



Whom
Shall I
Send?





The Work of a Bishop

The first paragraph is adapted from 'Understanding the Structure and Governance of the Anglican Church in North America' by The Most Rev'd Robert W. Duncan, D.D., Archbishop Emeritus, © 2023, Anglican House Media Ministry.

The fundamental declarations of the Province (Constitution I. Prologue and I.3) accept the credal proposition that the Church's apostolicity is expressed in the succession of Bishops. Bishops are held to be the successors of Jesus' apostles, and thus are necessary for the life and good order of the Church. Bishops ordain the clergy and other Bishops (Canons III.2.1; BCP, Ordinal, pp. 470-509). Bishops are given responsibility for preserving the Faith and Unity of the Church (Constitution, Article X.1). They are assisted by the priests to "banish and drive away all strange and erroneous doctrine, contrary to the Word of God" (BCP, Ordinal, pp. 504, 491). They are also the guardians of the teaching of the faithful (BCP, Ordinal, p. 503, 490). Not infrequently assisted by the deacons in this responsibility (BCP, Ordinal, pp. 477-478), the Bishop presides in confirmation of the faithful as they make their adult profession of faith (BCP, Preface to Confirmation, p. 178) expected of all members of the Anglican Church. Practically and administratively, a Bishop is the spiritual head—chief pastor—of each diocese, sometimes assisted by another Bishop, especially where need or transition is at issue. The Bishop unites the diocese by his oversight, pastoral care, and visitation of each congregation; his voice in the appointment of clergy; and by his efforts at conflict mediation within and among congregations.

The Diocese of Western Anglicans (DWA) has desired its Bishops to concentrate on upholding the authority of Scripture, ministering to the clergy, doing the work of an evangelist, and supporting and overseeing the planting of churches. The ACNA requires all candidates for the episcopacy to be faithful, prayerful, pious, moral, zealous for souls, fruitful in the Spirit, possessing the knowledge and gifts to fulfill the office, of good repute by the faithful, a male Presbyter of at least 35 years, and have demonstrated the ability to lead and grow the Church. To these qualities DWA adds the need for candidates to affirm the fundamental declarations of the diocese (Constitution and Canons Title II, Canon 1), have at least 10 years of full time parish ministry, to have never been divorced and remarried, and to be or have been the rector of an ACNA Local Church or currently be serving as an ACNA Bishop. The DWA Constitution and Canons are available [here](#).

DWA has partnered with Anglican Diocese of the Western Gulf, Anglican Diocese of Fort Worth, Anglican Diocese of the Southwest, Diocese of Cascadia, Anglican Diocese of San Joaquin, and Anglican Diocese of the Great Lakes to form ACNA West. The aim of this collaboration is to strengthen all of the Dioceses who wish to participate but who are primarily located in the western states by building strong episcopal and diocesan partnership and initiating shared ministry projects that advance God's Kingdom in unity. Initiatives include shared clergy examination processes, rapid response to disciplinary concerns, shared training for lay leadership and ministry and fellowship strengthening activities among the bishops.

The Suffragan Bishop for Special Mission serves within the context of a Missionary District, that is, a Deanery that is in the process of becoming a Diocese. While the Bishop of DWA remains the Bishop Ordinary of a Missionary District, the Suffragan Bishop ministers through Local Church visitations, ordinations, confirmations, institutions of a Rector, building consecrations, etc. while leading clergy gatherings, training and monitoring all Local Church leaders, and provide pastoral care for clergy and their families. The Suffragan Bishop serves as liaison to the Bishop Ordinary and the Executive Committee through communication, coordination, and annual reports on the progress of the Missionary District in its growth goals towards. Additional details can be found in the [Yellowstone Missionary District MOU](#).



The Bishop We Seek

The Diocesan Transition Team surveyed the clergy and laity of the diocese to determine seven foundational competencies that the next Bishop must demonstrate prior to consecration. Three competencies overwhelmingly emerged as the top three for both clergy and laity:

- Skilled relationally, approachable, compassionate
- Deeply prayerful
- Fidelity to ACNA polity and practice

The following four competencies round out the top seven:

- Compassionate pastoral care
- Develop, cast, and implement strategic vision
- Effective, dynamic preaching & teaching
- Skilled communicator through oral, written, and digital channels



Godly Character (1 Timothy 3:1-7)

Spirit-Led (John 20:21-22): Our next Bishop should be always listening to the Holy Spirit and seeking his ways through deep prayer, personal and spiritual discipline, and joyous worship. Recognizing that apart from God's grace there is no health in us, our next Bishop will do this work through exhibiting the fruit (Gal 5:22) and gifts (Isa 11:2) of the Spirit.

Prayerful (Rom. 12:12): He will be dedicated to daily prayer, reflection on Scripture, self-examination, accountability, sabbath rest, and service.

Humble (Matt. 18:4): He must seek God's priorities first and be willing to lay aside his own agendas for the sake of others. He must be aware of his own limitations and able to listen to others.

Pastoral (1 Pet. 5:2-3): As the pastor to the pastors, he will need to encourage, guide, and tend the souls of the priests and deacons in his charge, equipping them for mission and ministry, and supporting clergy families in their vocations. He must also remember that Episcopal ministry is an extension of his Priestly duty to "work diligently, with your whole heart, to bring those in your care into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of God, and to maturity in Christ, that there may be among you neither error in religion nor immorality in life" (BCP, 489).



Episcopal Competency

Visionary Leader: Our next Bishop should be consistent in looking ahead to ensure the mission, vision, and values of the Diocese are realized and expanded in submission to the Spirit's leading for the advancement of the Kingdom while also implementing a strategic approach to the development of organic systems that effectively strengthen the Local Church and the members of the Diocese in responding to the world in which we live.

Missional Leader: He will need to bring experience in church planting and effectiveness in prioritizing expansion of the Diocese through the development of new Local Churches and multiplication of existing Local Churches. The work will require the steady support of church planters and the development of financial resources to optimize success.

Collaborative Leader: We desire a Bishop who will be able to effectively collaborate for mission and ministry in the Diocese and in the Province and its College of Bishops, recognizing that bringing alignment around disparate voices is challenging and requires great listening and communications skill. We are partnered for mission and ministry at the Local Church, in the Deanery, in the Diocese, among the Bishops and Dioceses of ACNA West and in the College of Bishops.



Episcopal Competency

Equipping Leader: Our next Bishop must demonstrate investment in discipleship and evangelism and value the requirements of a Diocese to educate, form, and train Deacons and Presbyters in their vocations to effectively lead Local Churches to equip and deploy laity to do the work of evangelism and discipleship in their homes, neighborhoods, schools and work sites.

Deploying Leader: It is critical that our next Bishop will commit to deploying Deacons and Presbyters for mission and ministry with a full understanding of and skills in responding to the culture of the wider community with all of its theological concerns and moral quandaries. Those who are deployed as clergy leaders must be led to grow in their capacity to deploy laity for mission and ministry, recognizing the cultural challenges and how the Gospel addresses human need in every context.

Managerial Leader: He should bring experience and demonstrated effectiveness in his leadership and management, growing a large church organization, which brings with it difficult leadership decisions and careful stewardship of limited personal and church resources. Since growth is the nature of God's Kingdom, we see the need for skill in expanding resources, both human and financial, at every level.



Compatibility

Sacramental Unity: We highly value the Holy Eucharist as the primary liturgy for our Lord's Day worship, but Morning Prayer with sermon and song is also acceptable when a priest is unavailable. Most clergy and laity also support Deacons leading a Communion service with pre-consecrated elements in such cases. Baptism and Holy Matrimony are Sacraments that need preparation, protection, and support from the Local Church. Personal confession is practiced by most clergy, but not by most laity, which may indicate a need for teaching or training for clergy and laity alike.

Anglican Identity: The majority of both laity and clergy primarily embrace the view that Anglican theology encompasses the catholic faith and tradition from Scripture, the early Church, the Church of the Reformation, the Oxford and Cambridge movements, the charismatic renewal, and the ongoing missional impulse. We affirm the three streams of Anglican spirituality and seek a Bishop who will respect and function in all of them. We believe the Holy Spirit is active and present in every Christian through spiritual gifts and fruit. The work of the Spirit in our hearts enables us to be faithful in the work of making disciples who make disciples.

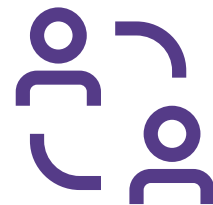
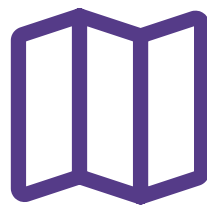
Kingdom Expansion: We are committed to actively engage in evangelism and discipleship in the local community, including the raising, training and deploying of Lay Missioners for evangelism and the expansion of the Local Church. We affirm the importance of working to ensure that every Local Church has a Deacon who can catechize members and seekers after Christ. We seek a Bishop who can facilitate Diocesan formation and Deanery multiplication through overcoming congregationalism and helping us build strong relationships among Clergy and Local Church members. We are strongly committed to giving time, energy, and money to supporting the deaneries with the hope of eventually, by God's grace, becoming new dioceses. We are highly committed to the practice of tithing by the Local Church to the Diocese and making offerings to the Deanery for Kingdom expansion initiatives.

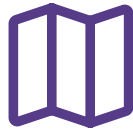


Four Commitments

The Deans, Executive Committee, and Diocesan Transition Team performed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis to assess the current state of the diocese. This analysis was informed by the work completed in the Diocesan Profile with an eye to the past as well as to the future. These groups have identified the following four commitments for our next Bishop to attend to:

- Grow Each Deanery into a Diocese
- Church Planting
- Evangelism
- Multi-Cultural Engagement





Grow Deaneries into Dioceses

Our bishops have emphasized the need for each Deanery to mature in mission and ministry as a missionary network of churches that effectively carry the Gospel to the wider community and multiply through church planting and Local Church expansion, resulting in a new Diocese of the ACNA. The Yellowstone Missionary District has begun its transition from Deanery to Diocese, and each deanery will determine, in consultation with the Bishop, the advisability of forming a Missionary District or moving directly to a Diocese-in-Formation. Our next bishop must embrace this vision, continuing to equip and support the deans, clergy, and laity of each deanery as they develop each region. This requires sacrificial leadership, a willingness to raise and send, that each deanery may thrive as the kingdom advances in each region to the point that it can become a Missionary District with a Suffragan Bishop and then a Diocese with its own Bishop. The Bishop's experience in and support of Local Church expansion and development will be a critical part of this work. This process will also require instilling in the leadership of each deanery the desire and will to establish more local church partnerships, recognizing that becoming partners in common mission helps everyone share resources, overcome isolation, reduce frustration, and instill hope in God and his Church.



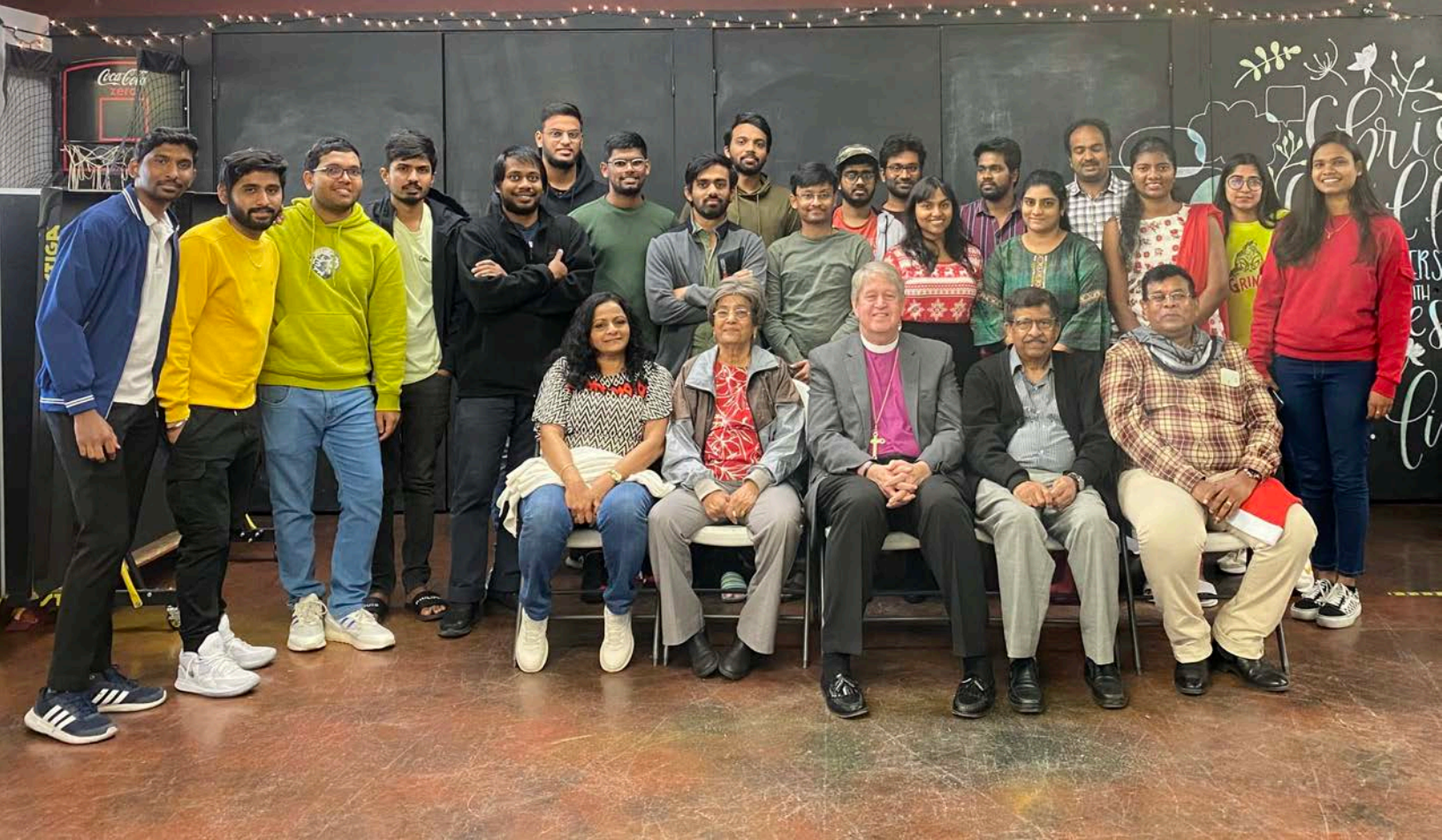
Church Planting

Critical to the growth of each deanery into a diocese is our effort to plant more churches. Church Plants not only advance the mission of reaching the world with the gospel, but they inspire existing Local Churches to re-engage with our calling to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. While the amount of territory each deanery encompasses is different, the opportunity is vast with populations ranging from 3 million to 17 million people. Church planting, though vital, is incredibly difficult work with high risks for burnout or failure due to a lack of resources, support, or encouragement. Our next Bishop must work with our Canon for Church Planting, not only embrace the need to raise up more church planters, but to increase funding for new church plants and their clergy. With the aid of the Canon for Church Planting, he must also prioritize efforts to strengthen the support systems for the pastoral, emotional, educational, and formational needs of new clergy and church planters.



Evangelism

We need a Bishop who is passionate about evangelism and who will equip the saints, both clergy and lay, for the task of reaching those who have never heard the gospel, who have fallen away from the Church due to doubt and deconstruction, who believe a false gospel, and who are ensnared in the deceptions of the evil one. Our next Bishop should have a heart that longs for the reconciliation of all in Christ, extensive experience and active engagement in reaching the lost, a passion for winsome apologetics, and a delight in training and raising up more evangelists. Importantly, this work is not limited to the work of the clergy, but is greatly expanded through the commitment of each Local Church to make disciples who make more disciples through relational evangelism. We must, under the leadership and encouragement of our next Bishop, increase daily the orientation of every Christian in his or her focus outwardly toward the world in mission, cultivating an outwardly-focused culture in every Local Church, and forming leaders around this priority.



Multi-Cultural Engagement

In order to accomplish all of the prior goals, we need a Bishop who is passionate about helping each deanery reach a fuller expression of the Church found in Acts 1:8 and Revelation 7:9-10. As revealed in the Deanery Surveys in the Diocesan Profile, the areas we minister in are populated by individuals from all over the world. It is not a question of whether we are connected to those of Hispanic, African, Asian, Native, or Pacific Islander descent, but whether we will engage them with the gospel of Jesus. Leveraging and developing more resources like liturgies in native languages and raising up and drawing in new clergy from different cultures will be critical to this work. We need a Bishop who will equip the saints for the work of reaching those of different languages, cultures, and backgrounds who in turn are empowered to lead and fully participate in the life of the Church as the Spirit inspires them.

ACNA Constitution Regarding the Bishop

Article IV: *The Structure Of The Province*

... 2. Congregations and clergy are related together in a diocese or network (whether regional or affinity-based), united by a Bishop. ... 5. Each Bishop in active episcopal ministry shall be included in a Provincial College of Bishops as provided by canon. ... 7. This Constitution recognizes the right of each diocese or network (whether regional or affinity-based) to establish and maintain its own governance, constitution, and canons not inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution and Canons of this Province.

ACNA Canons, Title III Of Ministers, Their Recruitment, Preparation, Ordination, Office, Practice and Transfer

Canon 8 Of Bishops

Section 1 - Concerning Requirements for Bishop According to Holy Scripture

A Bishop is called by God and the Church to be a shepherd who feeds the flock entrusted to his care. A Bishop is an overseer of the flock and as such is called to propagate, to teach, and to uphold and defend the faith and order of the Church willingly and as God wants him to – not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to his care, but being a wholesome example to the entire flock of Christ (1 Peter 5:2-3). These requirements are in addition to the requirements set forth in Canon 2 for Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13) and for Presbyter (1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:6-9).

Section 2 - Concerning the Ministry of Bishops

By the tradition of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, Bishops are consecrated for the whole Church and are successors of the Apostles through the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them. They are chief missionaries and chief pastors, guardians and teachers of doctrine, and administrators of godly discipline and governance.

Section 3 - Concerning Criteria for the Episcopate

To be a suitable candidate for the episcopate, a person must:

1. Be a person of prayer and strong faith;
2. Be pious, have good morals and exhibit Godly character;
3. Have a zeal for souls;
4. Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit;
5. Possess the knowledge and gifts which equip him to fulfill the office;
6. Be held in good esteem by the faithful;
7. Be a male Presbyter at least 35 years old;
8. Have demonstrated the ability to lead and grow the Church.

DWA Constitution Regarding the Bishop

Article One *Certain Governing Principles*

We affirm certain governing principles of our life as a part of the Body of Christ, including:

The Historic Godly Episcopate

We confess the Godly historic episcopate as an inherent part of the apostolic faith and practice, and therefore as integral to the fullness and unity of the Body of Christ.

The Bishop Evangelist

From the beginning our vision is of a diocese, minimal in structure, whose Bishop would concentrate on four main things: upholding the authority of the Holy Scriptures; ministering to the clergy, doing the work of an evangelist, and supporting and overseeing the planting of churches.

DWA Canons, Title II *The Clergy*

Canon 4 *Concerning the Election of a Bishop*

Section 4.04 *The Criteria for the Episcopate*

The qualifications for bishop are contained in Title III, Canon 8 of the Church's Canons. ... [In addition to the ACNA Constitutional requirements, a suitable candidate must] ... have affirmed the Fundamental Declarations of the Diocese (Title II, Section 1.02). ...

Section 4.05 The Pool of Candidates

The Bishop candidate shall be a male presbyter of at least 35 years of age, who possesses the qualities of a Bishop specified in Section 4.04 hereof, who has at least 10 years in ordained full time parish ministry, who has not been divorced and remarried, and who is, or has been, a rector of an ACNA congregation, or is currently serving as an ACNA Bishop. A candidate requires the agreement of his vestry, if applicable, to be considered for the episcopate.

Real Voices from the Diocese: Aspirations for Our Next Bishop

“If our new Bishop has absolute faith that Jesus Christ died for every soul in his care; if he is committed to acting as if there are ‘no ordinary people,’ as C.S. Lewis put it, our Diocese will be blessed and in good hands.”

“The Bishop must have an ability to unite a Diocese that is spread out and comprised of a variety of backgrounds, ethnicities, and needs.”

“One of the most pressing matters for our Diocese is outreach and evangelism within the ethnic and diverse communities in our region. Growth and support of the established churches, along with new and mission churches, are required for a healthy Body of Christ.”

“The Bishop should inspire us to love Scripture and the Trinity more than our next breath.”

“I don't ask the Bishop to do everything; one of his primary responsibilities is to surround himself with godly and diligent people to help shoulder the load.”

“Our Bishop must be a guardian of the historic faith and lead us in spreading that faith throughout the world.”

“We ask God to call an exceptional individual who has demonstrated more than the essential skills. This is a big ask, but let us go to the Lord and expect the impossible.”