through the social outreach and community work, and through those chance encounters when coworkers ask people questions about what is it that motivates them to do the work they are doing. The first action of invitation takes conscious effort to be an attractive and open community to those who enter as well as a group of individuals who move beyond immediate social and cultural categories and prejudices to encounter

others. It also means practicing the ministry of hospitality.

The vestry or mission/bishop's committee and clergy can consider:

- What is it to be welcomed into a community? How were we invited? How would we like to have been invited?
- How do we welcome people to this church? Especially those who are different from us?
Who are we excluding? How are we excluding them?
Consider the nature of the worship services, who gets to be leaders in the church, the language used to talk about programs and the way church activities are advertised.
- Once people express interest in being involved in the congregation, how do we involve them in the life of the church? What do we do to identify where they are on their faith journey and help them find ways to deepen their faith?
- How do we reach out to the surrounding community to make known our mission and to attract people to be involved with us in the mission? How do we invite people to this church? What do we do to attract them?
 - Include here a discussion of community outreach efforts, training members in how to invite others, providing resources

(materials or ideas) for inviting others, advertising or promotional efforts, signage, etc

Community Service

Congregations can provide for those in need, contributing to the good of society by striving to alleviate immediate suffering. While holding out a vision of a better society, congregations can provide for the practical and immediate needs of those in their care and those in the surrounding community.

Congregations can empower and enable. Churches can provide a forum for the congregation and others in the neighborhood to discuss social concerns that impact their life in the community. Congregations can explore how they are part of their surrounding community and how their continued existence depends upon working to improve that community. They can break down the walls that separate the non-poor from those who are struggling with poverty. Congregations can lend legitimacy to community-based organizations by publicly supporting them both financially and through volunteer help.

Congregations can be advocates for those in need. Congregations can point out the current realities, read the signs of the times, publicly say "no" to what denies dignity and participation, speak to the powers that are, and rekindle people's energy to work for change. Congregations can be the glue for the

neighborhood while they work with others to build a better society.

The vestry or mission/bishop's committee and rector can consider:

- Who are our neighbors? What is the condition of our neighborhood? What is its spiritual and economic life?
- What are the voices both in the neighborhood and in our congregation calling out for?
- How can this congregation plant compassion in action--carry out our Christian beliefs in a concrete manner?
- Who can we work in collaboration with? Who can we support to help us accomplish this?



Discussion Guide

The following questions and suggestions are provided to assist you in discussing the material in this chapter. You could take the first fifteen minutes of each vestry or mission/bishop's committee meeting to explore one area or you might schedule a more informal discussion over coffee and donuts after worship one Sunday a month. Another way to use this material is during the annual retreat (see sample design). Or you might pull out a section whenever a specific occasion seems to warrant it.

Discipleship and Apostleship

- How do we understand the concept of trusteeship?
- How do we nurture our spiritual life?
- How do we provide pastoral leadership in the congregation?
- What is our overall assessment of the congregation's mission and ministry? (Use the questions under each section, perhaps focusing on just one or two sections at a time and doing this over several meetings or assign one or two topics to each small group at a vestry retreat.)

New Members Orientation Retreat

Saturday 12-4:30 PM

- 12:00 Lunch with Rector, Wardens and other Vestry Members (who may or may not stay for the rest of the retreat)
- 1:00 Read/review/discuss: *Mission of the church and purpose of the congregation*; include a discussion of the congregation's mission statement, if you have one (Note: either ask people to read the material in advance or, probably more feasible, have the rector or a warden *briefly* review the material covered)
- 1:20 Read/review/discuss: *Elected Congregational Leaders: Roles and Responsibilities*
- 2:00 List and discuss how your group is organized (who does what), how your meetings are conducted and what schedule you will follow for the next year (regular meetings, retreats and special meetings) and any other group norms (ways of doing things)
- 2:30 Break
- 2:45 Read/review/discuss: *Fostering discipleship and apostleship in the congregation*
- 3:15 Distribute copies of the canons, last year's minutes, budget and treasurer's reports, the congregation's by-laws, an organizational chart, a copy of the reports given at the last annual meeting and any other documentation that would help orient a new member. If you use a specific decision-making process, you may want to include instructions for that (e.g. Robert's Rules of Order for formal voting or Consensus Decision-making). Review the budget and make sure new members know how to read the financial statements.
- 3:30 New members ask questions and explore concerns; talk about which committees or task groups the new members might join; take time to discuss each person's gifts, skills and prior experience (in church and in other aspects of life) as well as their interests before you decide who will do what. Remember to seek God's guidance as well.
- 4:00 Establish a mentor relationship for each new member who desires it (this could be with an continuing member or with someone who recently has retired from the vestry)
- 4:15 Prayer for each other and the work you have been given to do.
- 4:30 Depart in peace!

Weekend Vestry Retreat

Friday dinner to Sunday lunch

5:30 Gathering time, social hour

6:30 Dinner

8:00 Welcome, opening prayers

8:15 Brief presentation: Mission and Purpose of the Congregation

8:30 Small groups take copy and discuss:

- What is our understanding of why we exist as a congregation?
- Do we have a mission statement? If so, how does it relate to that mission of the church as stated in the Book of Common Prayer (p. 855)?
- How do our goals relate to that mission? How do they relate to the five statements in the Baptismal Covenant (p. 302)?
- What is uniquely Anglican about us? How does that impact how we structure ourselves or how we carry out our mission?
- How can we make the mission and ministry of this congregation a more central part of our work together?

9:15 Reconvene, brief comments on what people learned in their discussion

9:30 Compline

Saturday

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 Presentation: Ten Basic Responsibilities of Vestries

9:15 Three small groups, each assigned 3 or 4 of the Ten Basic Responsibilities to discuss and report on how your vestry currently addresses these and how you might better address each responsibility.

10:15 Break

10:30 Report from each small group (5 min. each)

10:45 Presentation: Canonical Responsibilities of Vestries and Rectors

11:00 Discussion: How is our vestry currently addressing our canonical responsibilities? Are there any changes we want to make?

11:30 Quick assessment: Three small groups each take one of the checklists (financial, property and personnel) and go through it; identify any key areas for improvement (write on newsprint and post in meeting room)

12:00 Lunch

1:15 Reports from small groups, discussion and decisions

2:00 Rector presentation: How I see us working together addressing: Who is in charge in our congregation? Do we maintain separate domains? Or have we developed a partnership model? If not, how might we move towards a partnership model? How are we exercising our spiritual responsibilities? How are we caring for each other and other congregational leaders?

- 2:15 Vestry response addressing the same issues
- 2:30 Discussion (as a whole or in two small groups): How can we as rector and vestry work together more effectively? What changes might we make?
- 3:30 Break
- 3:45 Brief Presentation: Discipleship and Apostleship
- 4:00 Discussion: How do we understand the concept of trusteeship? How do we nurture our spiritual life? How do we provide pastoral leadership in the congregation?
- 5:00 Social hour
- 6:00 Dinner
- 7:30 What is our overall assessment of the congregation's mission and ministry? Break into teams and use the questions under each area listed in the reading material to assess.
- 8:30 Small groups report; after all have reported, larger group asks questions and begins to identify a list of items to address tomorrow
- 9:15 Compline

Sunday

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 9:00 Group refines list of items to address, discusses areas needing additional work and develops a plan of action (who will do what, when, where and how)
- 10:00 Review of the weekend; identify decision made, decisions that still need to be made and develop a plan of action for all unresolved items
- 11:00 Eucharist
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00+ Departures

Resources

We have reviewed and made use of several diocesan publications relating to vestries for the preparation of this chapter. We especially want to acknowledge the following:

Atlanta, The Episcopal Diocese of. *Vestry Handbook*. no date. (67 pages).

Long Island, The Diocese of. *Vestry Manual*, 2nd edition. Garden City, 1994. (82 pages).

Maine, Diocese of. *Church Handbook for Wardens, Treasurers, Clergy and Secretaries*. Portland, 1995. (150 pages).

Nevada, Diocese of. "The Role of the Vestry in Total Ministry," in the diocese's *Total Ministry Notebook*.

Taylor, E. Don, Assistant Bishop of New York. "The Role of the Vestry in the Parish and in the Diocese," a paper presented to the Clergy and Vestries in the Bronx Region of the Diocese of New York, March 30, 1996.

Should you request a copy of the lengthy vestry handbooks from one of the dioceses which have prepared these, we recommend offering to reimburse the diocese for the cost of copying (multiply the number of pages by the standard duplication rate in your community to arrive at a fair amount).

Christian Formation

Frank Bates and Barbara Minges, **Adult Education Idea Book** (Pittsburgh: The Kerygma Program, 1991).

Joseph Russell, **Sharing Our Biblical Story** (Harrisburg, Pa: Morehouse Publishing, 1990)

Joseph Russell, **The Prayer Book Guide to Christian Education**, Cowley, 1996

In Dialogue with Scripture: An Episcopal Guide to Studying the Bible, The Episcopal Church Center, 1993

Lois Stephens, **I Love to Tell the Story: An Episcopal Handbook on Christian Education**,

Morehouse, 1994

Called to Teach, Called to Learn, The Episcopal Church Center, 1995

Pastoral Care

Peter L. Steinke, **How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems** (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1993).

Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1996).

R. Paul Stevens and Phil Collins, **The Equipping Pastor: A Systems Approach to Congregational Leadership** (Bethesda, MD: The Alban Institute, 1994).

Stewardship

John K. Brackett, **On the Pilgrims'Way: Christian Stewardship and the Tithe** (Cincinnati: Forward Movement Publications, 1990).

Kerry Dexter, **Fun Fundraising Ideas** (Harrisburg, Pa: Morehouse Publishing, 1995)

Fisher Howe, **The Board Member's Guide to Fund Raising** (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1991)

Ann Rowthorn, **Caring for Creation** (Harrisburg, Pa: Morehouse Publishing, 1989)

Evangelism

Elizabeth Rankin Geitz, **Entertaining Angels: Hospitality Programs for the Caring Church** (Harrisburg, Pa: Morehouse Publishing, 1995)

Richard Kew and Cyril Okorochoa, **Vision Bearers: Dynamic Evangelism in the 21st Century** (Harrisburg, Pa: Morehouse Publishing, 1996)

Community Service/Involvement

National Council of the Churches of Christ, **Urban Strategy Resources**

Charles Curren, **The Church and Morality** (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993)

Eleanor Scott Myers, **Envisioning the New City: a Reader on Urban Ministry** (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992)

Michael Zweig, **Religion and Economic Justice** (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991)