GUIDELINES FOR DIOCESAN TRAINED PRIESTS IN RECTOR LED CONGREGATIONS
(Adopted by the Commission on Ministry 4/3/12)

Discernment—

If the nominee does not plan to obtain a Masters of Divinity degree (M.Div.) through a seminary approved by the Bishop, and chooses the diocesan training path for ordination (the Wyoming IONA School)—additional discernment and work with the congregation will be required as to what the nominee’s congregation sees as their calling to ministry, and what roles that congregation will expect from that person after ordination. This work would be facilitated by and in consultation with the Bishop’s office and the Commission on Ministry (COM).

In addition to having a discernment committee, the COM will meet with the sponsoring congregation to gauge support, understanding and belief in the individuals call to Holy Orders.

A detailed plan-of-ministry of how the locally ordained person will work with the Rector, Vestry, members of the congregation, and in the community shall be developed by the nominee, Rector, and Vestry.

This detailed plan must be submitted to the Bishop and the COM for their approval prior to nominee being accepted as a Postulant.

Authority—

If the nominee completes the process and is ordained, they shall be considered associate priests within their congregation, and shall serve at the discretion of the Rector.

At such time as the present Rector would leave the congregation, the locally ordained priests will not be eligible to be considered for the position of Rector in that congregation.

During the interim/search process following the Rector’s departure, the locally ordained priests may only function within the realm of the agreed-to plan-of-ministry approved prior to ordination. They will not be allowed to take on additional roles or duties, normally done by the Rector, nor serve as an interim.

After the community’s hiring of a new Rector, the locally ordained priest will continue to be considered associate clergy, and serve at the discretion of the Rector within the approved plan-of-ministry.
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If the new Rector wishes to change the scope of the approved plan-of-ministry, a new one could be developed in the same fashion as before and submitted to the Bishop and COM for approval.

Other—
Locally ordained priests serving in Rector-led congregations:

1. shall be considered members of their home congregations.

2. shall serve only in their respective congregations and may not put their names on the list for supply clergy unless requested to do so by the Bishop or permission of the Bishop is given.

3. the Rector of the congregation would be considered the nominee’s mentor throughout the ordination process, and would send the required periodic reports to the COM in which the relationship between all parties would be evaluated.

NOTE: It is understood by all involved, that this is a working document and can be added to, and/or amended at any time at the discretion of the Bishop.