

Diocese of Moosonee Parish Leadership Guide

Roles

The roles of Incumbent and Churchwarden in the Anglican Church were established centuries ago. Each congregation has one Incumbent and two Churchwardens. With regard to Churchwardens, one is elected by the congregation at its annual “vestry” meeting and one is appointed by the Incumbent (the priest in charge of the parish). Together, the Incumbent and Churchwardens form the group of dedicated people who provide the core leadership for the local “vestry” or congregation.

This leadership triumvirate is quite Anglican in its creation – it is a pragmatic form of governance. The Churchwardens, by and large, look after the “temporal” affairs of the congregation – money, property and other such items. They always act jointly, never one without the other. The Bishop has the chief responsibility for oversight of ministry in all parishes in the Diocese. The Incumbent, as the Bishop’s representative in the parish on a day-to-day basis, looks after the liturgical, educational and pastoral concerns.

That might seem like a clean and simple way of delegating responsibilities and authority. There is, however, often not such a simple or easy separation of duties. There is very little if anything we do in our churches that can be separated from our mission and God’s holy work. Therefore, the Churchwardens will always work very closely with the Incumbent and vice versa, as nothing we do is totally “temporal” and everything we do here on earth is at least in part “spiritual”. How very Anglican!

As you proceed through this Guide, if you find quite a few areas of “shared responsibility” then you are reading this correctly. If you get a bit frustrated because of apparent overlap, do not be discouraged. Our system of governance which relies on teamwork and collaboration will be a strength and source of support.

The corporate form under which our congregations operate was also created through an Act of the Ontario Legislature. (See Canon 25). This means that the rules we refer to (our Canons or Canon law) are not “private rules” or bylaws of a private corporation; they are provincial statute. We do not operate as “ordinary corporations” either at the Diocesan or at the Vestry level. Although you may have

a background in business or law, or have held responsible positions in other organizations, much of what has been learned elsewhere will translate into our governance structure and rules. However, there will be twists along the way.

Church leaders should become familiar with The Diocese of Moosonee Canons, and policies as there are some significant differences in how we must work together both legally and according to our Anglican traditions.

A parish is an ecclesiastical unit within the diocese that is under the oversight of an Incumbent. As an episcopally-led church, we acknowledge that our bishop has ultimate responsibility for the mission and ministry of the diocese. However, our bishop does not work alone. As a synodical church, authority is shared amongst the clergy, the laity and the bishops and we work collaboratively to support the mission of our diocese, each using the gifts given by God to extend the kingdom.

Traditionally a parish or congregation has been associated with a defined mission field or geographic area set apart by the diocesan bishop. Parish boundaries have been created by the diocesan bishop in consultation with Diocesan Executive Council, and congregations have been established with the permission of the diocesan bishop, to provide a gathering place for worship in the community and to serve the local community. The parish church is tangible evidence of our mission and of God's reign here on earth and gives local expression to the mission and priorities of the diocese.

In more recent years, some congregations have come together through common language or country of origin/ancestry; these congregations have not always had a geographic mission field associated with their ministry.

Although the incumbent has oversight of a parish, the incumbent is acting on behalf of the bishop. When an incumbent is appointed to a parish the bishop says to the priest, in the liturgy of installation, "take this charge which is mine and thine..." The incumbent has no authority, separate and apart from the bishop but is always carrying out ministry on behalf of the bishop.

Our parishes and congregations have a fairly autonomous form of governance and management. However, the parish always exists in the context of the mission of the diocese. It delivers ministry to the local community on behalf of the whole diocese. In that respect, our parishes and our diocese always exist and work together in mutuality of interest.

Parishes and congregations are not permanent structures. They have a life cycle. They are planted; they grow; sometimes they die; sometimes they transform. There is a mutual stewardship responsibility, shared between the local ministry and the rest of our diocese, which obliges us to work together through all stages of the life cycle. It goes beyond congregational self-designation and self-determination. This responsibility includes a discernment of what to do when a ministry has insufficient resources.

Incumbent

Incumbents are to share responsibilities with churchwardens and lay leaders in the parish. The primary role of the incumbent is to oversee all aspects of parish life and to provide leadership, encouragement, and spiritual support in the parish and in the wider community.

Responsibilities:

These responsibilities are based upon and grow from the responsibilities assumed at ordination. They include the following:

- * arrange the liturgies and worship life of the parish, including music, so that the corporate and individual lives and ministries of the parish community are given expression;
- * provide general leadership with a view to fostering a strong spiritual, scriptural and sacramental base within the community so that it may reach out beyond the parish;
- * oversee the pastoral life of the parish, identifying and training pastoral care team members and providing administrative and communication procedures to support a healthy pastoral care ministry and other volunteer ministries in the parish;
- * ensure that dynamic Christian education programs are available to people of all ages in the parish and to oversee their delivery;
- * oversee the administrative work that supports the parish, ensuring that programs and activities are coordinated so as to contribute to the effectiveness of parish life;
- * together with churchwardens, lay leaders and vestry, manage the affairs of the parish with appropriate regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- * seek opportunities for ecumenical collaboration and for building mutual understanding and respect among churches within the parish;

- * share in the work of the diocese and to support colleagues in ministry, taking part in committee work and diocesan activities;
- * attend inductions, ordinations, deanery great chapter, clericus and information days;
- * keep up to date with changes in Canons and Policies and with other administrative matters that affect the diocese and the parish;
- * keep parish records and report periodically as required;
- * preside at vestry meetings, working with vestry to establish goals, manage the parish's resources, and develop stewardship programs;
- * perform other duties as may from time to time be required by the regional dean, the archdeacon, or the bishop.

The Vestry

The vestry is the voting membership body of a congregation. It is not necessarily the same as the congregation since a congregation may include people who are not part of the vestry. For example, those under the age of 16 are not eligible to be members of vestry. Also, those who are members of another denomination or do not describe themselves as Anglicans, but worship with an Anglican congregation, may be considered part of the congregation, but are not eligible to be members of vestry. Similarly, people with cottages or those visiting may worship in two churches but can only be members of one congregation's vestry.

Clergy appointed to a parish in a capacity other than Incumbent, Priest-in-Charge or Rector are not members of the Parish Corporation, but are entitled to attend corporation meetings with voice but no vote.

How Vestries are Formed

In all churches or places of worship of the Anglican Church of Canada within the Diocese of Moosonee, the Vestry shall consist of all those members of a congregation who are:

- (a) baptized, and
- (b) recognized by the parish community as full participants in the worship and life of the community.

A person to qualify as a Churchwarden shall:-

- a. be not less than twenty-one (21) years of age;
- b. be a Lay Member of the vestry of the church in question;

- c. have received the Sacrament of Holy Communion at least three (3) times during the previous year in the church in which he/she would serve as a Churchwarden;
- d. not be the spouse of the Incumbent or any assistant, associate or honorary Cleric of the parish;
- e. be in compliance with the Diocese of Moosonee Bishop's Policy "Screening in Faith";
- f. not be the spouse of the other Churchwarden, any Deputy Churchwarden, Treasurer, and Envelope Secretary.

Persons Entitled to Vote at Vestry

Persons sixteen (16) years of age, are baptized, and recognized by the parish community as full participants in the worship and life of the community. Unavoidable absence from worship with the congregation through illness or absence from home, shall not prevent a person from being entitled to vote.

Responsibilities of Church Wardens

It is the overall responsibility of the church wardens to organize the conduct of parish affairs so that the parish, with the spiritual guidance of the rector, will be able to effectively carry out its mission as a Christian community. To that end, and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it is the responsibility of the wardens to work in harmony with the incumbent or rector to take all necessary measures to ensure that, to the best of their abilities:

- i) the fabric of the parish properties are suitable for the exercise of the ministry of the parish and are duly cared for,
- ii) the financial affairs are cared for and recorded in an orderly and accurate manner so as to properly reflect the financial state of the parish, including accounts for which the wardens are directly responsible, and for all accounts of organizations using funds collected for use in the parish,
- iii) appropriate measures are taken to maintain the financial well - being of the parish,
- iv) all appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety and well - being of all persons on church property, and the property itself is adequately protected and insured,
- v) newcomers and visitors to the parish are welcomed and encouraged to enter into the life of the parish,

- vi) the various lay organizations are established, administered and co-ordinated with each other, utilizing the talents of as many lay people as is possible,
- vii) the rector and his/her family are properly housed,
- viii) the standards of the Anglican Church are upheld, while at the same time the parish is allowed to change and grow in accordance with the developing life of the congregation and to suit the changing conditions and needs of the local community,
- ix) issues of a non personal nature which may arise between laity and clergy are resolved expeditiously,
- x) all measures necessary for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the parish are attended to during the period when the parish is without a rector pending a new appointment,
- xi) parish matters which are required to come to the attention of the regional dean, archdeacon, and the bishops are properly presented and dealt with, and
- xii) parish records are kept in a safe and adequate manner,

All responsibilities shall be carried out in such a way as to enable the incumbent or rector and the laity to work together to jointly spread the Gospel and minister to each other and the community in which the parish is located and to meet their obligations and responsibilities beyond the parish boundaries.

Deacon

Deacons assist bishops and priests and have a special responsibility to minister in Christ's name to those who are poor, sick, suffering, and in any kind of need. Prior to ordination to the diaconate the candidate is expected to have a personal spirituality that demonstrates an integration of body, mind, and spirit working towards wholeness. This spirituality manifests a maturity that is demonstrated not only in regular participation in the liturgical life of the community, but also in an explicit commitment to spiritual growth, and a disciplined life of prayer. In addition, the candidate must demonstrate competence in the scriptures and church history, ethical decision-making, worship, as well as knowledge of Christian theology. Deacons are not members of the Parish Corporation, but are entitled to attend corporation meetings with voice but no vote.

Adapted from documents of the Dioceses of Toronto, Montreal, Huron, Fredericton and Nova Scotia PEI

See relevant Canons below.

CANON 23

The Composition of the Vestry

1. The Vestry shall consist of all those members of a congregation who are:

- (a) baptized, and
- (b) recognized by the parish community as full participants in the worship and life of the community.

2. Before a Vestry can be constituted, there shall be in the Parish or Congregation at least five persons who possess the qualifications stated under Section 1 of this Canon.

3. A properly constituted and regularly organized Vestry shall have two Church Wardens.

CANON 25

Of the Officers of the Vestry

1. The Church Wardens:

a) Of the Selection of Church Wardens:

(i) At the Annual Vestry Meeting of each organized Congregation, two Church Wardens shall be selected from among the members of the Vestry, one to be elected by a simple majority of the members of the Vestry present, and one to be appointed by the Incumbent. A Parish may choose to elect one or more Deputy Wardens from among the members of the Vestry.

(ii) If the Vestry declines or neglects to elect a Church warden, then the Incumbent shall appoint one to fill the vacancy.

(iii) If the Incumbent declines or neglects to appoint a Church warden, then the Vestry shall elect one to fill the vacancy.

(iv) The Church Wardens shall hold office for one year, or until the selection of their successors.

(v) A vacancy caused by death, removal, or resignation shall be filled by calling a special Meeting of the Vestry for the election of a People's Church Warden, or by the Incumbent appointing an Incumbent's Church Warden at Divine Service on a Sunday, or other day when a regular service is held.

b) The Rights, Powers, and Duties of Church Wardens:

(i) As provided by the Church Temporalities Act (1841-3, Vic., Ch. 74) the Church Wardens shall be a Corporation with the perpetual succession under the name of "The Church Wardens of the Church of in the ".

(ii) For the purposes of the Religious Institutions Act (Chapter 344, R.S.O., 1927) the Church Wardens, with the Incumbent, shall be deemed to be trustees.

As a Corporation, the Church Wardens:

(iii) Cannot exercise their corporate powers separately; that is, one cannot act without the consent of the other, and

(iv) They shall represent the interests of the Church for which they were so elected and appointed and of the members thereof, and shall and may sue and be sued, answer and be answered unto in all manner of suits and actions whatsoever, and may prosecute indictments, presentments and other criminal proceedings for and in respect of the Church and members whom they represent, and all matters and things appertaining thereto.

(v) In all matters not lying solely in the right and power of the Church Wardens by virtue of Acts of Parliament, it shall be their duty to carry out all legitimate directions of the Diocesan Synod and of the Vestry which they represent.

Upon the assumption of office the Church Wardens shall:

(vi) Receive from their predecessors the form containing the inventory of all Church property. They shall check the accuracy thereof, and then retain the Inventory Form in their possession until such time as they pass same to their successors in office.

(vii) Have jointly with the Incumbent custody of all monies and goods belonging to the Parish or Congregation and shall be responsible (a) for the entry of the amount of the offerings of the people in a book kept for that purpose, to include but not restricted to the entry of sums received each service in the vestry book, having been counted by two persons who have initialed such entry; (b) for keeping of records with regard to each individual's donations and issuing of receipts for tax purposes as a function distinct and separate from that of the Treasurer; and (c) for the safe custody of all parochial or congregational records and books.

(viii) Cause all Church buildings and property to be insured adequately by a reputable insurance company or companies,

(ix) Cause all Church buildings and property to be kept in good condition and shall ensure that necessary repairs to the same are made.

(x) Report, at the Annual Vestry Meeting, on the material state of the Church, the assets and liabilities, the receipts and expenditures, the condition of buildings and the amount of insurance carried.

(xi) Maintain good order and quiet in Church at the time of Divine Service, and shall prosecute all offenses against the same.

(xii) Attend the visitations of the Bishop, and the Regional Dean whenever cited, and shall submit such lists, records, books, and registers as may be requested by the same.

(xiii) Deliver all books, monies, property, and chattels to their successors in office, upon relinquishing their office, and

(xiv) Perform their other duties as defined in the Canons of the Diocese.

2. The Vestry Clerk:

a) The Church Wardens, in consultation with the Incumbent and the Select Vestry shall appoint a Vestry Clerk, whose appointment shall be subject to the approval of the Vestry at each Annual Meeting.

b) If necessary, the Select Vestry shall arrange for suitable remuneration for the Vestry Clerk.

c) The Vestry Clerk, or in absence thereof, a secretary appointed by the Chair shall enter the minutes of all meetings of the Vestry and of the Select Vestry in a book or books kept for this purpose.

d) The Vestry Clerk shall perform duties as defined by the Select Vestry.

3. The Auditor:

a) The Church Wardens, in consultation with the Incumbent and the Select Vestry shall appoint an Auditor, or Auditors, whose appointment shall be subject to the approval of the Vestry at each of its Annual Meetings.

b) If necessary, the Select Vestry shall arrange for suitable remuneration for the Auditor.

c) The Auditor shall inspect the parochial or congregational accounts annually, and shall submit a report therein to the Vestry at each of its Annual Meetings.

d) The Auditor shall act under the direction of the Select Vestry.

4. The Treasurer:

a) If necessary, the Church Wardens, in consultation with the Incumbent and the Select Vestry, shall appoint a Treasurer, whose appointment shall be subject to the approval of the Vestry at each of its Annual Meetings.

b) If necessary, the Select Vestry shall arrange for suitable remuneration for the Treasurer.

c) The Treasurer shall perform all duties as defined by the Select Vestry.

5. The Sexton:

a) If necessary, the Church Wardens, in consultation with the Incumbent and the Select Vestry, shall appoint a Sexton, whose appointment shall be subject to the approval of the Vestry at each of its Annual Meetings.

b) If necessary, the Select Vestry shall arrange for suitable remuneration for the Sexton.

c) The Sexton shall perform all duties as defined by the Church Wardens.

CANON 26

Of The Select Vestry

1. The Composition of the Select Vestry:

The Select Vestry shall be composed of:

- (i) The Incumbent
- (ii) The Church Wardens
- (iii) The Vestry Clerk
- (iv) The Treasurer, if any
- (v) The Lay Delegates to the Great Chapter
- (vi) Not more than six members of the Vestry, who shall be elected at the Annual Vestry Meeting and
- (vii) An equal number of members of the Vestry, who shall be appointed by the Incumbent.

2. Of Meetings of the Select Vestry:

- (a) The Select Vestry shall hold regular meetings at least four times each year, at which the Incumbent shall preside, or in the absence thereof, either the Incumbent's Warden or the People's Warden, in that order, or shall designate or otherwise provide for the appointment of a Chairperson.
- (b) A quorum of the Select Vestry shall consist of a clear majority of its members, of which majority the Chairperson shall be one.

3. The Duties of the Select Vestry:

It shall:

- (a) collect and count, or cause to be collected and counted, the offerings of the people received at Divine Service,
- (b) raise the funds required for the purpose of the Congregation or Parish,
- (c) inform the Congregation fully of the plans, activities, and needs of the Church,
- (d) make recommendations concerning the maintenance and insurance of Church property,
- (e) co-ordinate the activities of the several parochial organizations,
- (f) organize the Congregation or Parish for the making of canvasses and surveys,
- (g) prepare a yearly budget to be presented at the Annual Vestry Meeting, and
- (h) form its own Committees to deal with finance, property, and other temporalities of the Church.