**Ascension & St. George’s**

**Rector Position Description**

**Appendices: resources from book of common prayer & canons**

**From An Outline of the Faith, Commonly called the Catechism**

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| Q. | What is the Church? |
| A. | The Church is the community of the New Covenant. |
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| Q. | How is the Church described in the Bible? |
| A. | The Church is described as the Body of which Jesus Christ is the Head and of which all baptized persons are members. It is called the People of God, the New Israel, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and the pillar and ground of truth. … |
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| Q. | What is the mission of the Church? |
| A. | The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. |
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| Q. | How does the Church pursue its mission? |
| A. | The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love. |
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| Q. | Through whom does the Church carry out its mission? |
| A. | The church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members. |

***The Ministry***

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| Q. | Who are the ministers of the Church? |
| A. | The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons. |
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| Q. | What is the ministry of the laity? |
| A. | The ministry of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church. |
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| Q. | What is the ministry of a bishop? |
| A. | The ministry of a bishop is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as apostle, chief priest, and pastor of a diocese; to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church; to proclaim the Word of God; to act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church; and to ordain others to continue Christ's ministry.  |

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| Q. | What is the ministry of a priest or presbyter? |
| A. | The ministry of a priest is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the Gospel; to administer the sacraments; and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God. |
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| Q. | What is the ministry of a deacon? |
| A. | The ministry of a deacon is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a servant of those in need; and to assist bishops and priests in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. |
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| Q. | What is the duty of all Christians? |
| A. | The duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God. |

**From the Canons of the Episcopal Church**

**I.13: Of Parishes and Congregations**

***Sec. 1.*** Every Congregation of this Church shall belong to the Church in the Diocese in which its place of worship is situated; a Member of the Clergy serving a Cure having Congregations in more than one jurisdiction shall have such rights, including vote, in the Convention of the jurisdiction in which the Member of the Clergy has canonical residence as may be provided in the Canons of that diocese and may be granted seat and voice in the jurisdiction(s) in which the Member of the Clergy does not have canonical residence.

***Sec. 2***

(a) The ascertainment and defining of the boundaries of existing Parishes or Parochial Cures, as well as the establishment of a new Parish or Congregation, and the formation of a new Parish within the limits of any other Parish, is left to the action of the several Diocesan Conventions.

(b) Until a Canon or other regulation of a Diocesan Convention shall have been adopted, the formation of new Parishes, or the establishment of new Parishes or Congregations within the limits of existing Parishes, shall be vested in the Bishop of the Diocese, acting by and with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee thereof, and, in case of there being no Bishop, of the Ecclesiastical Authority.

***Sec. 3***

(a) Where Parish boundaries are not defined by law, or settled by Diocesan Authority under Section 2 of this Canon, or are not otherwise settled, they shall be defined by the civil divisions of the State as follows: Parochial boundaries shall be the limits as fixed by law, of a village, town, township, incorporated borough, city, or of some division of any such civil district, which may be recognized by the Bishop, acting with the advice and consent of the Standing Committee, as constituting the boundaries of a Parish.

(b) If there be but one Church or Congregation within the limits of such village, town, township, borough, city, or such division of a civil district, as herein provided, the same shall be deemed the Parochial Cure of the Member of the Clergy having charge thereof. If there be two or more Churches or Congregations therein, it shall be deemed the Cure of the Members of the Clergy thereof.

(c) This Canon shall not affect the legal rights of property of any Parish or Congregation.

**I.14: Of Parish Vestries**

***Sec. 1.*** In every Parish of this Church the number, mode of selection, and term of office of Wardens and Members of the Vestry, with the qualifications of voters, shall be such as the State or Diocesan law may permit or require, and the Wardens and Members of the Vestry selected under such law shall hold office until their successors are selected and have qualified.

***Sec. 2.*** Except as provided by the law of the State or of the Diocese, the Vestry shall be agents and legal representatives of the Parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy.

***Sec. 3.*** Unless it conflicts with the law as aforesaid, the Rector, or such other member of the Vestry designated by the Rector, shall preside in all the meetings of the Vestry.

**II.5: Of the Music of the Church**

It shall be the duty of every Member of the Clergy to see that music is used as an offering for the glory of God and as a help to the people in their worship in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer and as authorized by the rubrics or by the General Convention of this Church. To this end the Member of the Clergy shall have final authority in the administration of matters pertaining to music. In fulfilling this responsibility the Member of the Clergy shall seek assistance from persons skilled in music. Together they shall see that music is appropriate to the context in which it is used.

**III.9.6. Rectors and Priests-in-Charge and Their Duties**

**(a)**

(1) The Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall have full authority and responsibility for the conduct of the worship and the spiritual jurisdiction of the Parish, subject to the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the Constitution and Canons of this Church, and the pastoral direction of the Bishop.

(2) For the purposes of the office and for the full and free discharge of all functions and duties pertaining thereto, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall at all times be entitled to the use and control of the Church and Parish buildings together with all appurtenances and furniture, and to access to all records and registers maintained by or on behalf of the congregation.

**(b)**

(1) It shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to ensure all persons in their charge receive Instruction in the Holy Scriptures; in the subjects contained in An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism; in the doctrine, discipline, and worship of this Church; and in the exercise of their ministry as baptized persons.

(2) It shall be the duty of Rectors or Priests-in-Charge to ensure that all persons in their charge are instructed concerning Christian stewardship, including:

(i) reverence for the creation and the right use of God's gifts;

(ii) generous and consistent offering of time, talent, and treasure for the mission and ministry of the Church at home and abroad;

(iii) the biblical standard of the tithe for financial stewardship; and

(iv) the responsibility of all persons to make a will as prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer.

(3) It shall be the duty of Rectors or Priests-in-Charge to ensure that persons be prepared for Baptism. Before baptizing infants or children, Rectors or Priests-in-Charge shall ensure that sponsors be prepared by instructing both the parents and the Godparents concerning the significance of Holy Baptism, the responsibilities of parents and Godparents for the Christian training of the baptized child, and how these obligations may properly be discharged.

(4) It shall be the duty of Rectors or Priests-in-Charge to encourage and ensure the preparation of persons for Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and to be ready to present them to the Bishop with a list of their names.

(5) On notice being received of the Bishop's intention to visit any congregation, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall announce the fact to the congregation. At every visitation it shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge and the Wardens, Vestry or other officers, to exhibit to the Bishop the Parish Register and to give information as to the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal, in such categories as the Bishop shall have previously requested in writing.

(6) The Alms and Contributions, not otherwise specifically designated, at the Administration of the Holy Communion on one Sunday in each calendar month, and other offerings for the poor, shall be deposited with the Rector or Priest-in-Charge or with such Church officer as the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall appoint to be applied to such pious and charitable uses as the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall determine. When a Parish is without a Rector or Priest-in-Charge, the Vestry shall designate a member of the Parish to fulfill this function.

(7) Whenever the House of Bishops shall publish a Pastoral Letter, it shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to read it to the congregation on some occasion of public worship on a Lord's Day, or to cause copies of the same to be distributed to the members of the congregation, not later than thirty days after receipt.

(8) Whenever the House of Bishops shall adopt a Position Paper, and require communication of the content of the Paper to the membership of the Church, the Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall so communicate the Paper in the manner set forth in the preceding section of this Canon.

**(c)**

(1) It shall be the duty of the Rector or Priest-in-Charge to record in the Parish Register all Baptisms, Confirmations (including the canonical equivalents in Canon I.17.1(d)), Marriages and Burials.

(2) The registry of each Baptism shall be signed by the officiating Member of the Clergy.

(3) The Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall record in the Parish Register all persons who have received Holy Baptism, all communicants, all persons who have received Confirmation (including the canonical equivalents in Canon I.17.1(d), all persons who have died, and all persons who have been received or removed by letter of transfer. The Rector or Priest-in-Charge shall also designate in the Parish Register the names of

(1) those persons whose domicile is unknown,

(2) those persons whose domicile is known but are inactive, and

(3) those families and persons who are active within the congregation.

The Parish Register shall remain with the congregation at all times.

**From the Book of Common Prayer, Preface to the Ordination Rites**

The Holy Scriptures and ancient Christian writers make it clear that from the apostles' time, there have been different ministries within the Church. In particular, since the time of the New Testament, three distinct orders of ordained ministers have been characteristic of Christ's holy Catholic Church. First, there is the order of bishops who carry on the apostolic work of leading, supervising, and uniting the Church.  Secondly, associated with them are the presbyters, or ordained elders, in subsequent times generally known as priests. Together with the bishops, they take part in the governance of the Church, in the carrying out of its missionary and pastoral work, and in the preaching of the Word of God and administering his holy Sacraments. Thirdly, there are deacons who assist bishops and priests in all of this work. It is also a special responsibility of deacons to minister in Christ's name to the poor, the sick, the suffering, and the helpless.

The persons who are chosen and recognized by the Church as being called by God to the ordained ministry are admitted to these sacred orders by solemn prayer and the laying on of episcopal hands. It has been, and is, the intention and purpose of this Church to maintain and continue these three orders; and for this purpose these services of ordination and consecration are appointed. No persons are allowed to exercise the offices of bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church unless they are so ordained, or have already received such ordination with the laying on of hands by bishops who are themselves duly qualified to confer Holy Orders.

It is also recognized and affirmed that the threefold ministry is not the exclusive property of this portion of Christ's catholic Church, but is a gift from God for the nurture of his people and the proclamation of his Gospel everywhere. Accordingly, the manner of ordaining in this Church is to be such as has been, and is, most generally recognized by Christian people as suitable for the conferring of the sacred orders of bishop, priest, and deacon.

**From the Book of Common Prayer, Ordination of a Priest**

*The Bishop addresses the ordinand as follows*My *brother*, the Church is the family of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. All baptized people are called to make Christ known as Savior and Lord, and to share in the renewing of his world. Now you are called to work as pastor, priest, and teacher, together with your bishop and fellow presbyters, and to take your share in the councils of the Church.

As a priest, it will be your task to proclaim by word and deed the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to fashion your life in accordance with its precepts. You are to love and serve the people among whom you work, caring alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. You are to preach, to declare God's forgiveness to penitent sinners, to pronounce God's blessing, to share in the administration of Holy Baptism and in the celebration of the mysteries of Christ's Body and Blood, and to perform the other ministrations entrusted to you.

In all that you do, you are to nourish Christ's people from the riches of his grace, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

My *brother*, do you believe that you are truly called by God and his Church to this priesthood?

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| *Answer* |  I believe I am so called. |
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| *Bishop* | Do you now in the presence of the Church commit yourself to this trust and responsibility? |
| *Answer* |  I do. |

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| *Bishop* | Will you respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of your bishop? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you be diligent in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures, and in seeking the knowledge of such things as may make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you endeavor so to minister the Word of God and the sacraments of the New Covenant, that the reconciling love of Christ may be known and received? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you undertake to be a faithful pastor to all whom you are called to serve, laboring together with them and with your fellow ministers to build up the family of God? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you do you best to pattern your life [and thatof your family, or household, or community] in accordance with the teachings of Christ, so that you may be a wholesome example to your people? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you persevere in prayer, both in public and in private, asking God's grace, both for yourself and for others, offering all your labors to God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and in the sanctification of the Holy Spirit? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | May the Lord who has given you the will to do these things give you the grace and power to perform them. |
| *Answer* |  Amen. |

**From the Book of Common Prayer, Ordination of a Deacon**

*The Bishop addresses the ordinand as follows*My *brother*, every Christian is called to follow Jesus Christ, serving God the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit. God now calls you to a special ministry of servanthood directly under your bishop. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.

As a deacon in the Church, you are to study the Holy Scriptures, to seek nourishment from them, and to model your life upon them. You are to make Christ and his redemptive love known, by your word and example, to those among whom you live, and work, and worship. You are to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world. You are to assist the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments, and you are to carry out other duties assigned to you from time to time. At all times, your life and teaching are
to show Christ's people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself.

My *brother*, do you believe that you are truly called by God and his Church to the life and work of a deacon?

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| *Answer* |  I believe I am so called. |
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| *Bishop* | Do you now in the presence of the Church commit yourself to this trust and responsibility? |
| *Answer* |  I do. |
|   |   |
| *Bishop* | Will you respect and be guided by the pastoral direction and leadership of your bishop? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |

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| *Bishop* | Will you be faithful in prayer, and in the reading and study of the Holy Scriptures? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you look for Christ in all others, being ready to help and serve those in need? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
|   |   |
| *Bishop* | Will you do you best to pattern your life [and that of your family, or household, or community] in accordance with the teachings of Christ, so that you may be a wholesome example to all people? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
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| *Bishop* | Will you in all things seek not your glory but the glory of the Lord Christ? |
| *Answer* |  I will. |
|   |   |
| *Bishop* | May the Lord by his grace uphold you in the service he lays upon you. |
| *Answer* |  Amen. |

**From the Book of Common Prayer, Letter of Institution of a Minister**

*N.N.,* Presbyter of the Church of God, you have been called to work together with your Bishop and fellow-Presbyters as a pastor, priest, and teacher, and to take your share in the councils of the Church.

Now, in accordance with the Canons, you have been selected to serve God in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Church [of] \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

This letter is a sign that you are fully empowered and authorized to exercise this ministry, accepting its privileges and responsibilities as a priest of this Diocese, in communion with your Bishop.

Having committed yourself to this work, do not forget the trust of those who have chosen you. Care alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor. By your words, and in your life, proclaim the Gospel. Love and serve Christ's people. Nourish them, and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come.

May the Lord, who has given you the will to do these things, give you the grace and power to perform them.

Given under my hand and seal, in the city of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, on the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ year of my consecration.

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bishop of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.