

# Guide for Discernment of Ordered Ministry

REVISED WINTER 2025



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**The Anglican Diocese of Edmonton**

**Examining Chaplains**

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## Introduction

Discernment for ordination/ordered<sup>1</sup> ministry is a work of the whole people of God at prayer. From the earliest times of the Church, we find the holy orders of bishop, presbyter/priest<sup>2</sup>, and deacon in the life of the Christian community. These are roles that serve the life of the church directly and shape a particular sign and witness of Christ in the world. While they do not represent a higher calling among the multiplicities of Christian vocations, ordination (or perhaps more appropriately ordering for ministry) does consecrate some individuals to particular, weighty, life-long, visible, public, and often difficult work. As such, it is right that the Church takes particular care in helping people discern such calls.

This document seeks to outline the processes and procedures for those engaging in discernment for ordered ministry in the Diocese of Edmonton.

### *The Discernment of Any Christian Vocation*

Throughout the scriptures, God's voice speaks to create new life and to further the promises of God in creation. The person of Jesus is God's Word among us, in our flesh, through whom God invites us to join in the redemption of the world. We see this invitation in the way that Jesus called individuals from their usual work (Mark 1:16-20) or inspired them to live their same life in a new way (John 8:1-11). Sometimes the human response

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<sup>1</sup> It has been common for a long time to speak of those who are trained and uniquely set apart by the church to exercise spiritual, prophetic, sacramental, and pastoral leadership as ordained ministers. Use of this terminology, however, can sometimes contribute to a misunderstanding of ministry, as though ministry is only fully blessed or ordained by God if it is carried out by someone who serves in a clerical role. While, in the Anglican tradition, those whose ministries are ordered by the specific responsibilities which are entrusted to those called to serve as deacons, priests, and bishops do have particular and important roles to play in the life and work of the church, God has in fact so ordained it that, in Christ, all who are baptized share in ministry together. For that reason, some Anglican and ecumenical contexts are increasingly referring more to ordered ministry rather than ordination or the ordained. It is not that one set of vocabulary is better or worse, nor a matter of this way of speaking being right and another wrong. The choice to begin adopting this emerging terminology more often in this document is simply a way of emphasizing something about the ministry of all the faithful which the Diocese of Edmonton wants to particularly underscore.

<sup>2</sup> In the language of the New Testament, we see ministry described using quite a wide variety of titles. Already present at this stage are three particular foci of ministry that bear the names of *diakonos*, *presbyteros*, and *episkopos* – commonly translated into English as deacon, presbyter/priest, and bishop/overseer. Along with a number of other churches, Anglicans in Canada tend to be much more accustomed to referring to their ordered ministers of word, sacrament, and pastoral care as priests. Here again, however, the use of words can occasionally cause confusion. The New Testament is clear in several places that, in Christ, all members of the Body participate in a holy priesthood. Those ordered to the ministry of presbyter focus their baptismal priestly ministry in a particular way in their leadership of a gathered Christian community, but they are not in fact the only priests. For that reason, this document also seeks to refer more often to presbyters and the presbyterate rather than priests and priesthood – or at least to vary the usage of the two.

is immediate, and sometimes it takes time to emerge.

Listening for and attending to the voice of God in Christ speaking into our life is often called discernment. It may be an asking of our Lord, “what would you have me do today (or in my life)?” Or a more patterned revelation of who God has made us to be in the church’s eyes and the gifts of our family history, experiences, skills, dreams, circumstances and prayer life. A central biblical image of discernment is perhaps how “Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” after the visit of the shepherds (Luke 2:19, NIV). Discerning the voice of God may be direct and clear, as it was for St. Paul, or grow up in us over the span of many years and moments. It is one of the tasks of a parish priest to help individuals hear the voice of God and to create spaces for true discernment to happen.

There is a danger in the church that ordered ministry may be viewed as the pinnacle of Christian ministry. One way to balance this is to create a culture in the church where individuals are consciously exploring the work of God in their life and are aware of the many vocations to which they may be called. For instance, a senior may discern a renewed sense to be a teacher in the church, or to mentor students in their vocational choices; a young person may discern a passion for inviting the church into the work of social justice; a poet may discern a call to serve the community in liturgical preparation; someone may discern particular skills in the administration of the church; a Christian politician may discern a call to change unjust policies and legislations for a particular people group. The options reside in the creativity of the Spirit and the imaginations of the individual. God uses whatever we offer in the service of Christ’s Church. The diaconate, presbyterate, and episcopate are three particular shapes, or orders, within this larger matrix.

### *People and Structures Involved in the Discernment Process*

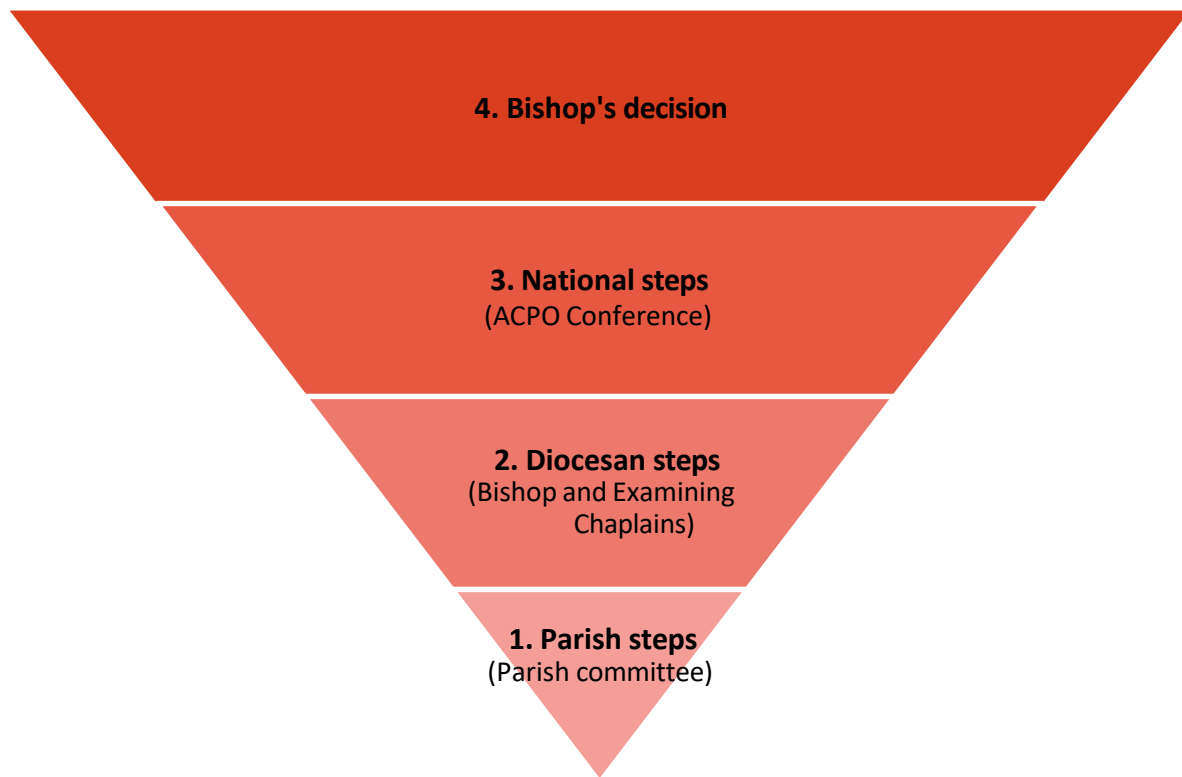
- Bishop of Edmonton: Final responsibility for the ordination, licensing, and overseeing of clergy in the Diocese of Edmonton rests with the diocesan Bishop.
- The people of the diocese: Every member of the church is invited to watch for a potential call to ordained ministry in one another when circumstances, gifts, passions, prayers and aptitudes begin to align toward this holy work.
- The individual: Seeking the will of God and the will of the church alongside their own sense of God’s movement in their life.
- Parish priest: The individual’s parish priest is the first line of support and discernment for any individual in their spiritual growth and pastoral care.
- Parish Discernment Committee (PDC): Initiated by the Bishop to

provide a report on the parish's experience and sense of call discerned in the individual.

- The Examining Chaplains Committee (ECC): An advisory body to the Bishop to aid in the selection and support of individuals in official discernment for ordained ministry. The committee does not begin to function with an individual until after the first meetings with the parish priest, Bishop, and Parish Discernment Committee recommends the individual for further process.
- Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO): A national advisory body for bishops in the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) that evaluates all persons seeking acceptance as postulants for presbyteral/priestly ordination. With the approval of the Bishop and Examining Chaplains Committee the Diocese of Edmonton may send a certain number of individuals to the annual ACPO Conference of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land for assessment of their suitability for ordered ministry in the ACC.

### *Steps in the Discernment Process*

A discernment process typically unfolds through a succession of mutually informing steps, each requiring further discernment by both the individual and the wider church. If, at any stage, there is not a recommendation for the individual to continue, the Bishop may indicate that the process is ended.



At no time should it be said or implied that simply showing interest in ordered ministry, or being in a discernment process towards ordination means that the individual will be ordained. Real discernment implies that the result is presently unknown and not a *fait accompli*. We wish to avoid undue emotional stress should individuals discover this too late in the process.

In some cases, a new discernment process can be started after a first discernment has ended. In such instances, it is important that there has been significant time passed (typically at least three years) and effort demonstrated to work on any issues and concerns. It is always a requirement that the process is restarted from the first step.

### *Parish Steps*

#### a. Initial Inquiry

The *Competencies for the Ministries of Priests in the Anglican Church of Canada* document describes that a person suited for ordained ministry must:

- Have a personal faith and spiritual life that inspires others;
- Understand who we are as the People of God, our stories, our history and what it means to be an Anglican within the wider Christian family;

- Be able to translate that rich tradition into the real life of the communities and contexts where we minister;
- Have the capacities to provide effective spiritual and inter-personal leadership in the communities we are called to serve;
- Be able to teach, mentor and support the development of the ministry of the whole people of God.

Option A: Parish leadership and members of a congregation begin to wonder if a certain individual might be drawn by the Spirit and well-suited for a life in ordered ministry and service to the church. The individual is respected in the community, known for their faithfulness to Christ in life and doctrine, grounded in the scriptures, active in the work and life of the church, with room to grow.

Option B: An individual comes forward with a growing desire to offer themselves in service of Christ and his church. This is shared with another member of the church, their priest, or the Bishop, and there is initial recognition that the individual may have such a call and the potential to serve well in this capacity (i.e., it is not a flighty thought or ill-fitting with the individual's character, pattern, or skill).

b. First meeting with parish priest (or in some cases the Bishop directly)

In any such conversation, the priest should rely deeply on their spirit of prayerful reflection, guarding against personal bias and initial impression.

The questions that will help to direct this conversation are:

- What do you think you know about ordered ministry?
- What do you perceive to be the work of a presbyter or deacon today?
- What are the questions that come to mind when you are discerning?
- How long have you been thinking about these things?
- Have other people ever raised this possibility with you?
- What type of role or ministry do you see yourself in?

After the conversation, the priest should reflect on the following:

- Can I imagine this person being ready now or in the future to serve the Church in an ordered way for the rest of their life? Why or why not?
- Would I be comfortable with this person serving in an ordered ministry in my own parish?
- What shape of vocation does it seem this individual might be called to? (see the sections of presbyteral and diaconal orders below)

If the parish priest clearly discerns that there is no apparent call to pursue the possibility of ordination for this individual at this time, it is right that they work with them to help them consider and explore other Christian vocations in ministry that may be more suited to their gifts. If they discern that there is real potential for an ordered life and ministry the individual should be directed to schedule a meeting with the Bishop.

At this stage the individual is considered an "inquirer." Confirmation, reception, or status as a communicant in the Anglican Communion is normally required for at least two years prior to a request for consideration as an inquirer, as is at least one year of regular participation in the life and worship of a parish as a recognized worshipping community of the Anglican Church of Canada.

#### c. First meeting with the Bishop

One of the central elements of episcopal ministry is to raise up people to serve ordered roles in the life of the church. Therefore, this meeting is a key moment in the discernment process. Many of the same questions as listed above can be explored further in this conversation, as well as other pertinent matters the Bishop wishes to ask the individual about.

If the Bishop discerns a potential call, the parish priest will be directed to form a Parish Discernment Committee (see below) to continue the process of helping the individual to articulate and test their call to be a presbyter or deacon in the church. If the Bishop is hesitant to pursue the process further at this time, the parish priest is asked to continue to accompany the individual in exploring other ministries that may be a better fit.

#### d. Parish Discernment Committee (PDC)

The PDC is constituted and overseen by the parish priest at the direction of the Bishop. As far as possible, it should be composed of an appropriate mix of people of different ages, genders, and cultures, and number no more than five people alongside the priest. A mix of new members and longer-term members of the church is encouraged since the PDC allows a learning and fellowship opportunity alongside the work of discernment. As elected parish representatives, it is appropriate, when possible, to include members of vestry in the committee's number. In some cases, other configurations of a PDC (such as one made up of people from multiple parishes, etc.) may be possible if a clear rationale is present.

These may be new sorts of conversations for some members of the PDC and some explanation from the priest of the nature and process of discernment



for ordination in the Anglican tradition will be helpful.

Before the meeting, the individual should be asked to provide the PDC with:

- A brief written overview of their spiritual journey, including the story of how they have come to an interest in ordained life.
- A written outline of their past and present work and their history of involvement in the life and ministry of the church.

The PDC meets over a series of occasions and is charged to follow the study guide called *Praying Together*, developed by the Examining Chaplains Committee. The order laid out in this document must be followed as outlined to ensure a standardized and fair process for everyone. Any concerns and feedback about the process, for future planning, should be directed to the Bishop, or the coordinator of Examining Chaplains.

The PDC should meet in a space that is comfortable, safe, and private to foster deeper discussion. The PDC should also be approached as a deeply prayerful experience and a spiritually edifying process for all involved. As such, meetings appropriately begin and end in prayer and seek to keep a prayerful tone through all discussions.

Following the completion of the necessary meetings, the PDC will prepare a report on the experience of the individual, their conversations together, and their sense of appropriate next steps. If the PDC feels unable to recommend this individual toward ordination at this time, it is not a judgment or slight on the individual, but rather, an opportunity for further discernment about purposes of God in their life and ministry. At times, the individual's sense of call may differ from the discernment of the PDC. If this is the case, this should simply be noted and passed on in the report.

The PDC report allows communication of the group's discernment back to the Bishop and the Examining Chaplains Committee and should include:

- A brief overview of the PDC's process and pattern of meetings;
- The tenor of the PDC's conversation;
- A recommendation towards or away from further steps in the ordination process, and reasons why;
- Any critical realities in the individual's life that will affect or influence their life in ordained ministry;
- Any other pastoral comments thought helpful to the Bishop and examining chaplains (confidential or private issues should be communicated directly to the Bishop alone).

Further details on preparing the PDC report are included in the study guide.

If the PDC recommends an individual to continue to the next stages, the individual will then come under the purview of the Examining Chaplains Committee as an inquirer. It is right at this point that the individual takes up a serious pattern of prayer and spiritual direction if they have not already.

### *Diocesan Steps*

#### a. Examining Chaplains Committee (ECC)

The inquirer will be asked to provide the following two documents to the Bishop and ECC:

- A Curriculum Vitae outlining education and work experience;
- An essay addressing the "7 Questions for Discernment" which will be provided to them by coordinator of the ECC.

These are then reviewed by the Bishop and the whole ECC to help the committee learn about the person and be a true aid in their discernment.

After this review, a group of three members from the ECC will be in contact with the inquirer to organize an interview for discernment towards either the diaconate or the presbyterate/priesthood. This is not a job interview, but another level of prayerful discernment and vocational process in the church.

Following the interview, a report is provided by the ECC as a whole which forms the basis for further recommendations to the Bishop. The ECC may recommend more time for discernment, an extended waiting process, additional study or formation, or that the inquirer become a Candidate for ordination. Approval of Candidacy will be communicated to the inquirer by the Coordinator of the ECC.

With the transition into the Candidacy phase the ECC will:

- Arrange for a psychological assessment of the candidate, to be paid for by the diocese;
- Assign one of the Examining Chaplains to walk alongside the Candidate through this season of continued discernment and formation. The Chaplain will be available to answer any questions, offer guidance, and keep the ECC advised of the individual's progress;
- Suggest resources for theological and pastoral education, other relevant training, supervised ministry experience, mentoring, etc.;
- Help the inquirer for presbyterate/priesthood to prepare the

application materials for the ACPO Conference.

As these steps proceed, a recommendation may arise to discontinue the process and to perhaps refer the individual back to the parish priest for alternative vocational discernment. Should this occur, special pastoral sensitivity and care are called for.

#### b. Post ACPO

At the completion of the ACPO process and taking the report of the ACPO Assessors into account, the ECC may make a recommendation to the Bishop that the Candidate become a Postulant for ordination. With the Bishop's concurrence, this phase will include setting an ordination date, ordination service planning, the reading of the "Si Quis" in the Postulant's home parish, the acquisition of "Letters Testimonial," and finally participation in a pre-ordination retreat.

### *National Steps*

#### a. The Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO)

Organized on a provincial basis, and accountable to the House of Bishops through provincial structures, ACPO is one of the four arenas of the discernment process which assist bishops in their responsibility for ordination in their diocese. Each plays an important part in the whole, and it is the primary responsibility of ACPO to assess on behalf of the wider Anglican Church of Canada. At annual, and in some cases bi-annual, discernment conferences, held in four Ecclesiastical Provinces across the country, ACPO evaluates all persons seeking acceptance as postulants for ordering to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada and provides an evaluative and prescriptive report for bishops and those assessed.

A typical ACPO report advises a bishop about the personal strengths and weaknesses of candidates, the nature of their personal faith, their present understanding and potential for Christian ministry, and their understanding of vocation. Assessors are chosen by the ACPO Secretary from a list of nominees supplied by the diocesan bishops or their designates.

Responsibilities for ACPO also include:

- Evaluating candidates in the areas of spirituality and church life, pastoral and social concern, and personal characteristics, using the national Competencies checklist for the presbyterate;
- Identifying areas in which the candidate needs to grow;

- Producing a formal recommendation on the Candidate's suitability for admission to postulancy for ordination;
- Offering advice regarding the pursuit of other forms of ministry.

Applicants to ACPO are required to:

- Fill out a comprehensive information form supplied by the diocese;
- Write a brief autobiography and two essays which develop an understanding of ministry in general and ordered ministry, in particular;
- Supply name, address, and telephone numbers of three referees who will complete a reference questionnaire sent out by the Provincial Secretary;
- If married or engaged, to provide a letter from their spouse or fiancé in support of the application to ACPO and the applicant's call to ordained ministry;
- Attend a weekend assessment conference.

The conference is an exercise in discernment of vocation to ordained ministry. It can be an emotional and stressful time for both the Candidates and the Assessors alike. With the support of the ACPO Chaplain, who leads in worship and provides pastoral care as needed throughout the conference, efforts are made to maintain an atmosphere of kindness and care.

Following participation in the ACPO Conference, and with review of the Assessors recommendations, the Examining Chaplains Committee, together with the Bishop, will determine whether the Candidate is moved to the status of a Postulant for ordination. A postulancy period will vary in time depending upon completion of other educational and formational expectations as well as other factors taken into consideration by the Bishop and ECC.

### *Ordination*

The decision to ordain is at the discernment of the Bishop, taking into consideration the input from all of the advisory structures identified above. When an ordination date is set, the Postulant becomes designated an ordinand.

Several pre-ordination documents are required from the ordinand in advance of proceeding to an ordination service. These include:

- "Si Quis": A notification read to the home parish of the Candidate for Holy Orders indicating the Bishop's intention to ordain the person and

to enquire whether any impediment may be alleged against the postulant;

- “Letters Testimonial”: A letter confirming the support of the parish from which the Candidate comes;
- Criminal Record check, Vulnerable Sector check, and other Safe Church procedures that are set by the diocese.

Ordinands will also be instructed as to other necessary preparations for ordination, including participation in a pre-ordination retreat and contributing to planning the ordination service.

## **Diaconate in the Diocese of Edmonton**

### *Definition and Vision*

Diaconal ministry is a unique ordering of the common baptismal call to serve the needs of others in Jesus' name with the grace and mercy of the Gospel. Deacons are often among the first to see and recognize areas of need or injustice which are sometimes overlooked by others. Their leadership in this regard frequently serves to prophetically draw the church's wider attention and response to these areas. This vocation gives a distinctive shape to ministry, with deacons serving as a special link or bridge between the world and the church and the church and the world. In a church where so much of our witness is likely to be taking place outside the walls of the places where disciples gather for worship, those who are ordered to the ministry of deacons seem to have a significant leadership role to play in our time. This ministry is not primarily about Sunday morning worship. However, the traditional liturgical roles of deacons (proclaiming the Gospel, assisting in the preparation of prayers, preparing the gifts to be offered at the Eucharist, sending the people into the world in mission) are also important as signs of the type of leadership deacons bring in their wider ministry.

### *Criteria for Discernment of a Diaconal Vocation*

A person exploring ordination to the diaconate in the Diocese of Edmonton should display the following:

- A living faith in Jesus Christ, including an active prayer life consisting of daily offices and other prayers, regular participation in a Eucharistic community, relationship with a spiritual director, and a ministry that serves others, their fellow disciples, and the wider church;
- Capacity to discern God's presence and activity in their own life and in the lives of others and to bear witness to their experience of God's love and grace in acts of evangelism;
- Love of and commitment to the Body of Christ in all its diversity and in its particular expression in the Anglican Church of Canada, demonstrating a healthy and loyal but not uncritical relationship to the diocese, ecclesiastical province, and national church;
- An understanding of holy orders and a willingness to accept and be guided by the authority of the Bishop and other leaders and to function as a co-operative member of a clergy and lay ministry team;
- An ability to articulate how their passion for ministry is consistent with the definition and vision of diakonia above, with experience of service particularly related to the marginalized, the oppressed, those in need, the sick, the lonely, the excluded and those things that others can

- tend to ignore;
- An integration of faith, action, spirituality, and theological reflection;
- An ability to relate to all people regardless of race, class, culture, age, disability, gender and orientation, to respect for the opinions of others, and to be honest and open with others especially when mediating conflict;
- Self-awareness including knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses, and a willingness to grow and change;
- A commitment to being a life-long learner with appropriate training for their particular area of ministry and willingness to engage in on-going study and education;
- An active plan for self-care, taking into account the dimensions of physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual health and wellbeing.

### *Written Submissions Required*

Candidates/Postulants for diaconal ordination will be required to submit the following to the Examining Chaplains Committee:

- A Curriculum Vitae (three pages maximum);
- Written responses to the “7 Questions for Discernment” as provided by the ECC.

### *Education and Formation*

The foundation of preparation for diaconal ministry will likely be practical experience and potentially some specialized training for the specific ministry areas identified as being at the core of the work anticipated as a deacon. In some cases, this may also involve prior post-secondary training.

In addition to the above, further theological education is also called for as part of preparation for diaconal ministry. The preferred institutional routes of diaconal formation in the Diocese of Edmonton are as follows:

Path A: Montreal Diocesan Theological College, Reading and Tutorial Certificate in Theology

This program of study requires no previous degree. It includes 10 thematically-focused units and can typically be completed in about two years. Students can advance through the modules at their own pace, meaning the program is especially well suited to being undertaken alongside other work, ministry, and life responsibilities. It is available completely by distance, with a local mentor appointed to assist along the way. It includes course content particularly useful for those serving in diaconal ministries.

## Path B: Other Equivalent Programs

Students who have already completed a theological degree program, or who, for a specified reason, wish to complete a specific degree program at another institution, may, upon review of that program by the ECC, have this accepted as equivalent provided it can be demonstrated to be consistent with that of Path A in terms workload, curricular content, and ability to fulfil diaconal ministry competencies. In some cases, at the discretion of the Bishop and the Examining Chaplains Committee, additional supplementation in certain areas through local training programs and experience may also be called for.



## **Presbyterate in the Diocese of Edmonton**

### *Definition and Vision*

Through baptism, every Christian shares in the royal priesthood of Jesus. Presbyters, who are commonly also referred to as priests in the Anglican tradition, are those whom the church has affirmed to be set apart to focus, in particular, on providing a ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care within local communities of faith and discipleship in Christ. The ministry of a presbyter/priest is both rewarding and complex. It requires being present and providing comfort to individuals and communities in times of sorrow and difficulty, encouraging and challenging people in living out their discipleship, helping people and churches in constantly re-orienting themselves and their purposes towards the Gospel, and raising up and empowering others to find and express their unique ministry within the Body of Christ. In all things a presbyter is called "to nourish Christ's people from the riches of [God's] grace and strengthen them to glorify God in this life and in the life to come" (BAS, p. 646).

### *Criteria for Discernment of a Presbyteral Vocation*

A person exploring ordination to the diaconate in the Diocese of Edmonton should display the following:

- A living faith in Jesus Christ, including an active prayer life consisting of daily offices and other prayers, regular participation in a Eucharistic community, relationship with a spiritual director, and a ministry that serves others, their fellow disciples and the wider church;
- Capacity to discern God's presence and activity in their own life and in the lives of others and to bear witness to their experience of God's love and grace in acts of evangelism;
- Love of and commitment to the Body of Christ in all its diversity, and in its particular expression in the Anglican Church of Canada, demonstrating a healthy and loyal but not uncritical relationship to the diocese, ecclesiastical province and national church;
- An understanding of holy orders and a willingness to accept and be guided by the authority of the Bishop and other leaders, and to function as a co-operative member of a clergy and lay ministry team;
- An ability to articulate how their passion for ministry is consistent with the definition and vision of presbyterate above, with an emphasis on creating and leading spiritual communities, teaching the heart of the Gospel and how it can be brought to bear in midst of day-to-day life, marking moments of joy and sorrow in people's lives with the church's resources of ritual, worship and prayer, and supporting and mentoring

- others as they grow in faith and ministry through all seasons of life;
- An integration of faith, action, spirituality and theological reflection;
- An ability to relate to all people regardless of race, class, culture, age, disability, gender and orientation, to respect the opinions of others and to be honest and open with others especially when mediating conflict;
- Self-awareness including knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses, and a willingness to grow and change;
- A commitment to being a life-long learner with appropriate training for their particular area of ministry and willingness to engage in on-going study and education;
- An active plan for self-care, taking into account the dimensions of physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health and wellbeing.

### *Education and Formation*

In some parts of the Anglican Church of Canada, as the needs of the church change, a differentiation has begun to be made between two potential expressions of ordered presbyteral/priestly ministry. Certain candidates to serve as presbyters/priests may see themselves more likely to serve in ministry in part-time, interim, or non-stipendiary fashions, while perhaps also being employed bi-vocationally in another field at the same time or during other seasons of their ministry. Other presbyters, by contrast, may be more likely to engage in the vocation of priestly ministry as a primary and full-time means of employment throughout most or all of their working life. In making such a distinction there must be no sense that one expression of presbyteral ministry is any more or less called by God and the church or qualified and equipped to serve. Yet such contextual differences do need to be considered and may have some implications for determining the most fitting formational processes insofar as the shape of future ministry may be discerned in advance.

In consideration of these factors, the Diocese of Edmonton recommends the following path for either residential-seminary-based, or online-context-based presbyteral ministry education:

#### **Path A: Huron University College, Master of Divinity**

This is a professional program of graduate level study that requires a prior undergraduate degree. At full-time, the course requirements can typically be completed in three years, but can also be pursued part time over as much as six years as necessary. When undertaken through full-time on-site residency there is the benefit of wider community formation opportunities within the life of the College. The virtual classroom delivery approach enables students to still have distance access to a wider learning community, worldclass

faculty, library resources, etc., while also making it possible for them to remain in their home community while undertaking their education. It also opens greater possibilities for part-time study. Offering the program in this online way allows the formational and integrative components of the degree to be carried out within the distinct ministry contexts in which students expect to serve in the future. As an Anglican theological faculty within a Liberal Arts, interdisciplinary, ecumenical, multifaith and transcultural university context, the Huron environment is particularly well-positioned for helping students obtain the presbyteral competencies needed for ministry in general, and with the specific place-based goals of the Diocese of Edmonton in mind.

A conversation with the Bishop and Examining Chaplains should normally occur before beginning M.Div. study. Completion of the program does not imply that ordination and/or licensing for ministry in the Diocese of Edmonton is guaranteed.

#### Path B: Other Equivalent Programs

Students who have already completed a degree program, or who, for a specified reason wish to complete a specific degree program at another institution, may, upon review of that program by the ECC, have this accepted as equivalent, provided it can be demonstrated to be consistent in terms workload, curricular content, and presbyteral ministry competencies with those presented by path A. In some cases, at the discretion of the Bishop and the ECC, some additional supplementation in certain areas may also be called for.

## **Links to Key Resources**

[ACPO Handbook](#)

[Competencies for Ordination to the Priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada](#)

[The Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada \(The Iona Report\)](#)

[Anglican Communion Competency Grids for Priests and Transitional Deacons](#)

[Anglican Communion Competency Grids for Vocational Deacons](#)

[Montreal Diocesan Theological College Reading and Tutorial Program](#)

[Huron University College Master of Divinity](#)

## Contact Information

General questions about vocation, the parish discernment committee, or an individual in your parish should be directed to the Bishop of Edmonton, the Rt. Rev. Stephen London, through his Assistant, Ms. Sarah Kemp:

[assistant@edmonton.anglican.ca](mailto:assistant@edmonton.anglican.ca)

Questions about an individual's progress or the Examining Chaplains Committee should be directed to the Coordinator of the Examining Chaplains Committee, Dr. Mark Peppler: [mpeppler@telusplanet.net](mailto:mpeppler@telusplanet.net)

The Examining Chaplains Committee meets as needed throughout the year, approximately every two months.

Communication does not typically occur between the Parish Priest and a Candidate/Postulant's Examining Chaplain.

The Anglican Diocese of Edmonton  
Synod Office  
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