



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF CHRIST OUR HOPE  
Credentialing Guide  
Office of Leadership Development

## ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF CHRIST OUR HOPE

P.O. Box 52449  
Durham, NC 27717  
Phone 984.999.4604  
[www.adhope.org](http://www.adhope.org)

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Archbishop and Primate, Anglican Church in North America

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Steven Breedlove  
Bishop Ordinary

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Quigg Lawrence  
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Canon for Leadership Development  
[jbailey@adhope.org](mailto:jbailey@adhope.org)

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Canon to the Ordinary  
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This information packet will walk you through the ordination process of the Diocese of Christ our Hope (hereafter DCH). Our prayer is that the Lord will speak clearly to you and to those participating with you in this process, as you discern God's call and continue to be equipped and released for ministry.

**All credentialing reports and materials should be submitted electronically to Ben Bowman at [bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org), or mailed to:**

Diocese of Christ our Hope

Attn: Ben Bowman

P.O. Box 52449

Durham, NC 27717

The ordination process is outlined in this document. Please review it thoroughly. We look forward to working with you through this process, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Grace and Peace,

The Rev. Canon Jeff Bailey

Canon for Leadership Development

Diocese of Christ our Hope

[jbailey@adhope.org](mailto:jbailey@adhope.org)

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# The Purpose of Leadership Development

This document outlines the process of clergy credentialing for those seeking to serve as ordained ministers in DCH, under the canons of the Anglican Church in North America. The clergy credentialing process seeks to discern in the life of those seeking ordination the calling, competence, and character necessary for the work to which they have been called. At the same time, it upholds the trust of the community by ensuring that individuals called to ministry are properly equipped for ordained leadership in the church. This process is intended to be constructive for the postulant and for the community in which they serve.

## Becoming a Deacon

DCH recognizes the Order of Deacons as a “full and equal order” of ordained ministry. The Office of Leadership Development also recognizes that candidates for ordained ministry enter the process at different points in their lives and ministries. Therefore, this process takes into account as much as possible both the office to which an individual is being called as well as the past experience of the candidate.

DCH is committed to providing its churches with competent clergy of high moral character. With this goal in mind, the ordination process does not simply seek to complete certain steps, but rather to equip men and women for ordained ministry. This process exists to prepare ordinands for ministry by providing them with theological foundations, spiritual formation, and practical skills.

Ordinands who indicate an interest in church planting will undergo a separate church planter assessment. [Information available from the Office of Leadership Development.]

As a safeguard to our parishioners and the integrity of DCH, the Office of Leadership Development requires a background check, physical, psychological and marriage assessments, and sexual misconduct prevention training.

## Deacon Aspirancy Phase

1. Membership in a DCH church for one year: An aspirant will be an active confirmed member of a parish for a minimum of one year. During this time the aspirant comes to know the local church and becomes known by its parishioners and the local clergy.
2. Interview with Rector and Letter of Recommendation: The aspirant and the rector will discuss the possibility of beginning the ordination process. The process formally begins when the rector sends a letter of recommendation to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development, indicating support for the aspirant to enter the ordination process. The letter of recommendation should include the first and last name of the aspirant, as well as their date of birth, current email address, cell phone number, and mailing address.
3. Parish Discernment: Once the rector’s recommendation has been submitted, the aspirant may begin parish discernment. A Parish Discernment Committee is made up of 6-8 people from the local church who know the aspirant personally and have experienced the aspirant in the context of service and ministry. A chairperson should be nominated to chair meetings. A summary of the committee’s findings and recommendations should be sent to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development. Further instructions and guidelines are provided in Appendix D of this Credentialing Guide.
4. Ministry Application: After recommendation by the Parish Discernment Committee, the aspirant submits the Ministry Application and all supporting documents to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) and sends in the application fee of \$200. The aspirant can obtain the Ministry Application on the DCH website, or in Appendix A of this Credentialing Guide. Checks should be made out to “Diocese of Christ our Hope.” Applications and checks are mailed to the Office of Leadership Development.

*\*The Aspirancy Phase cannot continue until all of the above has been completed and submitted to the DCH Office of Leadership Development.*

5. Intake Interview with Director of Leadership Development: Once all application materials have been submitted, the aspirant schedules an intake interview with the Director of Leadership Development. To schedule an interview, contact Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)). This meeting will formalize the ordination process.
6. Background Check: Once the Intake Interview has been completed, a background check is initiated by the Office of Leadership Development.
7. Wellness Assessments: Once the background check has been processed, the aspirant completes a physical exam and psychological and marriage (if applicable) assessments. It is the desire of DCH to see that each applicant for Holy Orders possesses the physical and psychological health necessary to serve and thrive as an ordained deacon or priest.
8. Regional Discernment: Once wellness assessment reports have been received, the aspirant will be interviewed by a regional team of clergy. The purpose of this meeting is to discern and confirm the aspirant's calling to ordained ministry. The regional team will submit a report of their findings and recommendations to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development.
9. Personal History Questionnaire: After completing the regional discernment process, the aspirant will complete the Personal History Questionnaire and send it to Ben Bowman.
10. Interview with Bishop: After the Personal History Questionnaire has been submitted, the Office of Leadership Development will arrange for the aspirant to meet with the bishop, who will review the aspirant's entire packet of information and will conduct an open-ended interview with the aspirant.
11. Episcopal Approval for Deacon Postulancy: Upon completion of all of the above, the bishop will review the aspirant's file and make a decision concerning his/her fitness to enter the Postulancy Phase.

*\*During the Aspirancy Phase:*

- Annual Ordinand Retreats: Ordinand Retreats are scheduled for each August. Everyone in the ordination process, or those who have recently been ordained, are invited to attend. The retreats are structured on a two-year cycle of themes: *Christ-Shaped Leadership* and *A Rule of Life*. The diocese requires everyone who is seeking ordination to attend at least one of the retreats during the ordination process, but ordinands are expected to come to as many as they can. These are wonderful opportunities to build relationships with the bishop and future clergy.
- Send Ember Letters to the Bishop: Throughout the ordination process, aspirants are required to write ember letters to their bishop. The dates for these letters are fixed by the church year: The week between the 3rd and 4th Sundays in Advent, between the 1st and 2nd Sundays in Lent, the week between Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, and the week after Holy Cross. Ember letters should be emailed to the Rev. Canon Jeff Bailey ([jbailey@adhope.org](mailto:jbailey@adhope.org)) and Bishop Steve Breedlove ([sbreedlove@adhope.org](mailto:sbreedlove@adhope.org)).
- Confirmation or Reception: During the Aspirancy Phase, the aspirant, if not already confirmed, will need to be confirmed as an Anglican. If the aspirant has been confirmed in another tradition by a bishop in succession, the aspirant will need to be formally received into the Anglican Church.

## Deacon Postulancy Phase

1. Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training: After Episcopal approval for the Postulancy Phase has been given, the postulant will complete the Ministry Safe and Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics courses. These are free of charge to the postulant.
  - a. Ministry Safe: you will receive an email from Ministry Safe, providing you with instructions and a link to take the course and quiz. Upon completion of the quiz, the Office of Leadership Development will be notified automatically.
  - b. Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics: email Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) to request your login code. When ready to take the course, visit <https://www.lewisonlinelearning.org/CourseInfo/10004>, then enter your login information under "Enroll in This Course." Please budget up to 3 hours for completion of this course. Upon completion, the Office of Leadership Development will be notified automatically.

2. Exam Readiness Review: At this point in the process the Canon for Leadership Development reviews with the postulant his or her readiness to take ordination exams, identifying any need for additional reading and study, or training, prior to taking the exams.
3. Exam Date Request: Once any additional reading, study, and/or training have been completed the postulant may request a date to take the exams from the Office of Leadership Development.
4. Examinations: Once a date for the exams has been given, the exams may be taken and then submitted to Art Going ([agoing@adhope.org](mailto:agoing@adhope.org)). The exams will be carefully graded by the Office of Leadership Development.
5. Episcopal Approval for Deacon Candidacy: Upon the successful completion of the exams, The Office of Leadership Development will arrange for the postulant to have a final interview with the bishop, who may then approve the Postulant for Candidacy.

## Deacon Candidacy

1. Setting the Ordination Date: The Office of Leadership Development will work with the bishop to set dates for all ordinations.
2. Ordination: While every effort will be made to accommodate the candidate's needs, it may be necessary for the candidate to travel for their ordination. On the day of the ordination, the new deacon will sign all ordination documents in duplicate.
3. Document Return: After the ordination, the new deacon will ensure all signed ordination documents are returned to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development.

## Priest Postulancy

*\*For those Deacons seeking ordination to the Priesthood, there are several further steps in the formation process.*

1. Priestly Formation Plan: The Office of Leadership Development will develop a plan to address areas of further growth needed prior to ordination. The Priestly Formation Plan will include ways to address ongoing Anglican theological, spiritual, and pastoral formation within the life of the local church depending on the needs of the postulant.
2. Diaconal Ministry: Each deacon will normally serve in the parish for one year before being ordained to the priesthood.
3. Rector Recommendation: Once the requirements of the Priestly Formation Plan have been satisfied, the rector will write the supervising bishop explaining why he is recommending him for the priesthood based on his experience of the postulant as a deacon in the local church. The template to be used for this letter is Appendix E in this Credentialing Guide and should be sent to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)).
4. Final Interview with the Bishop and approval for Priest Candidacy: After the details of the priestly formation plan are satisfied and the Rector Recommendation received, the Office of Leadership Development will arrange for the postulant to have a final interview with the bishop, after which, the bishop will make a decision on the ordination.

## Priest Candidacy

1. Setting the Ordination Date: Once the priestly candidate is approved for ordination, the bishop will work with the candidate on scheduling an appropriate date for the ordination.
2. Ordination: Every effort will be made for priestly ordinations to take place in the parish in which the candidate is serving. Only in extreme circumstances will the candidate have to travel for priestly ordinations.
3. Documentation Return: After the ordination, the new priest will ensure all signed ordination documents are returned to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development.

## Deacon Aspirancy Phase

1. Membership in a DCH church for one year	
2. Rector Letter of Recommendation submitted	
3. Parish Discernment Report submitted	
4. Ministry Application submitted	
Ministry Application Form	
Application Fee	
CV or Resume	
Academic Transcripts	
Electronic Picture of yourself	
<i>*The Aspirancy Phase cannot continue until all of the above has been completed and submitted to the DCH Office of Leadership Development.</i>	
5. Intake Interview with Director of Leadership Development	
6. Background Check Report received	
7. Wellness Assessment Reports submitted	
Physical Examination	
Psychological Examination	
Marriage Assessment	
8. Regional Discernment Report submitted	
9. Personal History submitted	
10. Interview with Bishop	
11. Episcopal Approval for Deacon Postulancy	
<b>During the Aspirancy Phase:</b> The Aspirant should be confirmed or received into the Anglican church, if they have not been before. It is also expected that throughout this process, the aspirant will write ember letters to the bishop.	
<b>Ordinand Retreats:</b> Ordinands are <i>required</i> to attend at least one Ordinand Retreat during the ordination process but are <i>strongly encouraged</i> to attend any retreats which occur during their ordination process.	



## **Deacon Postulancy Phase**

1. Ministry Safe and Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics courses completed	
2. Exam Readiness Review	
3. Notify Office of Leadership Development of readiness to take exams	
4. Examinations Completed and returned to Office of Leadership Development	
5. Episcopal Approval for Deacon Candidacy	

## **Deacon Candidacy Phase**

1. Set Ordination Date	
2. Ordination	
a. Sign Ordination Documents	
3. Ordination Documents Returned to Office of Leadership Development	

## **Priest Postulancy Phase**

1. Ordinand Retreat Attended	
2. Priestly Formation Plan developed	
3. Diaconal Ministry	
4. Rector Recommendation submitted	
5. Final Interview with Bishop	
6. Episcopal Approval for Priest Candidacy	

## **Priest Candidacy Phase**

1. Set Ordination Date	
2. Ordination	
a. Sign Ordination Documents	
3. Ordination Documents Returned to Office of Leadership Development	

## Transfer & Reception

The Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Christ Our Hope (DCH) may receive the transfer of duly ordained clergy from another ACNA diocese, or receive the orders of clergy from another Anglican jurisdiction. Upon examination of orders, he may also receive ministers who were ordained in historic succession, but are not currently resident in an Anglican jurisdiction.

### FOR ANGLICAN CLERGY SEEKING TRANSFER OR RECEPTION

Clergy already ordained in the ACNA or in GAFCON churches will seek transfer or reception by following these guidelines. After letters are received, DCH needs to confirm a place of ministry within the diocese, as well as an affinity with our focus and mission. The Bishop makes the final decision.

### BEFORE CONSIDERING TRANSFER OR RECEPTION

The Canon for Leadership Development will interview each applicant for transfer or reception, as will the Bishop. Please contact the DCH Director of Operations (Ben Bowman, [bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) to begin the process and set up the interviews. This will include conversations about your ministry, your relationship with your current Bishop and Jurisdiction, and reasons for considering a transfer. During this time, it is helpful if you fill out our Ministry Application to help us get to know you.

### **Checklist for Transfer or Reception**

Forms and guides are available on our website at <https://www.adhope.org/credentialing-documents>

- Contact Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) to request Reception or Transfer
- Interview with Canon for Leadership Development
- Receipt of Ministry Application
- Receipt of letter of transfer from your bishop
- Receipt of copies of certification of deacon and/or priest ordination
- Completion and receipt of DCH background check, or provide evidence of a background check completed within the past five years
- Completion and receipt of Ministry Safe and Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics courses (online sexual misconduct prevention tutorials), or provision of documentation showing completion of the same. Contact [bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org) for login info for both courses.
- Interview with DCH bishop
- Receipt of signed Oath of Conformity and Obedience
- Receipt of approval to transfer from the DCH bishop
- Certificate of transfer issued

# Licensure

The Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Christ Our Hope (DCH) may license clergy for specific ministry within the diocese, if they are duly ordained clergy in good standing from another ACNA diocese, or another Anglican jurisdiction, or who were demonstrably ordained in historic succession.

Licenses are issued for a one-year period, and are specific to a place and type of ministry. A report for the previous calendar year is due to the Bishop by the end of January.

## Checklist for Licensure

- Receipt of a letter from your bishop: of reference and permission to be licensed
- Receipt of written approval of the rector or ministry leader at the place of ministry to which you will be licensed
- Receipt of copies of certification of deacon and/or priest ordination
- Receipt of Ministry Application, Part I
- Completion and receipt of DCH background check, or provision of evidence of a background check completed within the past five years
- Completion and receipt of Ministry Safe and Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics courses (online sexual misconduct prevention tutorials), or provision of documentation showing completion of the same. Contact [bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org) for login info for both courses.
- Interview with the DCH bishop
- Receipt of approval from the DCH bishop
- Certificate of Licensure issued

## Appendix A





## References

*Please list three references: one clergy, one professional, one relational.*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    )  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    )  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    )

## Disclaimer and Signature

*I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. If this application leads to ordination, I understand that false or misleading information in my application or interview may result in my release.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ministry Application

## Part II – Personal Assessment Questions

1. **Your spiritual autobiography.** Have you been baptized? Were you raised in a Christian home? How did you come to know the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you been confirmed in the Anglican tradition? When and under what circumstances have you experienced conversion or a reawakening of your faith? Who have been important influences in your spiritual journey? What life experiences have been most significant in forming your faith? What struggles?
2. **The Gospel.** What is the gospel? What's the heart of the Good News you want to share with others?
3. **Discipleship.** How have you been taught the faith? Who discipled you along the way? Please describe. Have you experienced catechesis? If so, please describe.
4. **Anglican Formularies.** Carefully read the (Thirty-Nine) Articles of Religion and the 2008 Jerusalem Declaration. Do you have any reservations about affirming these statements of faith? If so, please describe and explain.
5. **Worship.** Briefly describe your current participation in public worship. How significant is worship as a part of your spiritual formation? What elements of worship are most meaningful to you? Is there anything connected to worship with which you struggle? What are some favorite hymns/songs and why?
6. **Spiritual Disciplines.** Describe your patterns and practices of personal and corporate devotions. How often do you read the Scriptures? When and how do you usually pray? Do you regularly use of the Book of Common Prayer (e.g., the Daily Office)? In what other ways do you seek to grow in grace? What other practices are meaningful for your spiritual life? Do you practice daily repentance? Have you experienced spiritual direction?
7. **Friendship.** Do you have close friends? How hard is it for you to sustain friendships?
8. **Calling.** Briefly describe your sense of calling to ordained ministry. To what office and type of future ministry do you believe God is calling you? Describe your gifts and strengths. How have others affirmed you in this sense of calling? Why do you wish to be ordained in the Anglican Communion? Are you willing to serve under spiritual authority?
9. **Leadership.** Describe your experiences in leading. Make sure to include any ministry in the church, including small group leadership or teaching. Were these ministry endeavors fruitful? What leaders have been significant in your life? Have you been mentored? Please describe that experience.
10. **Discipline.** Have you ever been disciplined or dismissed from a Christian congregation or denomination? Have you ever been removed from an ordination or credentialing process with another Christian congregation or denomination? If so, please explain.



11. **Spousal Support.** If you are married, please have your spouse respond to the following questions: Do you agree and support your spouse's sense of calling to ordained ministry? Are you of one mind and heart regarding the essential faith, doctrine and mission of Anglican Christianity? How have you grown through your spouse's ministry? If you have children, how have your children grown through your spouse's ministry? How have you and your spouse tried to integrate marriage and ministry?
  
12. **Debt.** What is your current level of indebtedness? Are you now, or have you ever been, in debt beyond your ability to meet your financial obligations? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? If so, please provide an account of the circumstances and how you handled the situation. How would you assess your personal money management? For example, do you have a budget? Do you live within the limits of that budget? Please discuss briefly.
  
13. Is there anything else you would like to communicate?

## Appendix B

# Medical Evaluation

## I. Purpose

The purpose of the Pre-Ordination Medical Evaluation process is to assess the physical health of ordination applicants.

## II. Process

1. The candidate for ordination identifies a licensed medical doctor and makes an appointment.
2. Prior to the appointment, the candidate for ordination (and spouse, if applicable) signs a release (attached) to allow the doctor to share his or her evaluation with the Office of Leadership Development.
3. The candidate meets with the doctor.
4. The doctor provides a written evaluation to DCH (attached).
5. The candidate or the sponsoring church compensates the doctor for services.

Dear Doctor,

N. is a candidate for ordination in the Diocese of Christ our Hope, a diocese of the Anglican Church of North America. You are being asked to provide a basic physical evaluation for N. The candidate will arrange payment for services with you or your office directly.

As a part of the ordination process, each candidate undergoes an evaluation by a licensed medical doctor who can provide an assessment of the candidate's physical health as it relates to the vocational demands of ordained pastoral ministry. Your work in assessing the candidate is part of the overall process of discerning the candidate's preparedness for ordination.

At the appointment, please provide the candidate for ordination with a release waiver to sign so that you might share your written, confidential evaluation with the Diocese of Christ our Hope (a recommended waiver template accompanies this letter).

In addition, we ask that you please complete the attached Medical Evaluation Form and have your office mail it directly to:

Diocese of Christ our Hope  
Office of Leadership Development  
PO Box 52449  
Durham, NC 27717

Thank you in advance for your service.

Sincerely,

Ben Bowman

Director of Operations  
Diocese of Christ our Hope  
P.O. Box 52449  
Durham, NC 27717  
[bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)

# Medical Evaluation Form

This is to certify that I, (name of Doctor) \_\_\_\_\_,

have conducted a full physical examination of (name of patient) \_\_\_\_\_

and have found (please check one):

\_\_\_ No medical conditions or concerns that would prevent him/her from performing the work of ordained ministry.

\_\_\_ The following health concerns that may prevent him/her from performing the work of ordained ministry (please list):

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Doctor's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Doctor's Office Contact Information:

Name of Office \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

## **Authorization to Release Information**

1. I am voluntarily seeking ordination in the Diocese of Christ our Hope and I understand that part of the ordination process requires me to undergo a physical assessment (hereafter, "Assessment") by a licensed medical doctor to evaluate my physical health.
  
2. I consent to participate in the Assessment and understand that I may be asked questions related, but not limited to, family history, medical history, lifestyle habits, criminal history, marital history, and sexual behavior. I agree that all the information I provide will be truthful and not misleading.
  
3. I authorize the doctor to release a confidential written report to the Diocese of Christ our Hope Office of Leadership Development.
  
4. I authorize the doctor to discuss, either in written form or orally, the written report with either the bishop or a member of the Office of Leadership Development.

---

Applicant's signature

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Date

---

Applicant's name (Please Print)

## Appendix C

# Psychological & Marital Evaluation

## I. Purpose

The purpose of the Pre-Ordination Psychological & Marital Evaluation process is to assess the psychological and marital health (if married) of ordination applicants.

## II. Process

1. The candidate for ordination identifies a licensed Christian counselor approved by his Rector and makes an appointment with this counselor.
2. Prior to the appointment, the candidate for ordination provides the counselor with DCH Guidelines for Assessment (below).
3. Prior to the appointment, the candidate for ordination (and spouse, if applicable) signs a release (attached) to allow the counselor to share his or her evaluation with the DCH Leadership Development Team.
4. The candidate (and spouse, if applicable) meets with the counselor.
5. The counselor provides a written evaluation to DCH.
6. The candidate or the sponsoring church compensates the counselor for services.

Dear Counselor,

*N.* is a candidate for ordination in the Diocese of Christ our Hope, a diocese of the Anglican Church of North America. You are being asked to provide a basic psychological evaluation for *N.*, and, if married, a marital health assessment for *N.* and spouse. The candidate will arrange payment for services with you or your office directly in advance of the counseling session.

As a part of the ordination process, each candidate undergoes an evaluation by a licensed Christian counselor or other qualified mental health professional who can provide an assessment of the candidate's mental, emotional, and marital health as it relates to the vocational demands of ordained pastoral ministry. Your work in assessing the candidate is part of the overall process of discerning the candidate's preparedness for ordination.

Please provide a basic evaluation based on the following areas:

- Mental health history
- Family mental health history
- Emotional maturity
- Interpersonal functioning
- Level of self-awareness
- Adaptability
- Sexual behavior
- Marital health

In addition to a comprehensive interview with the candidate and spouse, you may wish to administer a personality inventory (e.g., MBTI), marriage inventory (e.g., Prepare/Enrich) or other instrument ahead of the counseling session. At your discretion, some candidates may require more than one session. If you do administer an assessment instrument, please take time to review the results with the candidate; the wellness assessments (marital, psychological, medical) are not just measures of health but an important part of their ongoing formation.

Prior to your first meeting, please provide the candidate for ordination (and spouse, if applicable) with a release waiver to sign so that you might share your written, confidential evaluation with the candidate's bishop and the Diocese of Christ our Hope Office of Leadership Development (a recommended waiver template accompanies this letter). Upon conclusion of the interview process, please provide a brief written evaluation to the email address below based on the areas mentioned above along with answers to the following questions:

1. Do you have any concerns or do you foresee any issues that would potentially disqualify this person from ordained pastoral ministry?
2. In your estimation, what do you believe is the candidate's ability to respond to the emotional challenges inherent in the work of ordained ministry?
3. If the candidate is married, how would you describe the couple's marital health?
4. Do you recommend that this candidate pursue further counseling or see another mental health professional related to any issue uncovered through the evaluation? If so, please explain.

Thank you in advance for your ministry.

Yours in Christ,

Ben Bowman

Director of Operations  
Diocese of Christ our Hope  
P.O. Box 52449  
Durham, NC 27717  
[bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)



## **Authorization to Release Information**

1. I am voluntarily seeking ordination in the Diocese of Christ our Hope and I understand that part of the ordination process requires me and my spouse to undergo an assessment (hereafter, "Assessment") by a licensed professional approved by my pastor to evaluate my psychological and marital health.
  
2. I (and my spouse, if applicable) consent to participate in the Assessment and understand that such an Assessment may include questionnaires, inventories, other tests or interviews. I understand that I (and my spouse) may be asked questions related to, but not limited to, family history, medical history, criminal history, marital history, sexual behavior, education and employment. I (and my spouse) agree that all the information we provide will be truthful and not misleading.
  
3. I (and my spouse) authorize the counselor or other mental health professional to release a confidential written report to the Office of Leadership Development and to my supervising bishop.
  
4. I (and my spouse) authorize the counselor to discuss, either in written form or orally, the written report with either the Bishop or a member of the Office of Leadership Development.

---

Applicant's signature

---

Date

---

Spouse's signature

---

Applicant's name (Please Print)

## Appendix D

## Parish Discernment Guidelines

To those seeking ordination, Scripture lists certain qualifications (1 Timothy 3.1-16 and Titus 1.5-9) that should be noticeably present in the life of the inquirer. Particularly, they should be sound in the faith. They should have an ability to communicate the Gospel and to teach and disciple others in the faith. Their lives should reflect holiness and discipline which brings honor to Christ and which causes them to be respected by those outside the church. They should demonstrate wisdom and discretion. There should be visible fruit of their faith as well as a public affirmation by their local congregation of their sense of call.

All aspirants will begin their discernment process in conversation with their rector. If, after conversation with the rector, the rector believes that there is good basis for the aspirant to further explore and test their sense of call, the rector will convene a parish discernment committee. The role of the parish discernment committee is to further test the individual's call and to present to the rector with a written summary of their findings and a recommended path forward for the aspirant.

Parishes of DCH may wish to consider the establishment of a standing parish discernment committee that works with the rector to discern the call of all aspirants. In any case, the parish discernment committee should be composed of 5-8 persons. The rector may wish to include a vestry person as a member of the discernment committee. The committee will need a chairperson and a recorder. Because of the importance of the work undertaken by the parish discernment committee, the rector will orient the committee to its task.

It should be made clear that for an effective process of discernment, the committee must create a climate for honest conversation and genuine care. Confidentiality is expected.

Aspirants should prepare and present a 10-minute biblical reflection at the beginning of each meeting, including the first meeting. The texts for the five meetings are:

- First meeting, 2 Timothy 3.16-17
- Second meeting, John 3.16
- Third meeting, Ephesians 2.8-9
- Fourth meeting, Hebrews 4.15
- Fifth meeting, 1 Corinthians 10.31

Finally, a written summary of the discernment committee's work and recommendation will be presented to the aspirant and to the rector. With this information in hand, the rector will make a decision as to whether the aspirant should move forward in the process. In either case, the summary of the parish discernment committee with a letter from the rector will be submitted to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development.

If the rector feels that the aspirant should not proceed with the process, it will be necessary for him to assist the aspirant to discover and engage in a challenging, satisfying form of lay ministry in his/her areas of gifting.

## Meeting 1

This should be an introductory meeting in which the rector introduces the aspirant and, if married, his/her spouse to the parish discernment committee. The following elements should be a part of this first meeting:

1. The rector should introduce the aspirant, spouse, and parish discernment participants to each other. He should give an overview of the discernment process, giving particular attention to our Anglican understanding of ordination as well as the role and responsibility of the parish discernment committee.
2. Exploration vs. inquisition – get a clear understanding of the difference. (Some of the questions asked throughout this process may seem intrusive, but are a necessary part of the process).
3. Discuss any questions about the exploration process.
4. Arrange a schedule of meetings so that all participants are able to be present.
5. Nominate a chairperson for the committee who will be tasked with overseeing scheduling and leading meetings.
6. Nominate a recorder who will keep written minutes of each meeting and transmit the final report to the Office of Leadership Development.
7. Have the aspirant prepare a Spiritual Autobiography, of not more than 10 pages, to be distributed at least 3 days prior to the next meeting.

## Meeting 2

At this meeting, the aspirant should verbally present their Spiritual Autobiography.

1. The committee should be listening for the aspirant's ability to clearly articulate their conversion to Christ and a simple presentation of the Gospel.
2. Based on the Spiritual Autobiography, the following questions might be helpful to stimulate discussion:
  - In what ways has Christ shown Himself sufficient in this person's life?
  - What challenges has the aspirant faced? What challenges currently exist in this person's life? How does their faith inform their understanding of these challenges?
  - How does he/she respond to pressure?
  - What ministry experiences have they had? How have those experiences shaped their understanding of the Christian faith?
  - What ministries are they currently involved in? What joys and challenges are presented by those ministries?
  - How does he/she tie together the "secular and sacred" realms of life?

## Meeting 3

The following dimensions of calling are to be explored:

11. What is the aspirant's understanding of the Christian ministry?
  - How does he/she view the ministry of the whole Body of Christ?
  - How does he/she differentiate between the ministries of lay and ordained persons?
  - What is pastoral care?
  - Why do they believe that they are called to be ordained?

12. What further growth is needed and does this person have the capacity to achieve such growth?
  - What is his/her academic record?
  - What evidence is there of his/her continuing commitment to learning and intellectual growth?
13. In what ways do you see/experience the person as one who is growing in the Christian faith?
  1. How well does he/she understand the basics of the Christian faith (BCP pp. 845- 862)? Of Anglicanism (BCP 867-876)?

## Meeting 4

This meeting is used to explore aspects of the aspirant's emotional health, relationships, and leadership capabilities. The spouse should be present at this meeting as well.

The following questions will assist the group:

1. Have the aspirant describe their family life – family of origin as well as their current family situation. What joys and sorrows emerge? How does he/she deal with family conflict? Did he/she come from a divorced family? How did he/she process the emotional disruption of divorce? How are his/her relationships with their parents, siblings, spouse, children?
2. Have the aspirant describe his/her relational life with their friends, neighbors, classmates, colleagues. Is it easy or difficult for him/her to make friends? Does he/she have a mixture of old and new friends? Does the inquirer have any perception about how he/she is perceived by others?
3. Would the aspirant identify himself/herself as a “feeler” or a “thinker”? How are his/her thoughts and feelings expressed in a family, ministry, school or work setting?
4. Has he/she ever sought personal or marital counseling? For what matters? In what ways did counseling benefit the aspirant? What did he/she learn about himself/herself, and their spouse if applicable?
5. If married, then invite the spouse to be involved in the above discussions. Additionally, it might be helpful to have them recount their courtship, their marriage and their family life. What difficulties have they faced? What joys can they articulate? What challenges do they face? How did the decision to explore ordination arise? What are their spouse's thoughts and concerns regarding the possibility of ordination? Is she/he supportive?

The following will assist the group in exploring the person's capacity for leadership:

1. Has the aspirant ever led someone to Christ? Have they personally disciplined anyone? Give examples.
2. How has the person exercised leadership? How does he/she motivate others? Can he/she give any examples?
3. Is the aspirant able to identify a variety of leadership styles? Can he/she verbalize their preferred leadership style? Can he/she identify circumstances that challenge them as a leader?
4. How does he/she function in a small group setting? In a large group setting? Amongst peers?
5. What positive experiences has the aspirant had with those in positions of leadership? What negative experiences has he/she had with those in positions of leadership?
6. Does the aspirant evidence leadership in school, work, or church settings? How?
7. Can the aspirant identify personal/professional failures? How did he/she, practically, handle those failures? What insights were learned from those failures? What leadership skills were developed in response to their failure(s)?

## Meeting 5

This meeting will focus on whether the aspirant is called by God to the ordained ministry. The following questions will aid the group:

1. Is the person confusing a calling to Christian ministry with a calling to ordination?
2. Are his/her primary interests congruent with the basic function of an ordained person?
3. Are his/her innate abilities commensurate with the demands of the ordained ministry? While asking the questions and listening to the answers the discernment committee should consider whether they can envision this person as a priest in the church? Can they envision this person as their priest?

## A Meeting of the Parish Discernment Committee

This meeting is for the committee only. The committee will decide if they wish to recommend the aspirant to the rector. Broadly speaking, the committee will want to evaluate the aspirant with respect to the following categories:

- Character (is the fruit of conversion evidenced in their life?)
- Charism (do they evidence gifting for the ordained ministry?)
- Calling (can they articulate a sense of call? Do you discern a call?)
- Capacity (do they evidence the capabilities necessary for ordained ministry?)
- Competency (do they evidence skills/intellect necessary for ordained ministry?)

In addition to the interactions and questions of the previous weeks the committee may find the following evaluative questions helpful:

- How aware is the person of his/her own feelings?
- How well, and in what ways, does the person express strong positive and negative feelings?
- When dealing with feelings, do physical gestures and movements (body language) match the words spoken?
- To what extent is the person aware of and comfortable with his/her own sexuality? How well integrated is his/her sexual identity with other aspects of life?
- Are there any indications that the person aspires to the ordained ministry as a way of solving his/her personal or vocational problems/disappointments?
- Does the person have a level of maturity and ability to adapt that is commensurate with his/her age level?
- Does he/she show initiative, self-confidence and enthusiasm?

## Concluding Meeting with Rector

Finally, a written summary of the discernment committee's work and recommendation will be presented to the aspirant and to the rector. With this information in hand, the rector will make a decision as to whether the aspirant should move forward in the process. In either case, the summary of the parish discernment committee with a letter from the rector will be submitted to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) at the Office of Leadership Development.

If the rector feels that the aspirant should not proceed with the process, it will be necessary for him to assist the aspirant to discover and engage in a challenging, satisfying form of lay ministry in his/her areas of gifting.

## Appendix E

## Rector Recommendation in the Priest Postulant Phase

*Please submit this form to Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)).*

This is to certify that I, (name of Rector) \_\_\_\_\_,

Rector of (name of Parish) \_\_\_\_\_

have overseen the Postulant, (name of Postulant) \_\_\_\_\_

during his Diaconal Ministry and do certify that he has completed the requirements of his ministry as prescribed in his Priestly Formation Plan. Therefore, I recommend him to continue the ordination process and be moved into the Priestly Candidate Phase.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rector's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date