# Diocesan Customary

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF THE
LIVING WORD
vivus est enim Dei sermo

# SECTION I:

## MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CLERGY

### Clergy Information Forms:

Informational data forms on all licensed clergy of the diocese are maintained for the diocesan files. All clergy are required to submit such data to the diocese and take initiative to update this when changes occur, e.g. change of address or telephone number.

### Letters Dimissory:

Transfer of canonical residency by Letters Dimissory should be discussed with the Bishop well in advance of any request being submitted or any contact with another bishop or diocese. Bishops in the Anglican Church in North America have agreed protocols about the transferring of clergy between diocese and the issuing of Letters Dimissory. However, both the issuance and acceptance of Letters Dimissory may be delayed by the Bishop for cause.

### Canonical Residency and License to Officiate:

All clergy ministering in the Diocese for a period in excess of 60 days shall be either canonically resident in the Diocese or licensed by the Bishop. A rector must gain prior consent of the bishop to have a minister from outside the diocese lead worship or preach in a congregation of the diocese. Canonical residence shall be established by ordination in the Diocese, by the acceptance by the Bishop of letters dimissory, or by other reception authorized by the Bishop. Clergy serving as rectors of a congregation of the Diocese must be canonically resident in the Diocese. Clergy other than rectors canonically resident in another Anglican jurisdiction recognized by the Bishop must be licensed by the Bishop to minister in the Diocese. Such licenses are to be reviewed annually by the Bishop, and an annual activity report must be submitted to the Bishop by all licensed clergy prior to having their license renewed.

### Active and Inactive Clergy

All clergy holding the Bishop's license shall be the active clergy of the diocese, unless, any such clergy requests that they be designated as inactive, or such clergy is absent from attendance at two consecutive synods of the diocese without having been excused by the Ecclesiastical Authority, or such clergy be under ecclesiastical discipline. Inactive clergy may not function in an ordained capacity without first becoming active. Inactive clergy may become active by notifying the Ecclesiastical Authority and the Registrar and complying with the credentialing requirements for active clergy.

### Additional Clergy

Licensed clergy are required to participate in the clergy zoom meeting, attend the diocesan synod and clergy retreat and complete required licensing documentation. If clergy are unable to attend synod, the retreat, or the zoom meeting, they can be excused in writing from the diocesan bishop.

Active clergy shall remain in weekly worship in a congregation in fellowship with the Anglican Church in North America.

## Ministry Initiatives Outside the Anglican Church

Clergy are required to have the bishop's consent to regularly participate in Christian ministry outside of the local congregation or chaplaincy (e.g. ministry in another congregation, outreach ministry or ministry initiative).

## Physical Examinations and Clergy Wellness:

Clergy should practice good stewardship by setting the discipline of having thorough physical examinations with a licensed medical professional on a regular basis. In taking responsibility for their physical, spiritual and mental well-being, married clergy are to take time to be with their spouse and children. As conditions permit, all full-time clergy are to take at least one full day non-working day each week and annual vacation (in accordance with terms set forth in your contract).

## Vacation Policy:

Clergy are generally entitled to one month's vacation per calendar year (or as determined by contract). Vacation is to be taken in consultation with the wardens.

## Sabbatical Leave:

Sabbatical leave is a carefully planned period of time, usually three months after the first seven years of service to a congregation, in which a full-time priest is granted leave away from normal duties in order to spend an extended period of time in study, reflection, and renewal. Sabbatical leave is not a vacation, nor is it only continuing education; it is to promote a minister's spiritual, intellectual, and emotional renewal and growth. Sabbaticals are also a time for the minister to reflect on life, parish, mission, call and goals for the future, in order to be a more effective minister of the Gospel and shepherd God's people.

A sabbatical should combine the following elements:

1. Study and development

2. Space for reflection – time for self and for God

3. Refreshment

Congregations are strongly encouraged to join in a covenant with their clergy to provide for periods of a more stimulating and regenerative experience than is possible during short periods of continuing education.

**Eligibility:** All full-time paid priests who have served a minimum of five (5) years continuously in the parish granting the sabbatical or have served seven (7) full years as a priest in the ordained ministry are eligible for sabbatical leave. The recommended duration is three (3) months. It is not usual practice for a deacon to take sabbatical leave.

Following a sabbatical leave, the cleric is expected to commit to a minimum of one (1) more year of service in their present position.

**Financing:** The costs expected to be covered during the sabbatical include

• Continued full salary and benefits for the cleric on sabbatical.
• Costs incurred during sabbatical including travel, books, tuition as mutually agreed by the vestry.

• Cost of supply clergy.

**Planning a Sabbatical:** At least 12 months prior to the sabbatical, the priest should meet with the Senior Warden to discuss issues and questions involving a sabbatical leave. The bishop must be informed of and approve the sabbatical at least 12 month in advance and must approve the ministry plan for clergy to serve the congregation during the minister's absence.

The sabbatical proposal needs to address:
1. The reason for taking sabbatical.
2. A description of the proposed activities during sabbatical, not limited to but including opportunity for retreat and for study.
3. Ministry benefits from the sabbatical.
4. A plan through which the pastoral duties of the clergy will be met during sabbatical including:
a. Appropriate staffing during the sabbatical
b. Concerns about the life of the congregation during the sabbatical
c. Needs of the minister's family during sabbatical
5. A financial plan for funding the sabbatical and the possible extra expense of hiring supply clergy
6. A description of the way in which the sabbatical time will be assessed at its conclusion by both the priest and the congregation for its fruitfulness.
7. Six months prior to the sabbatical, the vestry should have a negotiated plan in writing outlining the agreed parameters of the sabbatical. The plan must also be submitted to the Bishop's office for his information and review.

**During Sabbatical:**

• The wardens meet weekly with staff or other clergy as appropriate.
• Communication with the priest on sabbatical will be maintained by him and those in charge of the congregation regarding significant pastoral concerns.
• The wardens communicate regularly and intentionally with the congregation.
• During sabbatical leave, the wardens will remain in office until the return of the priest.

**Post Sabbatical:** A reflection upon the sabbatical is written by the priest and submitted to the vestry and the bishop.

**Conclusion:** These guidelines are provided as a basic template for incorporating a sabbatical plan into a congregation's ministry. The following resources may prove helpful in further developing that plan:

**Resources:** The Alban Institute, "Clergy Renewal- the Alban Guide to Sabbatical Planning Grant & Scholarship Sources for Sabbatical Leave:

The Lilly Endowment, Inc.-National Clergy Renewal Program
2801 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208
317/916-7350
www.lillyendowment.org

Louisville Institute
1044 Alta Vista Rd.
Louisville, KY 40205
502/992-5432
www.louisville-institute.org

Note: there are many other places where sabbaticals and retreats are possible for clergy, including the Community of St. Mary Greenwich, NY and the Franciscans of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Bucksport, ME.

## Clergy Retreats and Conferences:

Personal clergy retreats provide a basis for the development of spirituality, and an annual personal retreat for all clergy is strongly recommended by the bishop. The annual ADLW clergy and spouse retreat provides an opportunity for the bishop and clergy to share in worship and teaching, develop mission and ministry and enhance the quality of collegiality expected among the clergy. The annual ADLW clergy retreat is mandatory for all resident and licensed clergy. Expenses for personal retreats and conferences should be shared by the clergy and the congregation. The Bishop asks each congregation to budget an annual amount for clergy continuing education and the costs of the annual ADLW clergy and spouse retreat expenses.

## The Pastoral Relationship:

Title II, Canon 2, defines the Pastoral Relationship of Diocesan Clergy. No priest or deacon is permitted to affiliate with a congregation of the diocese as an assisting member of the clergy without the express permission of the Bishop.

## Retired Clergy:

A former rector or assisting clergy must be circumspect in visiting or returning to their former congregation. Should a request be made by a parishioner to a former rector or assisting clergy to perform a marriage, funeral, baptism, etc., permission must first be granted by the incumbent rector/vicar and such ministry is to be performed only at his invitation. The former rector or assisting clergy must refrain from accepting any such request. Instruction of this policy before leaving a congregation will serve to fortify this position.

## Standards of Sexual Morality:

All clergy members of Anglican Diocese of the Living Word shall be under the obligation to model in their own lives, the received teaching of the Church that all its members are to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony (Title III, Canon 5). Clergy and laity of this Diocese are called to be exemplary in all spheres of morality. This is a condition of being appointed to a position of leadership, remaining in a position of leadership, or holding a license from the bishop. The blessing of same sex unions is prohibited. (Title III, Canon 5.2)

## Abuse Prevention:

All clergy functioning within this Diocese are required to receive training in the prevention of sexual harassment, adult sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse. This training must be updated every two years and is a requirement for maintaining a license from the bishop. All clergy and lay leaders must be familiar with the sexual misconduct policy of the diocese. Copies are available from Anglican Diocese of the Living Word office and are also found in the appendix of this Customary.

## Divorce:

Married clergy must care for their spouse and family in a manner that upholds the sanctity of marriage. The bishop must be informed if marital difficulties arise among the clergy so that he can provide sufficient opportunity for support and counseling.

If a member of the clergy is involved in divorce proceedings, the bishop is to be notified immediately. It may not always be possible for a clergy person involved in divorce proceedings to continue in office.

## Remarriage:

Marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, binding both to self-giving love and exclusive fidelity. The rite of Holy Matrimony is a worship service of the Church, in which the couple exchanges vows to uphold this covenant. They do this before God and in the presence of witnesses, who pray that God will bless their life together.

The covenantal union of man and woman in marriage signifies the communion between Christ, the heavenly bridegroom, and the Church, his holy bride (EPHESIANS 5:32). While all do not marry, Holy Matrimony symbolizes the union all Christians share with their Lord. In Holy Matrimony, God establishes and blesses the covenant between husband and wife and joins them to live together in a communion of love, faithfulness, and peace within the fellowship of Christ and his Church. God enables all married people to grow in love, wisdom, and godliness through a common life patterned on the sacrificial love of Christ.

Clergy who have been previously married and desire to be remarried, are required to obtain the diocesan bishop's consent for their remarriage, prior to engagement.

If the clergy person has been previously divorced, the bishop will appoint a senior member of the diocesan clergy to meet with the priest who desires to remarry. The priest will ask the following questions and make a report to the bishop either supporting or declining to support the request for remarriage. Final consent remains with the diocesan bishop.

How long were you previously married?

Why did your previous marriage end in divorce?

Was a third party involved in your previous marriage?

Were you and your previous spouse unequally yoked?

What attempts were made to reconcile with each other?

How long have you been divorced?

Are your children supportive of your remarriage?

Why are you convinced that your second marriage will be a lifelong commitment?

What pre-marital counselling will you undertake?

Should the bishop's consent for remarriage be given. The couple are required to undertake pre-marital preparation and sign the ACNA declaration below, which is to be sent to the bishop.

We, N.N. and N.N., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly

declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. We believe it is established by God for the procreation of children, and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord; for mutual joy, and for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; to maintain purity, so that husbands and wives, with all the household of God, might serve as holy and undefiled members of the Body of Christ; and for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom in family, church, and society, to the praise of his holy Name. We do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto."

**Clergy Supply Policies and Procedures:**

The Diocese maintains a list of clergy available for clergy supply. On request, this list will be sent to any parish, rector or vicar in need of a supply priest.

The recommended minimum remuneration is:

| | |
|---|---|
| One principal Sunday Holy Communion …….. | $150.00 |
| Other Sunday Holy Communion (each) …… | $ 75.00 |
| Weekday Holy Communion (each) …….…….. | $100.00 |

Mileage should be reimbursed at the standard rate per mile under current IRS rules.

**Interim Clergy:**

When there is a vacancy in any congregation of the Diocese, the Bishop or his representative will assist the vestry in engaging the services of interim clergy, to serve until such time as a new rector is called. If an interim priest-in-charge is appointed by the Bishop, he will serve with the understanding that he is not eligible for consideration as the new rector unless a prior agreement has been determined.

**The Dress of the Clergy:**

Clergy must be ever mindful that their personal appearance while in the performance of official duties in public. The appearance of clergy is not only a reflection upon themselves, but also upon their congregations and the diocese. Appropriate clerical attire, laundered and ironed, polished shoes, etc. is expected of all clergy of the diocese.

**Vestments:**

Non-Sacramental Services

- Cassock, Old English surplice and black preaching scarf/tippet

Sacramental Services

- Cassock, Old English surplice, and tippet
- Cassock, Old English surplice and stole.
- White alb and stole.

Clergy should consult the bishop regarding the regular use of any other vestments. The bishop determines what vestments are worn by clergy at diocesan services such as synod and installations.

**Vocational Deacons:**

Clergy who are ordained and licensed to serve as vocational deacons accept that they are not transitional deacons journeying toward presbyteral orders. They embrace their calling as permanent servants of Christ's Church in the diaconate. Unless the Bishop expressly gives consent, they will not endeavor to transition to presbyteral prders, and even then, only with the explicit consent and direction of the Bishop.

# SECTION II:

## MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE LAITY

### Acolytes:

Activities and training of acolytes is to be overseen by the rector of each congregation.

### Alcoholic Beverages:

It is the policy of the Bishop that no congregation will engage in the sale of alcoholic beverages or mixed drinks at any function of the congregation or any of its organizations.

The serving of alcoholic beverages (without charge) at wedding receptions, suppers, picnics, etc., either on or off the church property, is left to the discretion of the rector and the vestry. Where alcoholic beverages are served, alternative drinks (non-alcoholic) must be provided.

### Communicant:

1) **Communicant in Good Standing:**
   A baptized person who has been confirmed or received by a Bishop of this Church or a Bishop of the Anglican Communion, and who receives Holy Communion on a regular basis in a congregation of this diocese is a member in good standing.

2) **Lapsed Communicants:**
   It is both appropriate and necessary to expect lapsed communicants and those who have changed church affiliations and are seeking re-admittance to the Anglican Communion to be received back into communion following regular attendance and preparation under the direction of the minister.

3) **Refusal of Holy Communion:**
   Christians must come to the sacrament in penitence and charity. Excommunication (the disciplinary exclusion of a person from receiving communion) is always intended to encourage repentance and not meant to be a punishment. Excommunication is the most severe spiritual penalty the Church can inflict, and no priest should presume to pass this sentence except for the weightiest reasons: namely 'open and notorious sin' which is a scandal to the Church's fellowship, or 'malice and hatred' amongst members of the Church. No person shall be refused Holy Communion until they have been given an opportunity to provide an explanation to the priest of the circumstances involved. Laity are protected from arbitrary acts of excommunication by allowing those who have been refused the sacraments to appeal to the bishop.

   If a member of the clergy of this diocese be persuaded that any person who presents themselves to be a partaker of the Holy Communion ought not to be admitted to Holy Communion by reason of malicious and open contention with their neighbors, or other grave and open sin without repentance, he shall give an account of the same to the bishop within 14 days. Any person refused Holy Communion is to be encouraged to repent of their sin and amend their lives in order to be restored and received at the celebration of Holy Communion.

## Licensed Lay Ministries:

The Bishop will issue a license only at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the rector or vicar of the congregation in which the person will be serving. The license shall be issued for a period of time not to exceed three years and shall be revocable by the Bishop. Application forms seeking the bishop's license for lay ministers are available on the diocesan website.

# SECTION III:

## SACRAMENTS AND OTHER SERVICES

### SACRAMENTS

*"The Sacraments prescribed by Christ are badges and tokens of our profession as Christians, and, more particularly, they are trustworthy witnesses and effectual signs of God's grace and good will to us. By them God works invisibly in us, both arousing and also strengthening and confirming our faith in him. Christ our Lord has ordained two gospel Sacraments, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper"* (Article 25 - The 39 Articles of Religion, An Anglican Prayer Book, pg. 220)

### Baptism:

*"Baptism is a sign of the faith we profess and a mark that differentiates Christian persons from those who are not united to Christ; and it is also a sign of regeneration or new birth by which, as by an instrument, those who receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church, the promises of forgiveness of sin and of our adoption to be the sons of God are visibly signified and sealed, and faith is confirmed and grace increased by virtue of prayer to God. The baptism of young children is under all circumstances to be retained in the Church as a practice fully agreeable with the institution of Christ."* (Article 27- The 39 Articles of Religion, An Anglican Prayer Book, pg 221)

Except in emergencies, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism should be administered within the chief service on a Sunday or other major feast day. Each person to be baptized is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons, who are themselves practicing Christian believers who are active members of the Church. It is the required duty of the clergy to provide adequate pre-baptismal instruction to all sponsors, parents, and mature candidates.

In the baptism of infants and children, it is the Bishop's expectation that both parents will be an active communicant member of the congregation where the baptism is celebrated. In pastoral situations where only one parent is a baptized member of the congregation, the priest is to consult with the Bishop prior to the celebration of the baptism. Active participation in the life of the Christian community is expected of all parties involved, both before and after the baptism.

### The Lord's Supper:

*"The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves for each other, but is especially a Sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death. Accordingly, for those who rightly, worthily and with faith receive it the bread that is broken is a partaking of the body of Christ and the copy of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ* (1 Corinthians 10:16)

*Transubstantiation (the teaching that the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the actual flesh and blood of Christ) in the Supper of the Lord cannot be proved by Holy Scripture, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthrows the nature of a sacrament, and has given rise to many superstitions.*

*In the Lord's Supper the body of Christ is given, taken and eaten only in a heavenly or spiritual manner and faith is the means by which the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper.*

*The sacrament of the Lord's Super was not commanded by Christ to be reserved, carried about, lifted up or worshipped.* (Article 28 – The 39 Articles of Religion, An Anglican Prayer Book, pg 222)

The bishop reminds the ministers of the diocese that it is usual Anglican practice that if any of the consecrated bread and wine remain after the communion, it shall not be carried out of the Church; but the minister and other communicants shall reverently eat and drink the same. The bishop is agreeable for the consecrated communion to be extended, in exceptional circumstances, from the Sunday holy communion service to any of the baptized who are prevented from attending the celebration of Holy Communion in the congregation.

## OTHER SERVICES

### Confirmation:

Confirmation is a significant event in the spiritual life of a person making a public reaffirmation of his or her baptismal vows. It is a time of empowerment and commissioning, when one receives the apostolic laying-on-of-hands. Candidates for confirmation must be properly instructed in the Christian faith and life, repentant of their sins, and duly prepared to make a mature, public commitment to following Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Persons already confirmed by a bishop in the apostolic succession, but not in the Anglican Communion, may be received by the Bishop, following the appropriate instruction and preparation. Any member of the Anglican Communion who has lapsed from active participation in the life of the Church, or who for some other appropriate reason wishes to do so, may make a public re-affirmation in the presence of the Bishop at the time of his visitation.

Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows are three different, distinct categories of persons as traditionally understood in the practice of classical Anglicanism. Confirmation is for those who have been baptized but have never received the laying on of hands by a Bishop in apostolic succession. Reception is for those who have been baptized and confirmed in another church of the apostolic succession, (the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches), and now wish to be received into the Anglican Communion. Reaffirmation is for communicant members who wish to reaffirm their vows previously made at baptism and confirmation.

### Marriage:

Marriage is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman, binding both to self-giving love and exclusive fidelity. The rite of Holy Matrimony is a worship service of the Church, in which the couple exchanges vows to uphold this covenant. They do this before God and in the presence of witnesses, who pray that God will bless their life together.

The covenantal union of man and woman in marriage signifies the communion between Christ, the heavenly bridegroom, and the Church, his holy bride (Ephesians 5:32). While all do not marry, Holy Matrimony symbolizes the union all Christians share with their Lord.

In Holy Matrimony, God establishes and blesses the covenant between husband and wife and joins them to live together in a communion of love, faithfulness and peace within the fellowship of Christ and his Church. Great care should be taken to prepare all candidates for Holy Matrimony.

In preparing couples for Holy Matrimony, the clergy should comply with Diocesan Canons. The provincial canons expect that both candidates are baptized. It is also the responsibility of the clergy to understand local

law and to consult with the Bishop should they believe themselves compelled by law to act in a manner contrary to the teaching or canons of this Church. Clergy are not required to act as agents of the state in matters pertaining to civil marriage. In such circumstances, couples are encouraged to undertake a civil marriage following their service of Holy Matrimony.

Every congregation is expected to have clear and precise policies regarding marriages and the use of the church facilities for wedding receptions. Matters to be addressed include the use of flowers, candles, photographers, videos, music, rehearsals, fees, etc.

"*Marriage is an honorable, ordered relation and state instituted by God in the time before man and woman sinned. It signifies the mystical union between Christ and his Church. Christ adorned and beautified this ordered relation with both his presence and first miracle that he performed at a marriage in Cana of Galilee. Further, it is commended in Holy Scripture to be respected by all, and, therefore, it must not be entered upon, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly soberly, and in the fear of God; duly considering the causes for which marriage was ordained by God."* (An Anglican Prayer Book, pg. 138)

The Declaration of Intention of the Anglican Church in North America is required to be signed by every couple prior to marriage. A brief liturgy for the signing of the Declaration of the Intention appears on page 213 of the BCP 2019.

## Marriage in the Church of Divorced Persons:

Clergy of this diocese are required to petition the bishop for his consent to solemnize a marriage after divorce (the required form is available on the diocesan website and also found in the appendix of this Customary).

A petition to the Bishop is necessary when either or both parties have been previously married. A petition is something that seeks a decision. Therefore, certain information is necessary on which to base that decision. The pastoral relationship established between the priest and those coming to him seeking permission to marry in the Church is essential. The findings of the priest are the most important parts of the petition upon which the decision is based. Therefore, thorough counseling and teaching are expected.

In all requests for the Bishop's consent to the marriage of divorced persons, applications must be received by the Bishop at least 90 days before the marriage.

The Blessing of a Civil Marriage by a priest of the Church requires the same criteria and the consent of the Bishop, if there is a previous divorce with the previous spouse still living.

## Attendance and Participation at Same-Sex or Trans-Gender Wedding Services:

The bishop does not support or approve the attendance or participation of licensed clergy of this diocese at same-sex or trans-gender weddings.

## Funerals:

The Christian burial liturgy looks forward to eternal life, rather than backward to past events. It does not primarily focus on the achievements or failures of the deceased; rather it calls us to proclaim the Good News of Jesus and his triumph over death, even as we celebrate the life and witness of the deceased.

The readings used in the funeral or memorial service should always be drawn from the Bible and the prayers and music from the Christian tradition. A wake preceding the service and a reception following the service

are appropriate places for personal remembrances. The bishop discourages the presentation of personal eulogies as part of the funeral service. The burial liturgy is appropriately conducted in a church.

When the services of a minister cannot be obtained, a deacon or lay reader may officiate at the liturgy.

## Prayer Book Policy:

The Diocese of Anglican Diocese of the Living Word rejoices in our Anglican sacramental and liturgical heritage as an expression of the gospel, and we uphold the 1662 Book of Common Prayer as a true and authoritative standard for doctrine, discipline, and worship. The following liturgies and prayer books are approved by the bishop for regular use in public worship:

1) The Book of Common Prayer (1662)
2) The Book of Common Prayer (1928)
3) The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Prayer Book
4) An Anglican Prayer Book (2008) -the Prayer Book Society
5) The Anglican Church in North America BCP (2019)
6) The 1662 Book of Common Prayer: International Edition (2021)

The regular use of The Book of Common Prayer, 1979 has been retired and not approved for public worship in the diocese.

## The Comfortable Words:

At every celebration of Holy Communion in the Anglican Diocese of the Living Word, all four Comfortable Words shall be read whichever approved Prayer Book is in use. Where a rite permits the minister to read one or more of them, all four are to be read. Together they set forth the whole gospel, in order:

1. **The invitation.** *Hear what comfortable words our Savior Christ saith unto all that truly turn to him. Come unto me all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.* (Matthew 11:28) Christ calls the weary and the burdened to come to him.

2. **The source.** *So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* (John 3:16) Behind the invitation stands the love of the Father, who gave his Son.

3. **The mission.** *Hear also what Saint Paul saith. This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* (1 Timothy 1:15) The Son came for one purpose, to save sinners.

4. **The assurance.** *Hear also what Saint John saith. If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.* (1 John 2:1-2) This Word is for the Christian who has come, has believed and still sins. Jesus Christ stands before the Father on our behalf, and his sacrifice covers even this.

The Comfortable Words keep us from despair; the Prayer of Humble Access, which follows, keeps us from presumption. They are spoken to the minister at the Table no less than to the people, and the clergy are to hear them for themselves.

**Preaching:**

In the Anglican Diocese of the Living Word, preaching is usually the ministry of the priest. Deacons may make application to be authorized by the bishop to preach with the consent of the Rector of their congregation. The bishop requests that clergy and or wardens consult with him prior to inviting someone to preach or officiate at holy communion from outside the diocese.

## SECTION IV:

### CONGREGATION AND MISSION POLICIES

The Rector and Vestry shall be the governing body of the Congregation. Title II Canon 1, Section 5 of the diocesan canons declare the duties of the wardens and vestry.

**Vestry Officers:**

The wardens are designated as senior or junior, although sometimes called the "rector's warden" and the "people's warden".

**Financial Giving and Support of the Diocese:**

The Bishop encourages all congregations to give a minimum of 10% of their income to ministry and mission beyond the congregation. The diocese does not set assessments for each congregation; however, each congregation is asked to give generously to the diocese in order to finance the bishop and diocesan ministry. The bishop considers 10% of annual income to be appropriate financial support from each congregation.

## Where To Send Checks:

All checks sent to the diocese should be made out to "Diocese of Anglican Diocese of the Living Word" and marked for diocesan contribution, bishop's discretionary fund, etc.

Checks should be mailed to:

Anglican Diocese of the Living Word
9116 Center Street, Suite 204
Manassas, VA 20110

## Annual Reports:

Each rector and vestry are expected to comply with the requirements of the Diocese in preparing and submitting to the Diocesan Registrar the required annual report. These reports are usually undertaken through the reporting process of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA).

## Synod Delegates:

Each Congregation and Mission of the Diocese shall be entitled to two lay delegates. In addition, each Congregation having in excess of 200 eligible voters shall be entitled to one additional lay delegate for each 200 or fraction thereof above the first 200. The number of eligible voters shall be based upon the current annual report prepared and filed with the Diocese.

All canonically and licensed clergy are required to attend synod, unless excused in writing by the bishop.

## Prayer Schedule:

The bishop requests that each congregation use the Anglican Diocese of the Living Word prayer schedule during the Prayers of the People during weekly public worship to pray for the clergy, congregations and ministries of the diocese and the wider church. The prayer schedule is available on the diocesan website.

# SECTION V:

## DIOCESAN POLICY

### Episcopal Visitations:

During a visitation of the Bishop, the services are under his direction. The Bishop's visitation schedule is established months in advance. This requires the clergy to schedule with the bishop any special requests for visitations. The bishop usually meets with the vestry, clergy and other leadership when he makes a visitation.

### The Calling and Search Process for a Rector:

A prayerful process of discernment, including due diligence, shall be undertaken in the calling of a rector to a congregation.

The diocesan process is outlined in the appendix to this customary.

### Archdeacons and Deaneries:

Geographical groupings of congregations and missions are called archdeaconries. The purpose of the archdeaconries is to enable clergy and laity to share common interests and concerns and to work together with more strength than is sometimes available to single congregations. The Bishop appoints the Archdeacon, who serves at the Bishop's pleasure and represents the bishop in his archdeaconry.

### Missions:

Mission congregations are defined in Title II, Canon 1 Section 2 of the Diocesan canons.

### Title to Property:

Title II, Canon 3 of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Anglican Diocese of the Living Word provides that there is no denominational or diocesan ownership or financial interest in property owned by a congregation or mission of the diocese.

### Diocesan Policies

Please familiarize yourself with the following policies

1. Policy on Ministry Leadership and Employment
2. Policy for the Protection of Children
3. Policy for Reporting Allegations

# SECTION VI:

## COMMITTEES OF THE DIOCESE AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Title I, Canon 1 of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Anglican Diocese of the Living Word define the Order, Governance and Discipline of the Diocese.

### Diocesan Standing Committee:

The Diocesan Standing Committee serves as a council of advice to the Bishop. Together with the Bishop and subject to confirmation by the Synod, the Standing Committee acts to accept or deny an application for admission of a Congregation or Mission into the Diocese.

### Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee, consisting of members appointed by the Bishop with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee.

### Committee on Constitution and Canons:

The Committee on Constitution and Canons consists of three members, plus the Chancellor as an *ex officio member*. All proposed amendments to the Diocesan Constitution or Canons must be submitted to the Standing Committee no fewer than 15 days prior to the next Synod meeting.

### Reports Receiver:

If you or someone you know are in immediate danger or are in harm's way, please immediately call 9-1-1 or contact local law enforcement.

Pursuant to the Canonical Changes to Title V ratified by the delegates of the 2024 Synod of the Anglican Diocese of the Living Word, the position of Reports Receiver has been established to received reports of abuse and malfeasance by the clergy and licensed lay ministers of this diocese. On 06/06/2024 the Standing Committee of the Diocese approved unanimously the selection of Mrs. Sue Steege to serve a 3-year terms the Reports Receiver. If you have an allegation or report to make against a clergy member or licensed lay minister of this diocese you may contact Mrs. Sue Steege at: report@adlw.org you may also call and make a report at this phone number: (267) 406-0680

The details of a report and of any subsequent investigation shall be maintained in appropriate confidence until the report is dismissed for no reasonable grounds in accordance with Title V, Canon 5, Section 2, or the Reports Investigation Committee acts under Title V, Canon 6, Section 8.

A Helpful Title V flowchart to explain the processes laid out is available in the ADLW Constitution and Canons

# SECTION VII:

## DIOCESAN FORMS

Copies of the following Diocesan Forms may be found on our website at https://www.adlw.org/resources/general-diocese or by clicking the links below.

A) Petition for Bishop's Consent to Remarry after Divorce or Annulment
B) Eucharistic Minister
C) Eucharistic Minister Renewal
D) Licensed Catechist
E) Catechist Renewal
F) Lay Reader Application
G) Search process for a rector
H) Protection of Children

# SECTION VIII:

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

## Social Media Policy for Clergy

Developing Social Media guidelines at the Diocesan Level recognizes that our Ordination Vows and Annual Reaffirmation of Vows speaks to every aspect of our conduct. Our conduct on as ADLW licensed clergy on online platforms is as consequential as our conduct on the parish level. Please observe the following list of prohibited conduct.

Prohibited Conduct: Clergy may not engage in the following conduct with respect to the use of Social Media:

Developing Social Media guidelines at the Diocesan Level recognizes that our Ordination Vows and Annual Reaffirmation of Vows speaks to every aspect of our conduct. Our conduct on as ADLW licensed clergy on online platforms is as consequential as our conduct on the parish level. Please observe the following list of prohibited conduct.

Prohibited Conduct: Clergy may not engage in the following conduct with respect to the use of Social Media:

1. Posting, reposting, commenting favorably on, or liking content that reasonably could be construed as condoning the consumption of alcohol to excess, nor the consumption or use of any mind altering drug, whether legal or illegal.
2. Posting, reposting, commenting favorably on, or liking content that questions or denigrates the character of a fellow member of the clergy or a ministry leader.
3. Posting, reposting, commenting favorably on, or liking content that is derogatory to individuals based on race, color, ancestry, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or religion, including, but not limited to, slurs, jokes, stereotypes or other inappropriate remarks.
4. Posting, reposting, commenting favorably on, or liking content that threatens or advocates the use of violence against an individual or group of individuals.
5. Posting, reposting, commenting favorably on, or liking content that contains crude, obscene, or sexually explicit language, images, or acts.
6. Posting, reposting, commenting on, or liking content that reflects poorly on yourself, the diocese, or Christ Jesus and His church.
7. Posting, reposting, commenting on, or liking content that is libelous towards an individual or organization.
8. Posting, reposting, commenting on, or liking content that opposes the doctrine and standards of this diocese as contained in our foundational documents.
9. Posting, reposting, commenting on, or liking content that violates the Clergy Oath of Conformity.
10. Posting, reposting, commenting on, or liking content that endorses a political candidate or party in an election Revised October 2026