

Proposed Changes to Diocesan Canon 3.9: Of the Commission on Ministry
Proposed by: Commission on Ministry

DIOCESE OF OREGON – CANON 3.9

OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

Sec. 1. (a) A permanent Commission, consisting of 15 ~~twenty-seven~~ persons, appointed by the Bishop, subject to confirmation by the Convention, shall constitute the Commission on Ministry (“Commission”), for the administration of such affairs as shall appear in the following sections.

(b) The Commission shall advise and assist the Bishop in (1) the implementation of Title III of the Canons of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America, (2) the determination of present and future opportunities and need for the ministry of all baptized persons, (3) the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry of all types, and assessment of readiness therefore.

(c) The Commission shall advise and assist the Bishop in guiding persons engaged in a process of ministry discernment to determine appropriate avenues for the expression and support of their ministries, either lay or ordained.

Sec. 2 (a) All members of the Commission shall serve on one of the following two committees of the Commission with representation and terms of service as specified in sections 2.b and 2.c of this canon: The Committee for Baptismal Ministry Development or The Committee for Ordained Ministry Development. At the first meeting of the Commission the Chair of Commission shall appoint two persons to serve on both committees to act as liaisons.

(b) The Committee for Baptismal Ministry Development shall consist of twelve persons appointed by the Bishop, subject to confirmation by the Convention, for the administration of such affairs as shall appear in Sec. 4 below. There shall be nine Lay Persons and three Members of the Clergy appointed. Each year three Lay persons and one Member of the Clergy shall be appointed for a three-year term. No member of the Committee shall be eligible for re-appointment after having served a full three-year term until the expiration of one year. Vacancies occurring between annual Conventions shall be filled by election of this Committee from nominees presented by the Bishop. Members so elected shall serve the remainder of the term of the members they replace, provided their elections are confirmed at the next annual Convention. If not so confirmed, the Bishop shall appoint another person to complete the term, subject to confirmation by the Convention. In addition to the twelve members, the Bishop may also appoint a staff liaison person as a member of this Committee without vote.

(c) The Committee for Ordained Ministry Development shall be a permanent Committee of the Commission consisting of fifteen persons, appointed by the Bishop, subject to confirmation by the Convention, for the administration of such affairs as shall appear in Sec. 5 below. In the even-numbered years, two Priests, or if any, Deacons, and one Lay Person shall be appointed for five-year terms. In the odd-numbered years, two Lay Persons and one Priest, or if any, Deacon, shall be appointed for five-year terms. Such appointments shall be made so that there shall be at least one Priest, and if any, one Deacon, on the Commission at all times. No member of the ~~Commission~~ Committee shall

be eligible for re-appointment after having served a full five-year term until the expiration of one year. Vacancies occurring between annual Conventions shall be filled by election of the Commission from nominees presented by the Bishop. Members so elected shall serve the remainder of the term of the members they replace, provided their elections are confirmed at the next annual Convention. If not so confirmed, the Bishop shall appoint another person to complete the term, subject to confirmation by the Convention. In addition to the 15 members, the Bishop may also appoint the Dean of the Center for the Diaconate and a staff liaison person as members of the ~~Commission~~ Committee without vote.

Sec. 2 3. The Commission shall establish procedures for its organization and governance, with each committee of the Commission establishing procedures for its organization and governance consistent with the particular responsibilities of that committee. The entire Commission shall meet in plenary session at least twice a year.

Sec. 3 4. (a) It shall be the duty of The Committee for Baptismal Ministry Development to affirm and develop the ministry of all baptized persons by (1) promoting the understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, (2) conducting training and education for its members, for congregations and for the Diocese in all facets of baptismal ministry development including, but not limited to, gifts identification, discernment, and life-long formation for lay persons, (2) providing affirmation and support of baptismal ministries in daily life, (3) recruiting and training lay leaders in the Diocese, (4) providing information and referrals to individuals and congregations in the Diocese regarding baptismal ministry resources, and (5) sponsoring diocesan wide conferences on baptismal ministry.

(b) Subject to the Canons of the General Convention and of this Diocese, and subject further to the approval of the Bishop, this Committee shall have authority to appoint such sub-committees from and beyond its membership as it may find necessary to act on its behalf.

Sec. 5. (a) It shall be the duty of the ~~Commission~~ Committee for Ordained Ministry Development to assist the Bishop in matters pertaining to (1) the selection, examination, education, training, pastoral care, deployment, and continuing development of Postulants and Candidates; (2) the continuing development of Clergy of the Diocese; (3) providing guidance and pastoral care for Lay Professionals employed by the Church; and (4) performing such other duties as may be required by Canons of the General Convention.

(b) Subject to the Canons of the General Convention and of this Diocese, and subject further to the approval of the Bishop, ~~the Commission~~ this Committee shall have authority to appoint such sub-committees from and beyond its membership as it may find necessary to act on its behalf.

(c) ~~The Commission~~ This Committee shall provide for the conduct of those canonical examinations assigned it by General Convention Canons. The Bishop may appoint the persons who are to conduct the examinations.

(d) Under the guidance and oversight of the Bishop, ~~the Commission~~ this Committee shall interview each Candidate before ordination to the Diaconate, and, at its discretion, before ordination to the Priesthood, to ascertain the Candidate's personal readiness for such ordination; and shall report, in writing and without delay, the findings of the interview to the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

Sec. 4 ~~6~~. The Commission shall make a written report to the annual Convention ~~and upon request to the Standing Committee~~ with a copy to the Standing Committee upon its request. This report will include, but not be limited to, reports from both committees of the Commission.

EXPLANATION

The purpose of this revision to Canon 3.9 is to respond clearly to the changes made by the General Convention of 2003 to Title III of the canons of the national church. Those changes explicitly addressed the requirement that each diocese provide “for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons.” (III.1.1) This concern is addressed further in the canon that focuses specifically on the Commission on Ministry and in the canon on Discernment.

These changes, and more specifically to the addition of baptismal ministry to those aspects of ministry for which the Commission is responsible, is addressed by creating two committees within the Commission and assigning all members to one or the other of those two committees. (Additionally, two people would serve on both committees to act as liaisons.) The requirements of the national canon essentially double the workload of the Commission. The most effective way to ensure that all aspects of the Commission’s work are carried out intentionally is, therefore, to divide the work between these two committees. As proposed in these canonical changes, one committee would be responsible for baptismal ministry development and the other would be responsible for ordained ministry development. However, all members of the two committees would be members of the Commission, and mechanisms are provided to ensure that those committees would indeed function to support and enhance the overall responsibilities of the Commission.

Recommendation of Committee on Constitution and Canons: DO PASS