

# **PRINCIPLES FOR THE ORDERLY EXCHANGE OF PASTORS AND PRIESTS**

## **The Episcopal Church The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

### **Introduction**

Through adoption of Called to Common Mission (CCM), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and The Episcopal Church (TEC) entered into a relationship of full communion with one another. While full it includes the provision that the churches “recognize each other’s various ministries and make provision for the orderly exchange of ordained ministers of Word and Sacrament.”

This resource seeks to help the church bodies grow in their wise implementation of this provision. It includes both principles identified from the beginning and fruits of subsequent experience. This opening statement, common to the two churches, is followed by sections prepared by each church to help the other understand its procedures, commitments and distinctive terms.

Together, these materials support rather than replace direct conversations and personal relationships among those in our church offices who oversee specific instances of exchange of priests and pastors. It is essential that there be proactive, open and continuing communication among these offices. No document can convey the complexity of ways that the procedures of each church are lived out, and a commitment to help one another in honoring the diversities of each tradition is part of the meaning of living in communion.

### **Principles for the exchange of ministers of Word and Sacrament**

1. This orderly exchange of priests and pastors is for the sake of participation in the mission of God and can be an important sign of our unity in Christ.

Thus, the needs of mission are always paramount. Those serving as pastors or priests in one church may be invited to serve in another church; they do not have a right to serve in the other church.

2. Exchangeability, as part of common ecumenical commitment to collaborate as members of the one body of Christ, can enhance shared ministry and mission by encouraging more flexible, responsive and effective placement of ministers.

Thus, orderly exchange encourages those in our churches responsible for ministerial placement to invite the service of ministers available in other churches and make use of their gifts; it encourages ministers in each church to respond to such invitations or, where appropriate, to express their openness to serve in another church.

3. While we are members of the one body of Christ Jesus, there is also diversity in the body.

Therefore, the means of implementing orderly exchange need not be identical in each participating church. The existing polity of each church continues to be respected. It is important, however, that provisions parallel each other as much as possible and that each church be

conversant with the provisions of the others.

4. One of the ways diversity is expressed is in the various ways the churches are organized, live communally, and allow for the care and discipline of their congregations and the priests and pastors who serve them.

While these ministers retain their ministerial membership in their own churches, the orderly exchange of priests and pastors is understood to be at the invitation of the receiving church and subject to that church's placement procedures and polity. It is within this context that responsibilities of both care and discipline are exercised.

5. Called to Common Mission is a commitment to ongoing relationship between the churches, which is undergirded by ongoing conversation and mutuality. Good practice in orderly exchange will require continued conversation to share both the celebrations and the challenges of implementation.

Especially essential is this requirement: both the establishment of proper boundaries and the complete, continuing and mutual disclosure between church bodies of information concerning past and present ministry of these pastors and priests, including discipline related matters, both during initial consideration and throughout any period of service under orderly exchange.

## Implementation of the principles for the exchange of ministers

1. A pastor or priest may be eligible to engage in extended service in any position open to a priest or pastor in the other church except as noted otherwise in the polity of either church. These provisions for exchangeability under CCM do not directly affect these continuing practices:

- Ministers' occasional service in participating churches, while it may be further encouraged by full communion, continues to be authorized according to the polities of each of the churches.
- Service in the other church under the provisions of full communion does not accomplish or intend transfer of ministerial membership. When such transfer does seem appropriate, it will be authorized according to the polities of the two churches.

2. In evaluating the availability of ministers of Word and Sacrament, synods and dioceses will do so in accordance with the stated intentions in CCM.

a. To promote this aim, dioceses and synods should:

- Be in conversation with CCM counterparts in their geographic regions about general mission objectives which could be supported through orderly exchange of priests and pastors.
- Explore with their congregations where there may be appropriate opportunities for such exchange.
- Consult with their own ministers and those of the other church concerning the gifts and commitments necessary for carrying out orderly exchange within the spirit and intentions of CCM.

b. Priests and pastors open to service in another church body should:

- Consult, as appropriate, with their own bishops and their staffs concerning availability and suitability for service in the other church body.
- Use the ministerial profile or mobility forms of the sending church body and provide other documentation as requested.
- Contact (either directly or consultatively with one's own bishop, as appropriate) the synod or diocese where one wishes to serve and follow that church's procedure, and refrain from contacting a congregation directly unless instructed by the appropriate office in that church body.

3. Placement and oversight procedures of the inviting church shall be observed. Those responsible for placement will consider both faithful formation in the ministers' own tradition and their familiarity with that of the inviting church.

- The churches expect that those who would serve in a congregation of another church will be formed and grounded for ministry in their own tradition. Therefore, such service is not ordinarily intended for a first call or curacy
- To be invited for service in the other church, a pastor or priest will demonstrate to that church's appropriate regional body both knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, theological and liturgical identity, practices of ministry, and discipline of that church. That person will then be expected to preach, teach, administer the sacraments, and participate in the governance of that church in a manner consistent with that knowledge and appreciation.

4. Approval for extended service shall occur only in consultation with, and the concurrence of, the sending body.

- When granting concurrence for a minister to serve in another church, the sending

body will do so in accordance with the stated intentions in Called to Common Mission.

- Each church has a provision to grant a priest or pastor full participation in the synod or diocese in which the minister is serving, which may include privilege of voice and vote in governing bodies.

5. The pastor or priest is responsible for maintaining continued ministerial standing with and remains accountable to the sending body. Therefore, exchange of information concerning a specific disciplinary matter is initiated when an allegation of misconduct is first made, and appropriate next steps are agreed upon by representatives of the churches involved.

- In a disciplinary review or judicial process, the priest or pastor remains under the jurisdiction of the sending body, and the inviting body may be asked to participate as appropriate.

- The inviting body retains the right to rescind the invitation to service, even in situations where a formal disciplinary process may not be initiated by the sending body.

6. Since priests and pastors remain members of their sending body, they continue to participate in the pension and benefits program of the sending church. The inviting church should therefore be expected to contribute to the minister's pension and benefits program in keeping with the practices of the sending church.

7. Responsibility for pastoral care is shared by both churches: in the ELCA, by the synod; in The Episcopal Church, by the diocese.

8. The churches will continue conversations through the Lutheran-Episcopal Coordinating Committee to share experiences, address difficulties, and clarify procedures in order to enhance the orderly exchange of ministers and to find ways to celebrate more visibly our full communion relationship and its opportunities for expanded mission.

The national staff offices welcome and encourage the sharing of questions, concerns and experiences from local and regional settings.

## EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

### Full Communion bylaws

For the implementation of church-to-church relationships of full communion, the following bylaws in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America apply.

7.31.08. Invitation to Service. In accord with bylaw 8.62.11. and following, a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may serve contractually in a ministry setting of this church under a “Letter of Invitation to Service” upon the authorization of the bishop of the synod in which such service occurs.

8.62.11. A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church, serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament—upon endorsement by the synodical bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Sacrament is listed on the roster—under policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. A minister of Word and Service of this church serving temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be retained on the roster—upon endorsement by the synodical bishops and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister of Word and Service is listed on the roster—under policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council.

a. A letter of call may be issued to a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.44.A16.b.).

b. A letter of call may be issued to a minister of Word and Service of this church, serving temporarily in such a church body, by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a Synod Council, in accord with the Table of Sources of Calls (ELCA churchwide continuing resolution 7.74.A16.b.).

c. A letter of call issued by the Church Council or a Synod Council for service in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established by the Churchwide Assembly shall be governed by churchwide constitutional provision 7.43. and churchwide bylaw 7.43.01.

8.62.12. A minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be authorized by the synodical bishop to serve in a congregation or employing entity of this church. Such service shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the minister of Word and Sacrament in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation or employing entity. Any such service

shall be in accord with churchwide policies developed at the direction of the presiding bishop and secretary, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

8.62.13. Whenever a rostered minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is to serve or is serving in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by the Churchwide Assembly, or whenever a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been so declared and established is to serve or is serving in this church, a full sharing of relevant information concerning such rostered minister's experience and fitness for ministry is expected between the synodical bishop (or other appropriate office or entity) of this church and the appropriate person, office, or entity in the other church. Relevant information related to fitness for ministry shall include, but is not limited to, any information concerning disciplinary proceedings or allegations that could result, or could have resulted, in disciplinary proceedings.

8.62.14. A minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be granted the privilege of both voice and vote in the Synod Assembly during the period of that minister's service in a congregation of this church, in accord with ELCA churchwide bylaw 8.62.12.

8.62.15. The availability of a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be understood normally in three categories: availability to serve in an occasional situation; availability to meet an extended need, including service in "yoked parish" settings; and availability for a transfer of roster status.

a. Occasional service: An occasional situation is defined as one in which a minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synodical bishop.

b. Extended service: A minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be invited to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain a minister of Word and Sacrament of his or her present church body. Such a person would be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to live in a manner consistent with the ministerial policy of this church. Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synodical bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA in a given situation.

c. Transfer: A minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists who seeks to serve indefinitely within the ministry of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may apply for admission to the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and be approved through the candidacy process for admission to the roster. Such a minister would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other setting.

d. Roster status in more than one church body is precluded in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As required by ELCA churchwide constitutional provision 7.22. and bylaw 7.31.01., ministers on the Word and Sacrament roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America must accept and adhere to this church's Confession of Faith, as well as abide by this

church's standards and policies for ministers of Word and Sacrament.

8.62.16. Rostered ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, while serving in an ecumenical setting, remain subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A minister of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists is understood by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as subject to the standards, policies, and discipline of the church body in which the minister is rostered or holds ministerial membership. Such a minister, while serving in an ELCA congregation or other ministry, is expected to abide by the standards and policies of this church related to ministers of Word and Sacrament.

8.62.17. When a minister of Word and Sacrament from a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been declared and established by a Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America completes a contract for extended service, the synodical file on that minister shall be sent to and retained by the Office of the Secretary.

## **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

### Cooperation with other church bodies in the exercise of Word and Sacrament ministry

In accord with the governing documents of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, policy related to the orderly exchange of ministers between the participating church bodies is developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such policy would apply to ministers of Word and Sacrament of this church who, while being retained on the roster of the ELCA, would serve temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established, and to ministers of Word and Sacrament of a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established who would serve temporarily in a congregation or other ministry setting of this church.

The Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, adopted by the Church Council in March 2017, outlines the following practices related to the availability of ministers of Word and Sacrament between the ELCA and church bodies with which a relationship of full communion has been established. “Resources for familiarization with the life and practice of the ELCA” is an appendix on page 88. [http://download.ELCA.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Policies\\_Procedures\\_Roster\\_Mgmt.pdf](http://download.ELCA.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Policies_Procedures_Roster_Mgmt.pdf)

Background: In accordance with the governing documents of the ELCA, policy related to the orderly exchange of ministers of Word and Sacrament between the participating church bodies is developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and adopted by the Church Council. Such policy would apply to ministers of Word and Sacrament in this church who, while being retained on the roster of the ELCA, would serve temporarily in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established, and to ministers of Word and Sacrament in a church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established who would serve temporarily in a congregation or other ministry setting of this church without being admitted to the roster of the ELCA.

See “Admission to the Roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of Persons Ordained in Another Christian Tradition” [page 11 of the roster manual] for the process by which a minister of Word and Sacrament in a full communion partner church body, intending to serve indefinitely in the ELCA, may apply for admission to the ELCA roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament. Such a person would then become an ELCA pastor upon receipt and acceptance of a regular call and installation in an ELCA congregation or other approved setting.

Roster status in more than one church body at a time is precluded in the ELCA.

#### **I. Ministers of Word and Sacrament of another church body serving in the ELCA**

NOTE: A minister of Word and Sacrament of a full communion partner church serves in an ELCA congregation UNDER CONTRACT, NOT UNDER CALL by the congregation.

A. Occasional service. A minister of Word and Sacrament in a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists may be asked to preach or administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation on an occasional basis with the authorization of the synod bishop.

B. Extended service. A minister of Word and Sacrament in a church body with which a



relationship of full communion exists may be invited by the synod bishop to serve as the pastor of an ELCA congregation for an extended period of time, yet remain an ordained minister of that church body. Such a person will be expected to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in an ELCA congregation in a manner that is consistent with the “Confession of Faith” of the ELCA, and to live in a manner consistent with the expectations of this church as stated in “Vision and Expectations.” Such service shall be rendered only as authorized by the synod bishop in order to serve the ministry and mission needs of the ELCA or its ecumenical partners in a given situation.

Service in a congregation of this church or employing entity shall be rendered under a contract between the congregation or employing entity and the minister of Word and Sacrament, for a stated period of time in a form proposed by the synod bishop and approved by the congregation. Extended service is reviewed annually by the Synod Council or Church Council.

Upon the recommendation of the synod bishop and approval by the Synod Council, the synod bishop authorizes an extended service ministry.

1. Upon such authorization the minister of Word and Sacrament enters service in the ELCA through the entry rite, “Invitation to Extended Service,” which acknowledges the service of the minister of Word and Sacrament as pastor in a congregation or other setting of ministry in this church.

The Rite of Installation is NOT used as that rite is for use only for a regularly called minister of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA.

2. A minister of Word and Sacrament who is approved to serve in an extended service ministry in the ELCA may be granted voice and vote in a synod assembly.

At any time for the sake of the ongoing ministry, the synod bishop may withdraw authorization for service (or the congregation, employing agency or the minister may terminate a contract for extended service) after consultation with the other parties to the contract. Ministers of Word and Sacrament who have ceased to be “rostered” or the equivalent by a full communion partner church body are not considered eligible for such service unless or until they are received on the roster of the ELCA or of another full communion church.

## II. ELCA ministers of Word and Sacrament serving in another church body

A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church, serving for an extended period of time in a church body with which a relationship of full communion exists, may be retained on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament upon the recommendation of the synod bishop and by action of the Synod Council in the synod in which the minister is listed on the roster.

Congregations that cease to be rostered by a full communion partner church body are not eligible for service by a pastor of the ELCA until the congregation is received by the ELCA or another church body with which a relationship of full communion has been established.

## III. Procedures

A. Assessment. Authorization for extended service is given by the Synod Council, on the basis of the synod bishop’s assessment of the suitability for service of the minister of Word and Sacrament. The bishop may wish to appoint a panel to assist in this determination. The appropriate churchwide unit recommends that this not be a responsibility of the full synod Candidacy Committee, although members of the committee may serve on the panel.

B. Pension and medical insurance. A determination of the medical and disability insurance

for the minister of Word and Sacrament will be made. The guiding principle has become that a minister of Word and Sacrament serving under provisions of a full communion agreement remains in his or her parent church body's pension and benefits plan, and the congregation or other ministry setting contributes to that plan.

It is anticipated that a congregation of this church will be able to contribute to the plan of another church body in order to provide appropriate medical coverage and a pension plan. Similarly, a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church serving in another church body will need to determine that Portico Benefit Services (or another comparable plan) coverage is provided by the employing body.

C. Accountability and pastoral care. A minister of Word and Sacrament in another church body is accountable to the jurisdiction or judicatory in which that person is "rostered" or in other ways a member. Similarly, a minister of Word and Sacrament of this church serving in another church body remains on the roster of this church and is accountable to the bishop of the synod in which rostered. The synod bishop is responsible for appropriate pastoral care and leadership for all ELCA congregations, including those served by ministers of Word and Sacrament of other church bodies (ELCA constitutional provision 10.31.a.3.).

D. Exchange of information. The assessments, authorizations, and reviews necessary to the "orderly exchange of ordained ministers" between church bodies with which a relationship of full communion exists require the complete and continuing disclosure to the synod of all information concerning the past and present ministry of these ministers serving in the ELCA, or of ELCA ministers of Word and Sacrament serving under call from a synod council or the Church Council. Such disclosure must include any disciplinary proceedings, including discipline related to conduct during service in the ELCA by a minister of another church body.

E. Source of call. A minister of Word and Sacrament of this church serving in a congregation, local, or regional ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the Synod Council in which that minister is rostered. An ELCA minister of Word and Sacrament serving in a national ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the ELCA Church Council. This call is subject to annual review by the Synod Council or Church Council.

F. Titles. The usual title "pastor of (insert name of congregation)" would be used for ministers of Word and Sacrament serving in an ELCA congregation. The recognized professional title of "The Rev." for an ordained minister also would be applicable, in view of the officially recognized status of that minister of Word and Sacrament in a church body with which the ELCA has a relationship of full communion.

## **V. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Glossary**

### **Bishop**

In the ELCA, a bishop is a minister of Word and Sacrament given responsibility to provide pastoral care, teaching and leadership in a synod and its congregations. The bishop is chief executive officer of the synod, as well as its chief ecumenical and inter-religious officer, and is to strengthen the unity of the Church. Bishops exercise solely this church's power to ordain (or provide for the ordination by another synod bishop of) approved candidates for ministry of Word and Sacrament; and they consecrate (or provide for the consecration of) approved candidates for ministry of Word and Service. Bishops are elected by synod assemblies to six-year terms and may be re-elected.

### **Bishop's Assistant or Associate**

A member of the synod staff, either a rostered minister or a layperson, who assists the bishop in carrying out the responsibilities of that office, including matters regarding placement and rostering.

### **Bishop, Presiding**

A minister of Word and Sacrament who is a teacher of the faith of this church and provides leadership for the life and witness of this church. The presiding bishop is the chief executive officer of the churchwide organization and is the chief ecumenical and inter-religious officer of the ELCA. The presiding bishop is elected to a six-year term and may be re-elected.

### **Book of Concord**

The Book of Concord (1580; current English translation 2000) is a collection of 10 foundational documents for Lutheran theology: the three ecumenical creeds, Augsburg Confession, Apology, Smalcald Articles, Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, Small Catechism, Large Catechism and Formula of Concord. It became the official standard of doctrine for most Lutheran Churches; the ELCA constitution accepts the Augsburg Confession as a "true witness to the Gospel" and the other confessional writings as "further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church." Most familiar of the Reformation-era texts is Martin Luther's Small Catechism, which continues in common use as a formative presentation of Christian affirmations. Its teachings and even phrases are instantly recognizable to many Lutherans.

### **Church Council**

The Church Council of the ELCA is the board of directors of the churchwide organization, serving as the interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly. The Church Council meets at least two times each year, and is composed of the four churchwide officers (presiding bishop, vice president, secretary and treasurer), the chair of the Conference of Bishops, and at least 32 and not more than 45 other persons elected to six-year terms by the Churchwide Assembly.

An ELCA minister of Word and Sacrament serving in a national ministry setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the Church Council.

### **Churchwide Assembly**

The Churchwide Assembly is the highest legislative authority of the churchwide organization. It reviews the work of the churchwide officers and churchwide units. It establishes churchwide policy

and adopts the budget for the churchwide organization. It has the sole authority to amend the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA. The Churchwide Assembly meets triennially in regular session.

### **Churchwide Organization**

The churchwide organization functions interdependently with the congregations and synods of the ELCA. It is responsible for developing churchwide policy, standards for leadership, including rostered ministries, and the coordination of the work of the ELCA both globally and throughout the territory of the ELCA.

### **Conference of Bishops**

The Conference of Bishops is composed of the bishops of the 65 synods, the presiding bishop and the secretary of the ELCA. The conference meets at least two times each year and is a forum in which goals, objectives and strategies may be developed and shared concerning pastoral leadership, care and counsel for the synods. The Conference of Bishops reviews recommendations from the appropriate churchwide units pertaining to policies and programs, and in particular participates in the development and study of ecumenical and inter-religious documents and assists bishops in their ecumenical and inter-religious roles.

### **Congregation**

Congregations, together with synods and the churchwide organization, are one of the three interdependent expressions of the ELCA. They act through their Congregation Meetings and typically delegate authority to an elected Congregation Council.

### **Congregation Council (see also Church Council and Synod Council)**

Like synods and the churchwide expression, an ELCA congregation has a council. Typically the congregation delegates many matters of governance to its council, which it elects from its members. Each congregation's constitution specifies the pastor's role on its council.

### **Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions**

The basic commitments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as its organizational outline, structural patterns, and rubrics of governance are expressed by its constitutions, bylaws and continuing resolutions. These documents govern the life of the ELCA as congregations, synods and the churchwide organization.

### **Deacon**

Since 2016, ministers of Word and Service are known as deacons. Some deacons are members of the Diaconess Community of the ELCA and are known as Sisters.

### **Evangelical**

"Evangelical" was an original designation for the reformers, from the Greek word for "gospel" or "good news." Still used this way in German-speaking areas to designate Christians who are not Roman Catholic or Orthodox, the term is also used currently by The Lutheran World Federation to characterize Lutheran tradition. While in the United States the word has distinctively taken on additional connotations from other historical developments, its use in the name of the ELCA honors and reclaims the heritage of witnessing to the "good news" of God's grace and living as "gospel people," sharing God's love for the world.

## **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**

The ELCA came into being on January 1, 1988, by the uniting of three church bodies. Lutheran roots on this continent are deep. In the mid-17th century early Lutherans came from Europe, settling in the Virgin Islands and the area that is now known as New York. The Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the first Lutheran church body, was established in 1748. The ELCA is currently the largest of the Lutheran bodies in the United States.

## **Letter of Call**

A call is an action through which a person is asked to serve in a specified ministry. Such an action is attested in a “letter of call.” A letter of call is issued by that ELCA expression (congregation, synod or churchwide organization) most directly involved in accountability for the specified ministry.

## **Lutheran World Federation**

The ELCA belongs to the Lutheran World Federation, a Communion of Churches. This is a global body of churches in the Lutheran tradition which unites its members in “pulpit and altar fellowship” and describes Lutheran identity as evangelical, sacramental, diaconal, confessional and ecumenical.

## **Membership**

ELCA members are the baptized members of its congregations. Baptized members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in ELCA congregations, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.

**Pastor Ministers of Word and Sacrament** are known as pastors, especially those who serve in congregational settings. The term “pastor” may describe a minister of Word and Sacrament serving in a non-congregational setting as well.

## **Region**

There are nine geographic regions within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recognized as a partnership among groups of synods within the region and the churchwide organization.

## **Roster**

The ELCA has two rosters: the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and the roster of Ministers of Word and Service. For each roster there are four mutually exclusive categories: under call, on leave from call, on disability status or on retired status.

## **Rostered Ministers**

Those listed on the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament or on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service are collectively known as rostered ministers. Every rostered minister must be a member of an ELCA congregation. (For those granted retired or disability status, rare exceptions are made.)

## **Rostered Minister Profile (RMP)**

The RMP is a 16-step document designed to stimulate reflection, to summarize a rostered minister’s interests and ministry, and to be used as a professional résumé. It is used by ELCA rostered ministers and candidates for rostered ministry to express their interest in and availability for a call.

## **Synod**

There are 65 synods in the ELCA. Each synod, together with the churchwide organization, bears primary responsibility for the oversight of the life and mission of the ELCA in its territory.

## **Synod Council**

The Synod Council is the board of directors of the synod and serves as its interim legislative authority between meetings of the Synod Assembly. For the ELCA, a minister of Word and Sacrament serving in a congregation, local or regional setting of another church body serves under a letter of call from the council of the synod in which that minister is rostered.

## **Synod-authorized ministries**

When need exists to render Word and Sacrament ministry for a congregation or ministry of this church where it is not possible to provide appropriate pastoral leadership, the synod bishop — acting with the consent of the congregation or ministry, in consultation with the Synod Council, and in accord with standards and qualifications developed by the appropriate churchwide unit, reviewed by the Conference of Bishops, and approved by the Church Council — may authorize a person who is a member of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to offer this ministry. Such an individual shall be supervised by a minister of Word and Sacrament appointed by the synod bishop; such service shall be rendered during its duration under the sacramental authority of the bishop as the synod's pastor. Such an individual will be trained to fulfill this ministry for a specified period of time and in a given location only. Authorization, remuneration, direct supervision, and accountability are to be determined by the appropriate synod leadership according to churchwide standards and qualifications for this type of ministry. Authorization for such service shall be reviewed annually and renewed only when a demonstrated need remains for its continuation. (ELCA bylaw 7.31.09.)

Synod-authorized ministers are not available for exchange through full communion agreements.

## **Synod Assembly**

The Synod Assembly is the highest legislative authority of the synod, with a regular meeting held at least triennially (with most synod assemblies meeting annually). All rostered ministers are voting members, as are representative lay members from every congregation within the synod.

## **Worship Resources**

Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006) is “commended” for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This is a core rather than a comprehensive resource; it reflects a body of prayer and song that our churches consider worthy to hold in common. The book contains notable representatives of a wide variety of liturgical texts and musical forms that point to larger repertoires outside this volume — expressions desired in every context by an increasingly diverse church. Examples of this widening circle of resources include Libro De Liturgia Y Cantico (1998) and This Far by Faith: An African American Resource for Worship (1999); Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly (2009); supplemental resources on marriage, <http://www.ELCA.org/Resources/Worship#Liturgy> and many more in diverse media. The Use of the Means of Grace was adopted for “guidance and practice” by the 1997 Churchwide Assembly as “a statement on the practice of Word and Sacrament.”

[http://download.ELCA.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/The\\_Use\\_Of\\_The\\_Means\\_Of\\_Grace.pdf](http://download.ELCA.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/The_Use_Of_The_Means_Of_Grace.pdf)

DRAFT

**GUIDELINES  
FOR THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
RELATED TO THE EXCHANGE OF  
PASTORS AND PRIESTS  
UNDER CALLED TO COMMON MISSION**

## **Introduction**

The Office of the Presiding Bishop with assistance from the Office for Ministry Development and the Church Deployment Office of The Episcopal Church articulated the guidelines in this section. These guidelines are based upon a review of the *Constitution and Canons* and typical practices of The Episcopal Church. The 2018 Constitution and Canons are available for free use online and in print copies from the Office of the General Convention:

<https://www.generalconvention.org/publications>

## **I. Information in Brief about ELCA Polity**

As synods, dioceses, congregations, agencies and churchwide ministries offices consider the possibility of exchange in order to promote mission, it is important for members of The Episcopal Church to understand certain similarities and differences in polity and practice between the ELCA and The Episcopal Church. A few key aspects of ELCA polity are described below.

- Pastors and priests are recognized as ministers of Word and Sacrament in both denominations and are therefore fully interchangeable.
- Before a possible exchange of deacons, deaconesses and diaconal ministers, the churches will engage in a process of consultation to determine how some of the functions of each of these distinct callings may be shared. Diaconal ministers in the ELCA are called to speak God's Word, the gospel and the apostolic faith to God's world. They also are called to public witness and service that exemplifies Christ-like self-giving and leads the church and all its members to witness to Christ in the world. They are not ordained but rather are consecrated lay ministers. Diaconal ministers are stipendiary professionals in the ELCA. Deaconesses in the ELCA are women in community who are consecrated and called into service. In the liturgy in the ELCA, diaconal ministers may serve as assisting ministers, a role that is open to other lay members as well.
- The churches will over time come to share in the ministry of bishops in an evangelical, historic succession. In the ELCA, bishops are pastors who are elected for six-year renewable terms of service as bishops.

## **II. Relevant Canonical Structure**

This document is intended to give guidance to the church regarding the exchange of clergy with the ELCA for service in The Episcopal Church on an occasional or extended basis.

A rector in an Episcopal congregation must be a priest of The Episcopal Church, therefore extended service by an ELCA pastor in an Episcopal congregation would of necessity occur



under circumstances *other* than that of “rector.”

Given the wide variety of contexts for mission in the dioceses of The Episcopal Church, it is difficult to anticipate the many types of exchanges that may take place as a result of the passage of CCM. This document will nevertheless outline guidelines that should be helpful in facilitating exchanges in the most common circumstances.

The 73rd General Convention of The Episcopal Church in 2000 adopted two revisions to the Canons of particular application to the exchange of clergy between The Episcopal Church and the ELCA on a temporary, i.e., occasional or extended basis, to implement Called to Common Mission.

Canon III.19 (i.e., Title III, Canon 19), which pertains to the authorizations necessary if persons not ordained in The Episcopal Church are invited to officiate (even on a single occasion) in an EC congregation, was amended by adding a new subsection (b) (4) which authorized, with the consent of the Bishop, a Member of the Clergy of this Church or the Wardens, in case of clergy vacancy or absence, to invite Clergy ordained in another Church in communion with this Church to officiate on an occasional basis, provided that such clergy shall teach and act in a manner consistent with the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church.

By articulating the circumstances in which members of the clergy ordained in other churches in communion with The Episcopal Church may be invited to serve in The Episcopal Church on particular occasions, this provision is intended to make our canons consistent in this regard with those of the ELCA.

Canon III.12 specifies the requirements to be met before a member of the clergy ordained in other churches in communion with The Episcopal Church may be permitted to officiate in an Episcopal Church congregation as vicar, curate, on-going supply pastor, interim, assistant or pastor-in-charge for a specified term under a contractual arrangement. To make this provision fully applicable to ELCA clergy, General Convention amended this canon by adding a new subsection (d) to read as follows:

(d) The provisions of this Section 1 shall be fully applicable to all members of the Clergy duly ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its predecessor bodies before January 1, 2001, as well as those ordained after that date by Bishops of that Church.

### **III. Further Explanation of Temporary Service of ELCA Pastors in The Episcopal Church**

Pursuant to the canons, temporary service may take two forms, occasional and extended:

**Occasional Service.** For a number of years prior to the adoption of Called to Common Mission, The Episcopal Church and the ELCA engaged in a process of sacramental sharing: opening pulpits to each other’s preachers, holding joint eucharists where pastor and priest would stand together at the altar, etc. It is assumed that an Episcopal Church priest may invite an ELCA pastor in good standing to preach or celebrate or in other ways participate in Episcopal Church liturgies when The Episcopal Church priest is also present without any further authorizations.

The canons provide that without a license no priest shall officiate (i.e., in the absence of the priest of the parish) more than two months by preaching, ministering the sacraments, or holding any public service, within the limits of any diocese other than that in which the priest is canonically resident.

A diocesan bishop may desire to establish a general policy that allows for the occasional service i.e., for a period of less than two months, of an ELCA pastor in an Episcopal Church congregation without the need for prior approval by the bishop. If a congregation desires an ELCA pastor to serve for a period over two months, the pastor would be required to obtain a license to officiate (or other similar documentation) from the diocese in which the congregation is located.

**Extended Service.** An ELCA pastor may serve in an Episcopal Church congregation with appropriate authorization of the bishop and the congregation. Extended service, it is expected, will ordinarily take place under a contractual arrangement. The pastor would remain an ordained minister of the ELCA during his/her time of service. In fulfilling a sacramental role in a congregational setting, or other leadership role in The Episcopal Church, the pastor will be expected to teach and act in a manner consistent with the doctrine, discipline, and worship of The Episcopal Church. (See CCM, par. 22)

#### **IV. Serving in The Episcopal Church**

##### **A. Church Deployment Office Profiles**

Typically in The Episcopal Church, a priest in active service will obtain registration materials from the Church Deployment Office (CDO) in order to create a Personal Profile that is maintained on a computer database in New York. Congregations and other church bodies that are in a search for leadership typically file a Search Request with CDO. The Deployment Office completes computer searches to match specific ministry needs with appropriately gifted persons as one step in the calling process. The CDO profiles are primarily used for permanent or long-term ministries, particularly rectorships, although they are also ordinarily used for certain non-tenured extended positions (such as assistant, interim pastor, etc.). The latter use will be of interest to an ELCA pastor.

At present, before a member of the clergy from one of our Anglican Communion partners can register with CDO, the sponsoring bishop of The Episcopal Church must request such registration. ELCA pastors seeking other than occasional service in The Episcopal Church are likewise advised to contact the Ordinary (bishop with jurisdiction) of the diocese in which they would like to serve and request the bishop to sponsor their registration with CDO. Once that bishop submits the pastor's name to CDO, the pastor will be eligible to register.

Exchanges of clergy may, in some cases, take place without resort to CDO profiles, just as Episcopal clergy at times fill positions without use of the churchwide deployment system. Moreover, service in The Episcopal Church on an occasional basis often occurs without use of CDO profiles. ELCA pastors therefore may not need to register with CDO.

## **B. Transfer**

Should an ELCA pastor seek to serve indefinitely within the ordained ministry of The Episcopal Church, the pastor may apply for transfer. The pastor would be required to subscribe to and make the following declaration:

I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of The Episcopal Church. (Article VIII, *Constitution*)

In making this declaration, the pastor thereby would relinquish membership in the ELCA in order to become canonically resident in the diocese in which the clergy person seeks to serve. Among other requirements, a thorough examination by professionals appointed by the bishop of the diocese covering both medical and psychological condition must be submitted and satisfactorily passed. (Canon III.12 (c))

2018 canonical revisions provided the following rules for Clergy Ordained by Bishops of Churches in Communion with This Church:

### **Title III. Sec. 2. a. 1. Certificate required to officiate**

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

### **2. Letters Dimissory or equivalent credentials**

Before being permitted to take charge of any Congregation, or being received into any Diocese of this Church as a Member of its Clergy, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall receive Letters Dimissory or equivalent credentials under the hand and seal of the Bishop with whose Diocese the person has been last connected, which letters or credentials shall be delivered within six months from the date thereof. Before receiving the Member of the Clergy the Bishop shall require a promise in writing to submit in all things to the Discipline of this Church, without recourse to any foreign jurisdiction, civil or ecclesiastical; and shall further require the person to subscribe and make in the Bishop's presence, and in the presence of two or more Presbyters, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution. The Bishop and at least one Presbyter shall examine the person as to knowledge of the history of this Church, its worship and government. The Bishop also being satisfied of the person's theological qualifications, may then receive the person into the Diocese as a Member of the Clergy of this Church.

### **3. Churches in full communion**

The provisions of this Section shall be applicable to all Members of the Clergy ordained in any Church in full communion with this Church as specified in Canon I.20, subject to the terms of the covenant of The Episcopal Church and the other Church or Churches as adopted by the General Convention and by the denominational authority or similar body for those Churches that are not members of the Anglican Communion by action of the Anglican Consultative Council.

#### **b. Deacons**

A Member of the Clergy who is a Deacon shall not be ordered Priest until having resided within the jurisdiction of this Church at least one year and all the requirements for ordination to the Priesthood as required by Canon III.8 have been satisfied.

#### **c. Mentors**

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

#### **C. Exchange of Information**

In order to insure the complete disclosure of information concerning the past and present ministry of ordained persons serving in The Episcopal Church, dioceses normally require reviews including any or all of the following: review of credentials and background, proof of completion of sexual misconduct prevention training, statement of good standing from one's bishop, letters of recommendation, and an interview with the bishop of the receiving diocese. Dioceses of The Episcopal Church normally will use these same reviews prior to placement of an ELCA pastor in an Episcopal Church congregation or other Episcopal Church employment setting. Naturally, the more extended that the contemplated service is, the more thorough the exchange of information should be.

#### **D. Continuance in Pension Plan**

An ELCA pastor serving in The Episcopal Church will need to determine that the ELCA Board of Pensions coverage will be provided by the employing Episcopal Church entity.

#### **E. Titles**

No rules of The Episcopal Church require the use of any title by priests/presbyters. The title "The Reverend" is applied to priests and deacons in The Episcopal Church (used as an adjective in formally addressing a member of the clergy). Some priests use the title "Father." Its counterpart for female priests, used by some, is "Mother." "The Very Reverend" indicates a dean of a deanery, a seminary, or a cathedral. "The Right Reverend" indicates a bishop. "The Most Reverend" indicates the primate.

#### **F. Glossary of Selected Episcopal Church Terms**

**Anglican Communion.** Churches in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury throughout

the world. Member churches exercise jurisdictional independence but share a common heritage of Anglican identity.

**Archdeacon.** A clergy person (almost never a deacon) with a defined administrative authority delegated by the diocesan bishop, similar to a regional dean.

**Bishop.** One of the three orders of ordained ministers in the church, bishops are charged with the apostolic work of leading, supervising, and uniting the church. They stand in the historic succession, maintaining continuity with the ministry of the early Church and between Christian communities today. Bishops serve as chief pastors of the church, exercising a ministry of oversight and supervision. They are consecrated bishops for life.

**Bishop, Assistant.** A bishop, ordinarily a full-time member of the diocesan staff, who is appointed rather than elected and assists in carrying out the episcopal ministry of the diocese.

**Bishop, Assisting.** In common usage, a bishop who aides the diocese by providing additional episcopal services on a temporary basis. Appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of, the diocesan bishop, or the Standing Committee if there is no bishop.

**Bishop Coadjutor.** The elected bishop, with the right of succession upon the resignation of the diocesan bishop, who serves with the diocesan bishop.

**Bishop, Diocesan.** Also known as the Ordinary of a diocese. A diocesan bishop, as distinct from a suffragan, assistant, or coadjutor bishop. The term apparently springs from the understanding of “ordinary jurisdiction” which is held in canon law to be the jurisdiction “permanently and irremovably annexed to” the office of bishop. By canon, a bishop may not resign jurisdiction without the consent of the House of Bishops. A bishop must resign from all jurisdiction at the age of seventy-two.

**Bishop, Presiding.** Chief Pastor and Primate of The Episcopal Church.

**Bishop Suffragan.** A bishop who does not automatically succeed a diocesan bishop. Elected by the diocese to serve indefinitely at the direction of the diocesan bishop.

**Book of Common Prayer.** Official book of worship of The Episcopal Church. (Abbreviated “BCP”.)

**Book of Occasional Services.** Book of optional services and texts prepared by the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.

**Hymnal 1982.** The collection of hymn texts, tunes, and service music authorized for use in The Episcopal Church. Also widely used: *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (LEVAS); and *Wonder, Love and Praise*.

**House of Bishops.** Part of the two-house legislature of General Convention. All diocesan, suffragan, coadjutor, assistant, and most resigned and retired bishops are members of this body,

which also meets periodically between General Convention.

**Canon.** The word has several different meanings in the church.

1. The canon of scripture.
2. A church law.
3. As a title, a canon may be a member of the clergy or laity on the staff of a cathedral, diocese or other institution.
4. In liturgy, the fixed portion of the Great Thanksgiving in the Holy Eucharist.

**Canon to the Ordinary.** Clergy or lay person who serves as assistant to the diocesan bishop.

**Canonical Residence.** Clergy serving under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authority of a diocese are canonically resident in that diocese. Clergy may move from jurisdiction to jurisdiction pursuant to canonical procedures.

**Celebration of New Ministry.** Form of service for the installation or recognition of a priest as the rector of a parish. May also be used for a wide variety of other parochial and ecclesiastical ministries of assisting clergy, vicars of missions, bishops, lay canons, etc. (BCP, p. 558).

**Church Deployment Office (CDO).** Seeks to match persons with required skills and talents to opportunities for ministry in order to assist the church (congregations, bishops, dioceses) to practice good stewardship of God's gifts.

**Commission on Ministry (COM).** Pursuant to Title III, Canon 1, each diocese is required to establish a COM to assist the bishop in determining the present and future needs for ministry in the diocese.

**Constitutions and Canons.** The Episcopal Church has a Constitution and a set of canons adopted and amended from time to time by the church's triennial General Convention. These, together with the additional directions or "rubrics" of the Prayer Book, generally constitute the written "law" or rules of the church that guide its ministry. Each of the church's more than 100 dioceses also has a constitution and set of canons that supplement those of the national church and provide for local governance.

**Curate.** The term typically refers to an assisting priest in a parish.

**Cure.** The pastoral and geographical responsibility and charge of a member of the clergy.

**Deacon.** One of three offices to which people can be ordained in The Episcopal Church, along with priests and bishops. The deacon's vocation lies in serving—especially the weak, the poor, the sick, the lonely—and in interpreting to the church the needs and hopes of the world. The sign of the office of deacon is a stole worn over the left shoulder and fastened under the right arm. In the eucharist, deacons read the gospel, lead the Prayers of the People, introduce the confession, prepare the altar, assist with the distribution of the bread and wine, perform the ablutions, and dismiss the people.

**Deployment Officer.** The clergy or lay member of the diocesan staff responsible for assisting the bishop, congregations and individuals with deployment.

**Diocese.** A geographical area that serves as the primary unit of organization in The Episcopal Church. A bishop and a legislative body—a convention or council—oversee each diocese.

**Diocesan Convention.** Annual meeting of lay and clerical representatives from the congregations of a diocese to elect members of committees and deputies to General Convention, make decisions about diocesan policy, conduct other diocesan business (e.g., budget, program) and from time to time, elect a bishop for the diocese.

**Ecclesiastical Authority.** The responsible individual or body in a church institution. In a diocese, this authority rests with the diocesan bishop. Should the episcopate be vacant or the bishop be incapacitated, the responsibility falls upon the Standing Committee or other bishop.

**Episcopal Church Center.** The churchwide ministries office of The Episcopal Church housing the office of the Presiding Bishop, his staff, and other church-related offices. Located in New York City.

**Executive Council of The Episcopal Church.** The national body that administers the program and policies adopted by the General Convention.

**General Convention.** The national legislative body of The Episcopal Church. It consists of a House of Bishops and a House of Deputies (four lay persons and four clergy persons from each diocese). Convention meets every three years.

**Priest.** Derived from Greek *presbyteros*, “elder.” The ministry of a priest is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in overseeing the church; to proclaim the gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and pardon in the name of God (BCP p. 856).

**Priest-in-Charge.** Practices vary widely among dioceses. In a parish without a rector, the priest-in-charge generally contracts with the vestry, in consultation with the bishop, to perform many of the functions of a rector.

**Rector.** Elected by the vestry of a parish in consultation with the bishop, and serves as the leader of the parish with respect to its spiritual life and mission. In charge of liturgy, music, education, outreach, and pastoral care, the rector has full use of the parish property to carry out his or her office, hires and supervises lay and clerical staff, and is generally entitled to preside at all vestry and parish meetings.

**Vicar.** The title applies to the priest-in-charge of a mission congregation, serving at the pleasure of and representing the bishop.

**Primate.** The chief bishop in an Anglican Province is called a primate. The term relates to primacy, which in ecclesiastical terms is the status of being first, or presiding, among other bishops.

**Province.** 1) An internal division of an autonomous national church of the Anglican Communion. There are nine provinces in The Episcopal Church, including overseas jurisdictions. 2) An autonomous national or regional church member of the Anglican Communion.

**Regional Missioner.** A priest to whom the bishop has delegated certain oversight responsibilities for a cluster of congregations.

**Rite I, Rite II.** The 1979 BCP provides the services of Morning and Evening Prayer, the Holy Eucharist, and the Burial Office in both traditional language (Rite I) and contemporary language (Rite II).

**Standing Committee.** A body that shares the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese with the bishop in certain defined areas (e.g., clergy discipline, property of parishes, ordination). In the absence of a bishop it sometimes becomes the sole ecclesiastical authority. Its members are elected by the diocesan convention. It also serves as the bishop's council of advice.

**Supplemental Liturgical Materials (SLM).** A booklet published by Church Hymnal Corporation in 1991 to supplement the existing Rite II liturgies of the BCP.

**Vestry.** The vestry is the legal representative of the parish with regard to all matters pertaining to its corporate property. Vestry persons are elected from among the membership of a congregation at the annual parish meeting. The rector is ordinarily the presiding officer of the vestry (unless otherwise specified in state law or diocesan canons). The basic responsibilities are to help define, articulate and insure support of the mission of the congregation and the larger church.

**Warden.** A congregation usually has two wardens who are members of the vestry. The senior warden leads the parish between rectors and is a support person to the rector. The junior warden often has responsibility for church property and buildings.

*Revisions to December 2018 by Dr. Kathryn Johnson (ELCA) and Richard Mammana (The Episcopal Church)*