



Called to Ministry

Section 1 / Doc 1:

Introduction to Vocational Discernment

**Guidelines for Ministry of all the Baptized,
Lay Licensed Ministries, and Holy Orders**

for the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe

Commission on the Ministry of the Baptized

The Commission on the Ministry of the Baptized serves to guide and empower all baptized people in discerning their ministries.

European Institute for Christian studies

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I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a sacrifice – alive, holy, and pleasing to God – which is your reasonable service. Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God – what is good and well-pleasing and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you not to think more highly of yourself than you ought to think, but to think with sober discernment, as God has distributed to each of you a measure of faith. For just as in one body we have many members, and not all the members serve the same function, so we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually we are members who belong to one another.

Romans 12:1-5

Introduction to Vocational Discernment

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Introduction to Vocational Discernment

First, a word of welcome to the Vocational Discernment Process

All can offer their personal gifts and talents in the service of Christ and the Church. Some feel that their gifts and talents can be directed in specific ways, perhaps as an ordained person, perhaps through a particular kind of ministry. The word “call” is usually used to describe that sense we feel when we discern the possibility of responding to some obvious need, and see ourselves in that role. Another word that will appear from time to time is “vocation”. This section of The Convocation Handbook has been prepared as a guide for those who have noticed a desire to be of service in some formal way, and would like to take the steps necessary to become qualified in one of the ministries upon which the Church depends. Sometimes we refer to this as a sense of vocation.

Glossary of terms and references to other sources

As you proceed through the pages that follow, you will encounter some words and phrases that are either new to you or may require some interpretation. We have already encountered the word “Canon”, from which terms such as canonical and even canonization derive. Every attempt has been made to ensure that this document is easy to understand, but of necessity some terms are used that need explaining. A comprehensive glossary of terms is provided at the end of this first document and you are encouraged to consult the glossary as needed.

Introduction

The Ministry of the Baptized

The primary ministry of the baptized is that of continuing the work of Christ in the world. Ministry is a way of living in the world, aware that God acts in and through every Christian to bring to fruition God’s plan for all creation. It is the way we live when we realize that Christ encounters us in everyone we meet – family, friend and stranger.

One of the greatest challenges of the ministry of the baptized is its invisibility to the unknowing observer. This minister wears no uniform or identification that sets him or her apart, confers status or authority, or automatically signals that these good works are done in the name of Christ. Every Christian must discover her or his own way of letting Christ be known through activities often not regarded as “religious.” This risk to be vulnerable in the name of Christ will often involve stress, conflict and confusion. Its model is Christ’s own public and often invisible presence in the world.

There are many ways to channel Christ's redeeming love into our troubled world. Not only are we called to be caring, generous, tolerant and forgiving persons ourselves, but we are also called to redeem the mistakes, inadequacies and omissions of each other.

We are all sent to minister in the midst of the distractions, temptations and evil of the world. To do so requires recollection and mindfulness, patience and charity, and the ability to acknowledge faults, seek forgiveness and try again, and again, and again. It requires trusting that God will empower us each time we seek guidance and open ourselves to receive it.

The ministry of the baptized is exercised in two arenas: within the world and within the Church. The primary arena is the world. With lives centered in the community of faith, the people of God are sent out to represent Christ to families and friends, communities, at workplaces and places of leisure, "bearing witness to Him wherever we may be."

Ministry Beyond Church Doors

In an ideal world, every person would go about daily life as a biblically knowledgeable representative of the Christian community,

1. able to proclaim the Good News
2. living as a faithful steward of God-given gifts
3. reflecting Christ's compassion to those who are afflicted
4. seeking ways to reach out to the oppressed
5. and working diligently for justice and peace.

We are constantly re-learning how to open ourselves to the action of God's Spirit so that we may be channels of God's love. A supportive congregation will be involved in guiding and sustaining the ministries of its members in their daily lives — their lives in Christ — whatever their occupation or profession. As William Law wrote in the 17th century:

As a good Christian should consider every place holy because God is there, so one should look upon every part of one's life as a matter of holiness, because it is to be offered to God. For as all persons, and all things in the world truly belong unto God, so all things are to be used, and all persons are to act in their several states and employments for the glory of God.

Those in worldly business, therefore, must not look upon themselves as at liberty to live to themselves, to sacrifice to their own humors and tempers, because their employment is of a worldly nature. ... It is as much the duty of those in worldly business to live wholly unto God as it is the duty of those who are devoted to Divine service....

Men and women may, and must differ in their employments, but yet they must all act for the same ends, as dutiful servants of God, in the right and pious performance of their several callings. A few are called to live “under orders”, that is to say, to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders in order to serve the people of God by equipping them for their various ministries (Ephesians 4:12), according to the discipline of the Church.

The late Very Rev. James C. Fenhagen, retired Dean of the General Theological Seminary, has written:

We are being led to find deep satisfaction in small things... to find the satisfaction in ministry not in what is dramatic or successful in the world's eyes, but more in the satisfaction of faithfulness and rootedness and the deep pleasure which comes when, by us through the Spirit, we see lives transformed and values changed because of the baptized who see themselves working in the world committed to making a difference. Sunday after Sunday, the Eucharist empowers the church. Life is uncertain, but for us the victory has been won by the resurrection of Christ. It is participating in this victory that gives our ministry power.

We know that all are called to represent Christ in the world. Most people do this quite directly, participating in the world beyond the Church's doors while earning a living and caring for family.

Ministry takes countless forms that stretch beyond the routine of daily life:

- nurturing and serving one's own family
- acting to feed and shelter the homeless
- working on behalf of all persons with disabilities
- supporting victims of racial and sexual and economic oppression
- caring for children and the elderly
- practicing non-violence
- acting ethically in the workplace
- challenging the comfortable and affluent whose hearts may be hardened against others by fear of failing or by servitude to possessions or status
- sharing one's faith with a friend
- engaging in the political process
- practicing responsible stewardship of environmental resources.

All of these and more, done for Christ's sake, are ways in which the baptized proclaim Christ in deed, and summon the world to respond.

Ministries within the Gathered Church

Five major elements characterize the life of most congregations, sustain energy and support member's ministries in the world: worship, Christian education, pastoral ministry, outreach and evangelism, and stewardship and administration.

Worship

Corporate worship is the primary point of contact and shared experience for all members. It is the community's center of religious expression, from which all other ministries of the congregation originate and are regenerated.

The call to the great majority of the baptized is to participate in corporate worship wholeheartedly "in the pew." Here we render our grateful praise and thanksgiving, confess our sins, intercede for those in need, and seek guidance and strength for the tasks that lie ahead – whatever our daily vocation may be. All baptized people may also assist in planning and conducting worship, and serve as acolytes, choir or altar guild members, lectors and ushers.

Since the beginnings of The Episcopal Church, the Canons have provided for licensed readers to assist the Clergy and to conduct certain services when no Clergy are available. In 1991, a major revision of Title III, the ministry canon, formalized a number of additional roles and established criteria for preparation and procedures for licensing. In 2003, an additional revision of Title III further refined these positions. (See Doc 4A: Canonical References, and the documents of Section 2: Licensed Lay Ministries.)

Training for licensing

Each Diocese of The Episcopal Church will have its own specific applications of this canon. People interested in training for worship ministries should speak with the Priest-in-Charge of their Parish.

Christian Education

Next to worship, Christian education probably has the most influence on the life of Church members. Most congregations sponsor educational programs and religious instruction for people of all ages, including Church school classes for children, inquirers' and Confirmation classes, adult forums, youth groups, parenting programs and vacation Bible schools. These offer opportunities for life-long learning, ever deepening exposure to the riches of Scripture and tradition, Church doctrine and history, the inspirational lives of the saints, the example of the great prophets and martyrs, and the powerful witness of prayerful men and women throughout history.

Through educational programs, contemporary Christians explore centuries of the Church's knowledge and experience in order to relate it to everyday life in their own time and place. While Clergy may offer leadership in the educational life of the congregation, the community must also raise up lay educators to sustain and deepen the intellectual and spiritual life of its members.

In the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, the European Institute for Christian Studies (EICS), Commission on the Ministry of the Baptized (COMB), Youth across Europe (Youth Retreats and Conferences), and Education for Ministry (EfM)

offer opportunities for growth and learning beyond the Parish. Notification of these and other opportunities is distributed through the communication systems of the Convocation.

Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral ministers in a congregation include all who share in building and bonding the community, and in nurturing and shaping the membership and congregational activities. They coordinate the congregation's internal life and the organizations that complement its worship and education. Such ministry also recalls the early Church's understanding of itself as a mutually interdependent community whose members minister to one another, share each other's gifts, and prepare to move out into the world.

Pastoral activities that support the life of the congregation thus extend well beyond conventional "pastoral visits" from the Clergy. They include prayer chains and telephone support networks, preparing and sharing food, arranging congregational fellowship, and the multitude of ways in which every Christian expresses care for each other through prayer and presence. Some communities have hospitals that offer training in pastoral ministry. Many congregations offer training to their people in pastoral ministries.

Outreach

Each congregation's ministry extends beyond its own membership. Outreach means living the Gospel by ministering to those in need. Begun in worship and fellowship, these activities lead outward in service to:

the sick: bringing flowers, food and companionship to the sick or shut-in; assisting with worship and fellowship in nursing homes; preparing meals for the homebound; walking for cancer research; running to raise money for AIDS or other causes; praying for healing; the poor and oppressed: sharing food, clothes, furnishings and money with the needy at home and abroad; staffing soup kitchens, clothing exchanges and shelters; visiting prisoners; working for just labor laws and full employment; addressing the underlying causes of poverty, hunger, homelessness;

the young and the weak: providing child care, pre-school programs and after-school programs; sponsoring sports and crafts programs; tutoring, mentoring; housing and staffing counseling centers; support for others whose needs are not physical but emotional and/or spiritual, opportunities for sharing one's journey in Christ.

These activities and many others bear witness to God's love and saving power, and create opportunities for sharing one's personal faith and love for God.

Evangelism

Evangelism means proclaiming the Gospel by witnessing to the power of Christ to transform our lives, and inviting others to share in the transforming life of the community that is Christ's Body on earth. Evangelistic ministry includes:

- the new member: inviting a person to one's church; welcoming the new members into your midst.
- neighborhood Bible studies: sharing one's own knowledge and experience of the Word.

Stewardship

Stewardship expresses in tangible form the gratitude and generosity of members in response to God's love. It also provides the physical and organizational structures that make possible the congregation's worship, life and ministry at home and beyond.

Through personal stewardship every baptized Christian shares in the community's offering of itself to God, in service to the world.

Administration

Administration ensures the "institutional maintenance" of the congregation – its communications, finances, maintenance of building and property, stewardship, membership records, office activities and general administration.

Ministry in Daily Life

Every member of a congregation is involved in aspects of these five elements of the community's life, the activities most readily identified as "ministry." Every member is also called to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ in all aspects of daily life at home with family and friends; in the workplace with co-workers, customers, clients, bosses and employees; and in the community as responsible neighbor, good citizen, honest taxpayer and informed voter.

The Church is not the only place where we experience God. We can experience God through the week. The Church is the place we gather once a week to celebrate the ways in which God has been with us the other six days.

In everything, we are called to be a vehicle of God's presence in the world. Given the new challenges each day brings, this requires both flexibility and a sensitivity to those around us in order to recognize how God might wish to love them through us. Are we willing to be used by God in answer to someone else's prayer?

Discovering and affirming gifts and talents can be an exciting process. Discernment involves exploring how these gifts and talents equip each individual to minister both in the Church and in the world. Such a process can help individuals and congregations

deploy the great mix of gifts in response to God's call, to witness to God's love for the whole creation.

Personal discernment is as important for the person who enjoys preparing church suppers as for one called to priesthood. Knowing our gifts and using them to the degree that God intended is deeply satisfying. It provides freedom to express who we are in the context of obedience and service to God.

Being intentional about identifying gifts and talents may bring surprising results when unused or hidden attributes are brought to light. The cook may learn that others appreciate her reading ability as a lector. The mechanic may become a welcome visitor to the elderly. The doctor may become the fastest dishwasher on the kitchen crew.

Within the context of prayer and study, vocational searching often leads to questions about the various "orders" of ministry and the individual's proper place within that matrix. God calls all Christians into ministry. Those called to the ministry of the baptized have a full and unique ministry as they continue to channel Christ's redeeming love into our troubled world. Christians who experience God's converting power in their lives will participate actively in corporate worship and fellowship, and in the programs and outreach projects of the congregation that best match their individual gifts and interests. Some may be called to a life of prayer and service as members or associates of a religious order. Others may be moved to pursue employment in Church-related programs, serving full-time within the Church community – teaching, managing buildings and financial affairs, directing outreach and service programs, as a musician, secretary or administrator.

In addition, intentionally using gifts and talents for the purpose of glorifying God can bring meaning to our lives. When our Lord said to Saint Peter, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets," the apostle answered, "At Thy word I will." He was not going to do something different from what he had been doing daily, but this very thing he had been constantly doing, he did now with a sense of vocation and as an act of responsive obedience. The sense of vocation may alter the whole condition of life. It may take one from an office to the priesthood, as it took Matthew from his customs to his discipleship. It may take another into the religious life or out to the mission field. It may, on the other hand, only change the motive and quality of the life, leaving it the same but transfigured and vastly enriched.

The Baptismal Covenant

The Baptismal Covenant is spoken by the whole congregation at every Baptism taking place during the main service on Sunday. It is important to reflect on this basis of our faith as a part of the Discernment Process. How does the discerning person live out this statement in his/her daily life? It is found in The Book of Common Prayer, pp. 304-305, and in Doc 4B of this documentation.

What does the term “vocation” mean?

What has brought you to the point of discovering this document? Whether it was personally observing some need, or matching one of your skills with some work that clearly needs to be done, or perhaps noticing another person doing something that you would also like to do, or as a result of your study of Holy Scripture, you are really responding to your call. You have taken the first step towards finding a path ahead that will enrich your own life, and the lives of others. It is a path that will encourage your spiritual life, and one that will explore and develop all that you have to offer, and desire to offer. This path is called discernment.

What does the term “discernment” mean?

Discernment is a process that allows us to distinguish between our own willfulness and God’s will; between our own self-defined purpose and God’s intended purpose for us; that is, God’s call to us to ministry. The verb discern comes from the Latin *discernere*, which means to separate or to distinguish accurately one choice, option or object from another. The process of discernment, when applied to Christian vocation (the Latin root is *vocare*, meaning to call,) is the process by which we bring clarity and insight to the ministry to which we are being called by God.

Discernment is seldom a linear process that moves quickly or neatly and in an orderly fashion. Indeed, the discernment process is a life-long journey that continues even after we have initially reflected upon the issue of vocation. Discernment is at the heart of everything we do in life.

Welcome to this process! Some of your preconceptions will be challenged, and some of your innermost feelings will be encouraged.

While a sense of call is always personal, the development of ministries needs to be organized and, in many cases, supervised. The next paragraphs show how this works.

Processes for ordained and licensed lay ministries

The Bishop of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe oversees the processes for becoming an ordained minister, and issues licenses for those kinds of ministry requiring oversight. Some of these processes must also conform to requirements of the Church known as Canons – that is, the guides and rules of The Episcopal Church as an entity, and as a result of the acts of the regulatory body of the Church, known as General Convention, over the years.

Two groups assist the Bishop in discharging this supervisory role. These groups consist of appointed members. They are:

COMB – Commission on Ministry of the Baptized

The main role of COMB members is to oversee the actual discernment process. This is a process that includes all persons seeking the way towards ordained and licensed ministry, and also provides resources for those whose job it is to assist in the discernment process i.e. clergy, discernment committee members, Vestry members, etc.

EICS – European Institute for Christian Studies

The main role of EICS members is to facilitate and make possible the various kinds of training that follow on from the initial discernment process.

How to get started

You will have thought about your decision to follow your call, you will have prayed about it and you may have discussed it with your partner or friends. The very first practical step in the process is to prepare a personal statement. This document is the basis for your initial discussion, which will be with your priest. The statement will contain your vital information, your background, your educational qualifications, your personal and professional obligations, your affiliations and your motivation.

In this section you will find detailed information about ordained and licensed lay ministries. You may skip to the area of ministry to which you feel most drawn, and for which you feel most qualified. The material contained in your completed personal statement will assist your priest in guiding you forward and will be a part of your discernment process. The information you provide will be available to the Bishop, to the various persons, boards, committees and institutions that will become involved in your development and formation.

Ministries in The Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church has maintained the threefold order of ordained ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons which has characterized Christ's One, Holy and Apostolic Church since its earliest days.

For those discerning a possible call to the **Priesthood**, the ministry of this order is:

1. To proclaim in preaching and in his/her personal life the Gospel of Jesus Christ
2. To celebrate the Eucharist and administer the Sacraments
3. To bless and declare pardon in the name of God
4. To share with the Bishop and other Clergy and Laity in the councils of the Church.

Read more: Doc 3A: Holy Orders: General Information; and Doc 3D: Holy Orders: Priesthood

For those discerning a possible call to the **Diaconate**, the ministry of this order is:

1. To make Christ and His redemptive love known to the world, and to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world
2. To proclaim in public worship, in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments, and in his/her personal life the Gospel of Jesus Christ
3. To share with the Bishop and other Clergy and Laity in the councils of the Church.

Read more: Doc 3A: Holy Orders: General Information; Doc 3B: Holy Orders: Diaconate; and Doc 3C: Article on the Diaconate

For those discerning a possible call to **lay ministry**, there are many ministries in The Episcopal Church to consider, seven of which require licenses:

1. Pastoral Leader
2. Worship Leader
3. Preacher
4. Catechist
5. Eucharistic Visitor
6. Evangelist
7. Eucharistic Minister

1. Pastoral Leader

A Pastoral Leader is authorized to exercise pastoral responsibility, lead public worship and preach within a specific congregation where no clergy leadership is present. Congregations in need of a Pastoral Leader will be identified by the Bishop as the circumstances arise. *Read more: Doc 2A*

2. Worship Leader

A Worship Leader is authorized to lead Morning and Evening Prayer in a congregation with permission of the Bishop and under the direct supervision of the Clergy or a Pastoral Leader. *Read more: Doc 2B*

3. Preacher

A Preacher is authorized to preach with permission of the Bishop and under the direct supervision of the Clergy or a Pastoral Leader. *Read more: Doc 2C*

4. Catechist

A Catechist is authorized to prepare people for baptism, confirmation, reception or the reaffirmation of baptismal vows with permission of the Bishop and under the direct supervision of the Clergy or a Pastoral Leader. *Read more: Doc 2D*

5. Evangelist

An Evangelist works with and is supervised by the Clergy, primarily within the context of his or her own congregation, to inspire, encourage and equip others to be effective witnesses to the Good News. Evangelists must be comfortable sharing their own faith stories in order to draw others to God. *Read more: Doc 2E*

6. Eucharistic Visitor

A Eucharistic Visitor is a layperson authorized to take Holy Communion following the service to members of the congregation unable to be present. He or she should act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise under the Priest or a Pastoral Leader. *Read more: Doc 2F*

7. Eucharistic Minister

A Eucharistic Minister is authorized to administer the Chalice at a Celebration of the Holy Communion. He or she should act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise under the Priest. *Read more: Doc 2G*

Ministries not requiring a Bishop's License

- Lector

A Lector is a parishioner trained and appointed by the Member of the Clergy to read the Lessons, lead the Psalm, or lead the Prayers of the People.

- Intercessor

An Intercessor is a person responsible for preparation and delivery of the Prayers of the People.

- Usher

Ushers welcome newcomers, distribute bulletins, assist in seating and guide the congregation during distribution of Communication.

- Altar Guild

Altar Guild members prepare and maintain supplies and vessels used during Eucharistic services.

- Others

Congregation members are encouraged to participate in committees, such as Stewardship and Outreach. Acolytes and Crucifers assist as directed during services.

Glossary

Accredited seminaries or institutions: seminaries or institutions whose programs have been approved by the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe.

Acolyte: in contemporary Anglicanism, a general term which covers not only servers, torchbearers, and lighters of candles but also crucifers, thurifers, and banner-bearers.

Agape: a Greek term for one of the four types of love in the Bible. Jesus showed agape love and commands his followers to do likewise.

Anglicanism: the doctrines, principles, or system of the Anglican Church.

Anglican Communion, The: churches in communion with the See of Canterbury throughout the world. Member churches exercise jurisdictional independence but share a common heritage concerning Anglican identity and commitment to scripture, tradition, and reason as sources of authority. Churches in the Anglican Communion continue to reflect the balance of Protestant and Catholic principles that characterized the *via media* of the Elizabethan settlement.

Applicant: a person seeking to begin a vocational discernment process in and with the help of a local congregation.

Ascetical theology: the organized study or presentation of spiritual teachings found in Christian Scripture and the Church Fathers that help the faithful to more perfectly follow Christ and attain to Christian perfection.

Aspirant: a Nominee who has applied and not yet been approved for postulancy, but who has been accepted by the Bishop and COMB for a period of vocational discernment, personal and spiritual growth, and theological education.

Baptism: the full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body, the church. God establishes an indissoluble bond with each person in baptism. God adopts us, making us members of the church and inheritors of the Kingdom of God (BCP, pp. 298, 858). In baptism we are made sharers in the new life of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sins. Baptism is the foundation for all future church participation and ministry.

Bishop: the Bishop in Charge of the Convocation. The Bishop is responsible overall for the development of lay and ordained ministry, including the ordination process; for licensing of lay ministers; the admission of Postulants and Candidates; and ordination.

Bishop's Committee: a group of people selected by the Bishop to provide administrative and pastoral direction to the members of a mission church.

Call: a term often used in connection with a vocation (see "vocation").

Candidate for Holy Orders: a person who has completed postulancy and may still be in the process of theological education, and who, having fulfilled the necessary canonical steps, is in the final phase of preparation and examination for being qualified and fit for ordained ministry. This is the last stage before being accepted by the Bishop for ordination.

Candidate for Licensed Lay Ministry: a Nominee in the final phase of formation for licensed lay ministry.

Canons: the rules of The Episcopal Church (together with its Constitution), as last revised, under which it operates. The Convocation, as part of The Episcopal Church, is subject to their authority. The Canons pertaining directly to the procedures described in these guidelines are Title III, "Ministry." Nothing in these guidelines should be construed as in any way contradictory to the Constitution and Canons.

Catechist: a person trained and licensed to prepare Candidates for Baptism (and their parents and godparents in the case of young children), Confirmation, Reception and the individual Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows. A catechist may be responsible for training and equipping the Sunday School teachers in a parish or group of parishes. A catechist may also be a person especially equipped to help the members of a congregation to understand and live out their calling as baptized Christians at the heart of God's world (Canon III.4 and especially Sec. 8).

Catechism: Church doctrine as set forth in the Creeds and An Outline of Faith.

Christology: the doctrine of Christ. The traditional scope of Christology covers an exposition of the person of Christ, usually in terms of the Chalcedonian Definition, a carefully balanced formula designed to express both the full humanity of Jesus of Nazareth and his full divinity as the Son of God.

Clergy, Members of the: persons in holy orders, ordained for the ministry of Bishop, Priest, or Deacon. The Episcopal Church canons concerning ordination for these ministries are equally applicable to men and women.

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is education to teach pastoral care to clergy and others. CPE is the primary method of training hospital and hospice chaplains and spiritual care providers in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

COMB country liaison: the COMB contact person for the churches and the clergy in a country who explains and interprets the vocational discernment process. Once an aspirant's nomination has been approved by the Bishop, the person is assigned a COMB mentor.

COMB mentor: the COMB member who is assigned to work with the Nominee to clarify the steps toward licensed lay or ordained ministry. The mentor reports to

COMB on the progress of the person in the process. EICS will also assign an academic advisor for the Nominee's formation.

Commission on the Ministry of the Baptized (COMB, hereinafter referred to as "the Commission"): a group of lay and ordained persons appointed by the Bishop to assist in the development and affirmation of lay and ordained ministries in the Convocation. The Commission makes advisory recommendations to the Bishop regarding petitioners for certain lay and all ordained ministries.

Confirmation: the Episcopal Church's theology of Confirmation has continued to evolve along with its understanding of baptism. Confirmation is no longer seen as the completion of Christian initiation, nor is Confirmation a prerequisite for receiving communion. Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's body the church (BCP, p. 298). Accordingly, Confirmation has been increasingly understood in terms of a mature, public reaffirmation of the Christian faith and the baptismal promises.

Congregation: a group of people who make up a parish or mission church affiliated with the Convocation.

Consecrated Elements: the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist.

Consequentialism: the doctrine that the morality of an action is to be judged solely by its consequences.

Convocation: The Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, a part of The Episcopal Church and as such also part of The Anglican Communion.

Council of Advice: a body of four clerical and four lay representatives, elected by the Convention of the Convocation, which serves in the same capacity as the Standing Committee of a diocese (Canon I.15.9)). The Council's role is to interview Postulants as they proceed to Candidacy and to give advice and consent to Candidacy, and for ordination, to certify that all canonical requirements for ordination have been met.

Deontology: the study of the nature of duty and obligation.

Diaconate: a full order equal to the presbyterate and the episcopate, the diaconate plays an important role in many dioceses and congregations. As commonly used, the term refers to those ordained deacon as a permanent vocation. Those ordained deacon as a preliminary step toward ordination as a priest, as required by canon law, are called "transitional deacons."

Discernment Committee: a group of Christians from one's congregation who follow a formal process instituted by the Commission's Guidelines for Discernment Committees in the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe for helping a person

discern God's call, under the authority of the person's Priest, and in consultation with the Bishop.

Discernment process: a process of interviews, guidance and training offered to someone discerning a call to ordained ministry or to someone pursuing acceptance for a licensed lay ministry.

Divine Command theory: a meta-ethical theory which proposes that an action's status as morally good is equivalent to whether it is commanded by God. The theory asserts that what is moral is determined by what God commands, and that to be moral is to follow his commands.

Ecclesiology: from the Greek *ekklesia*, "church," and *logia*, "doctrine," the term refers to the doctrine of the church.

Episcopacy: government of the church by Bishops.

Eros: one of the four words in Ancient Greek which can be rendered into English as "love". Eros is the term for sexual love itself, as well as the god's name.

Eschatology: theology of the last things, the end of time and history, the coming of the Kingdom of God.

Eucharistic Minister: a person licensed by the Bishop who is trained to administer the elements at the Eucharist in the absence of sufficient numbers of Priests or Deacons assisting the celebrant.

Eucharistic Visitor: a person licensed by the Bishop who is trained to take the Sacrament (consecrated at a celebration of the Eucharist immediately beforehand) to members of the congregation unable to attend due to illness or infirmity. (Canons III.4. esp. Sec. 6 and 7)

European Institute of Christian Studies (EICS): a commission of lay and ordained persons appointed by the Bishop to provide and oversee the formation of those seeking lay and ordained ministries in the Convocation. EICS works closely with the Bishop and Commission to ensure the requirements of The Episcopal Church and the Convocation regarding education of people in training.

Evangelist: a lay person trained and licensed to present the Good News of Jesus Christ in such a way that people are led to receive Christ as Savior and follow Christ as Lord in the fellowship of the Church (Canon III. Sec 4.9).

Field Placement: the preparation of the postulant that involves supervised practical application of the theoretical course in a church environment. The practicum provides students with the opportunity to integrate and apply classroom learning in a church work environment, which allows them to observe and learn from clergy in the field.

Formation: education and training.

General Ordination Examination (GOE): The General Convention of 1970 created the General Board of Examining Chaplains (GBEC), with responsibility to prepare at least annually a General Ordination Examination covering 1) The Holy Scriptures; 2) church history, including the ecumenical movement; 3) Christian theology; 4) Christian ethics and moral theology; 5) studies in contemporary society, including racial and minority groups; 6) liturgics and church music; Christian worship and music according to the contents and use of the Prayer Book and The Hymnal; and 7) theory and practice of ministry. Candidates are examined in these seven areas before ordination to the diaconate.

Good News, the: the message of good news described as a narrative in the four gospels. The message of good news is described as theology in many of the New Testament letters. It relates to the saving acts of God due to the work of Jesus on the cross and Jesus' resurrection from the dead which bring reconciliation ("atonement") between people and God.

Homiletics: the art of preaching or writing sermons or other religious discourse.

Intercessor: a person specially gifted in intercessory prayer.

Intinction: the Eucharistic practice of partly dipping the consecrated bread, or host, into the consecrated wine before consumption by the communicant.

Layperson: any person who has not been ordained either to the diaconate or to the priesthood.

Lector: a parishioner trained and appointed by the Member of the Clergy to read the Lessons, lead the Psalms, or lead the Prayers of the People.

Letter of support (Vestry): the Nominee's congregation or other community of faith attestation committing the community to:

1. pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and
2. involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Diaconate. (Canon III.5.2c)

Licensed Lay Ministries: any of the seven lay ministries provided for in the Canons (III.4.3-9) whose exercise requires the support of a Member of the Clergy in charge of a congregation and licensing by the Bishop (Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Evangelist, Catechist, Eucharistic Minister, and Eucharistic Visitor). Lectors and intercessors may be appointed by a Member of the Clergy in charge without licensing, but as in all forms of ministry should receive appropriate instruction and preparation.

Member of the Clergy: Deacon, Priest and Bishop.

Missiology: the study of the missionary function of the Christian Church.

Mission: a congregation that is not self-supporting and which is under a vicar.

Nominee: a person who, with the support in writing (including financial help if appropriate) of a Member of the Clergy and his/her congregation, is seeking a public ministry in the Convocation, either as a licensed Pastoral Leader or as a Deacon or Priest, but who has not yet been officially received as a Postulant or accepted for training as a licensed pastor.

Ordained Ministries: the Diaconate and the Priesthood.

Parish: a self-supporting congregation under a rector.

Parishioner: a person recorded on the electoral role of a parish or mission.

Pastoral Leader: a person trained and licensed to exercise pastoral leadership and/or administrative responsibility in an existing or newly planted congregation (Canon III.4 and especially Sec. 3). This license requires the most extensive educational process. (It replaces for the most part the office of Licensed Lay Reader. The term "Lay Reader" is no longer used in the Canons.)

Personal statement: an article detailing the person's spiritual journey.

Philia: often translated "brotherly love", is one of the four ancient Greek words for love: *philia*, *storge*, *agape* and *eros*.

Postulant: a person who has been accepted by the Bishop, as provided for in the Canons, for a period of vocational discernment, personal and spiritual growth, and theological education en route to ordination.

Preacher: a person trained and licensed to proclaim the Good News of God in Christ Jesus in the world at large, as well as in the worshipping community, always under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight (Canon III.4 and especially Sec. 5).

Priesthood: the body of people ordained as Priests.

Priest-in-Charge: a Priest in charge of a parish who is not its incumbent.

Reception (Christian Commitment): the act of publicly affirming one's faith and commitment to the responsibilities of one's baptism in the presence of a Bishop by a baptized person who has been a member of another Christian fellowship and who wishes to be affiliated with the Episcopal Church.

Reaffirmation of baptismal vows: the presentation to a Bishop of a person already baptized in the context of a service of Baptism or Confirmation to reaffirm his or her baptismal vows.

Rector: a Priest in charge of a parish that is fully self-supporting.

Safe-guarding God's children: a child protection policy and educational program.

Spiritual life: life in the context of faith.

Spiritual Director: someone you can talk with confidentially about your prayer and spiritual life. A spiritual director helps you explore the darkness of self-doubt, confusion, fear and anger so that you are able to be free of what blocks you from God's loving presence.

Synoptic Gospels: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which describe events from a similar point of view, as contrasted with that of John.

Systematic theology: a discipline of Christian theology that formulates an orderly, rational and coherent account of the Christian faith and beliefs.

Teleology: the explanation of phenomena by the purpose they serve rather than by postulated causes.

Usher: someone who helps the orderly conduct of a service, as well as incarnating the welcome and hospitality of the congregation.

Vestry: The Vestry is the legal representative of the Parish with regard to all matters pertaining to its corporate property. The number of Vestry members and the term of office varies from parish to parish. Vestry members are usually elected at the annual parish meeting. The presiding officer of the Vestry is the Rector. The basic responsibilities of the Vestry are to help define and articulate the mission of the congregation; to support the church's mission by word and deed, to select the Rector, to ensure effective organization and planning, and to manage resources and finances.

Vicar: The title generally applies to the Priest in charge of a mission congregation. The diocesan Bishop is the Rector, and the Priest representing the Bishop is the Vicar. The term is derived from the Latin *vicarius*, "substitute."

Virtue theory: currently one of three major approaches in normative ethics. It may, initially, be identified as the one that emphasizes the virtues, or moral character, in contrast to the approach which emphasizes duties or rules (deontology) or that which emphasizes the consequences of actions (consequentialism).

Vocation: From the Latin *vocare*, "to call," vocation is the "calling" one infers from the external and internal signs which evolve over time. Vocation may involve a task or job, but it also concerns a way of life. All Christian vocations — lay or ordained, single or married or religious — are specific expressions of Christian identity rooted in the baptismal covenant.

Vocational Discernment Conference: A retreat structured to help anyone seeking God's will for his or her life hosted by the Commission, usually held around the beginning of Advent. Attendance is required for people considering ordination or

certain licensed lay ministries (Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Catechist and Evangelist).

Vocational Discernment Process: The process beginning at the congregational level and moving forward first to the Bishop and then to COMB, by which a petitioner clarifies the nature of the ministry that he or she seeks, and is either licensed to a lay ministry, ordained, or asked to undertake another form of ministry.

Worship Leader: A person authorized to lead Morning or Evening Prayer in a congregation with permission of the Bishop and under the direct supervision of the clergy or a Pastoral Leader.