



**DIOCESE** *of*  
**CHRIST** *our* **HOPE**

# Customary for Parish Visits

Rt. Rev. Dr. Steven A. Breedlove

Rt. Rev. Alan Hawkins

Rt. Rev. Dr. Quigg Lawrence

Last Updated 1.26.22

## **Preface to Parish Visits**

Throughout Anglican Church history, it has been customary for the local parish to receive an annual visit from the bishop of their diocese. The purpose of these visits is primarily pastoral and relational – a time when the bishop, clergy, and congregation can come together around the spiritual and strategic needs of each church community.

We consider it a great privilege and blessing to visit your church each year. This is a highlight of our ministry – central to our desire to serve our clergy and churches – and we pray that it will be a highlight of your year as well. Full participation by all or most of the lay leaders, clergy and spouses, and ministry staff is **optimal**. Please plan ahead with your team to make the most of the visit!

To that end, we will proactively set up a weekend visit several months ahead of time. Once we lock in on dates, please ensure to place this on your personal and church calendars and protect those dates. Six weeks prior to your visit, Canon Ben Bowman will send you this customary. Please read it carefully and begin to frame your expectations and desires for the parish visit. One month prior to your visit Bp. Steve or Bp. Quigg will contact you to begin planning the details of your visit.

Your point of contact for parish visits is Canon Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)). Please direct all parish visit questions and plans to him.

We look forward to visiting you!

Bishops Steve, Alan, and Quigg

## Overview of Parish Visits

There are **standard** parish visit activities and **optional** parish visit activities, depending on the needs of the parish. Standard parish visit activities are those that apply to any visit at any given time. Optional parish visit activities only apply to visits at particular moments in the life of a parish. The rector and his staff are responsible for coordinating all required standard parish visit activities with Canon Ben Bowman and the bishop. If the parish visit requires one or more optional activities, please alert Canon Ben Bowman as soon as possible.

### Standard Bishop's Visit Activities

#### **Expected:**

One on one meetings with clergy: **Required** for all clergy associated with the congregation, unless excused by the bishop.

Dinner with the Rector and his wife

Meetings with ordinands

The bishop to preach and celebrate

#### **Recommended:**

Meetings with lay leadership (vestry, bishop's council, etc.)

Meetings with church staff

Fellowship time with the entire parish

---

*One on one meetings with clergy, dinner with the rector and his wife, and meetings with ordinands are required. Meetings with lay leadership and church staff are highly recommended but left to the rector's discretion. Fellowship time with the entire parish is recommended, as well. This is a great opportunity for the bishop to engage the congregation and cast vision for the ministry of the diocese. The bishop normally preaches and celebrates.*

### Optional Bishop's Visit Activities

Confirmations, receptions, reaffirmations

Baptisms

Ordinations

Installation of a rector

Dedication of a new worship space

Launching of a major stewardship campaign

Commissioning or licensing of lay ministers, new church plants, launch teams, or missionaries

Targeted ½-day retreats led by the bishop, his spouse, or another member of the diocesan leadership.

---

*These activities are available for any parish visit, if needed. Because they require extra preparation, please alert Canon Ben Bowman as soon as possible if you plan to include any of these activities in your parish visit. Below you will find further instructions for including each of these items in your visit, as well as links to appropriate liturgies and orders of service.*

# Liturgical Instructions

## **Standard Sunday Worship**

- The Bishop will normally determine the texts and theme of the sermon. This will be confirmed with the Rector with plenty of time to make adjustments to the preaching schedule.
- We will accommodate local liturgical customs, but it is important that you walk through the Sunday liturgy in advance with the Bishop and review any local sensibilities.
- The Diocese has authorized the following “family” of Eucharistic Prayers:
  - ACNA (Anglican Standard Text) Prayer of Consecration
  - ACNA (Renewed Ancient Text) Prayer of Consecration
  - 1552 Modern English Prayer of Consecration
  - 1662 Prayer of Consecration
  - Kenyan Prayer of Thanksgiving
- Please use any one of the above for the Eucharistic Prayer as they are composed, without alteration. Where an epiclesis is included, it is to be retained.
- Please use the following wording for the Fraction anthem, if one is used: “Christ our Passover is sacrificed, once for all upon the cross: Therefore, let us keep the feast.”
- Where there is a Deacon, the Deacon is to prepare the altar, read the Gospel, and assist with Holy Communion. If there is no Deacon, the Priest will do so.
- The liturgical color used should reflect the Rite being administered—red for confirmation, ordination, and baptism, or the designated color of the liturgical season for the celebration of the Eucharist. The liturgical color for major feast days always supplants the color for confirmation.
- The Bishop will normally vest in Rochet, Chimere, and Stole, but this can be changed according to local sensibilities.

## **Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation**

**Please Note:** Because confirmation is a more rigorous liturgical service, please coordinate the details of this liturgy with Canon Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) by sending him your service draft with the full liturgy **two or more weeks ahead of time.**

- We urge all churches to prepare your people to be confirmed, received, or reaffirmed as part of your regular program of adult and youth discipleship. More and more DCH churches find an annual confirmation service to be an essential and life-giving opportunity to bring together intentional discipleship and episcopal ministry in the parish. The process of discipling people toward confirmation, capped by a time of prayer and conversation with the Bishop and a confirmation service the next day is a spiritual highlight in the life of the whole parish. Since confirmation is the culmination of a process of weeks, or months, of Bible study, prayer, and personal discipleship, confirmation weekends require long-range preparation.

## Ordination

**Please Note:** Because ordination is a prescribed liturgical service of the Province, coordinate the details of this liturgy with Canon Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) by sending him your service draft with the full liturgy **at least two weeks ahead of time.**

- All ordinands for the diaconate and their rectors must make every effort to celebrate each diaconal ordination at an appropriate annual Deanery Retreat. However, exceptions can be made, particularly if there is no expectation (or possibility) for a subsequent presbyteral ordination, or there are extenuating family, travel, or work circumstances. Please contact Canon Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) to confirm that a diaconal or presbyteral candidate is (or will be) ready to be ordained prior to planning that as a part of an upcoming parish visit and to request a possible exception from the “Deanery Retreat norm” for a diaconal ordination.
- Presbyteral ordinations are normally celebrated in local parish settings, and a parish visit is an opportune time for such an ordination. Again, please coordinate with Canon Ben Bowman to ensure that a deacon has fulfilled (or will fulfill) all requirements prior to scheduling a presbyteral ordination.
- Ordinations follow a prescribed liturgy from the Province. Both diaconal and priestly ordination liturgies are available on the Provincial website (<https://bcp2019.anglicanchurch.net>).

## Combined Liturgical Activities

- At exceptional times, it may be possible to combine baptisms with confirmations, or confirmations and an ordination, etc., during one service led by a bishop. However, these are challenging liturgical services which require careful planning. Before planning for a combined liturgical service, please discuss in detail with Canon Ben Bowman as early as possible within the parish visit planning process. If a combined service can be worked out, the liturgical planning will be handled by Canon Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)). He will provide you with samples of various liturgical services and/or direct you further in planning.
- All unusual or exceptional liturgical services should be confirmed two weeks or more prior to the visit so that the Bishop can walk through the liturgy with the appropriate local leader(s) and make any final decisions necessary to ensure a wonderful time of worship.

## Planning and Preparation

### **Six Weeks Prior to the Parish Visit**

- Canon Ben will contact you to begin planning your visit and send you this customary.
- Begin outlining a schedule for your visit according to the standard and optional items for parish visits listed above.
- Have all clergy complete the Clergy Well-Being Inventory, which can be found under “Resources” on the diocesan website ([www.adhope.org](http://www.adhope.org)). **Please be sure to always download this form anew as it is updated periodically. This will prevent you from using an outdated form.**
- **NOTE:** If you desire to include an ordination, contact Canon Ben at this time to ensure that a proposed candidate for any ordination can be reasonably assured of being ready to be ordained by the time the parish visit occurs.

### **One Month Prior to the Parish Visit**

- Send a draft schedule to Canon Ben that includes:
  - Arrival and departure details
  - Meeting details:
    - Attendees (clergy, ordinands, vestry, lay leaders, etc.)
    - Times
    - Locations
  - Plans for optional parish visit items
    - If you will be having confirmations, a meeting with all confirmands and the Bishop is required. Though they will all meet together at once, please plan the length of the meeting by calculating 10 minutes/confirmand, with a minimum of 45 minutes and a maximum of 2 hours.
    - If you will be having ordinations, a special retreat with all ordinands and the Bishop is required. Please plan for 3 hours.
- If you will be using any special liturgies (confirmations, ordinations, commissioning, etc.), please reach out to Canon Ben Bowman ([bbowman@adhope.org](mailto:bbowman@adhope.org)) to confirm and finalize these.
  - Contact Anne Hammond ([ahammond@adhope.org](mailto:ahammond@adhope.org)), the Diocesan Administrative Assistant, to provide her with the details for the diocesan announcement about the ordination and the ordination certificate.
  - If Confirmation Certificates are desired, you can download them under “Resources” on the diocesan website ([www.adhope.org](http://www.adhope.org)).
- All clergy send their completed Clergy Well-Being Inventory to Canon Ben for the bishop to review prior to his visit. These are kept confidential and only viewed by the bishop.
- Canon Ben will finalize the schedule with the Bishop and contact you with confirmation or any changes that need to be made.
  - A call will be scheduled at this time between the rector and the Bishop to touch base on the upcoming visit.

## **Two Weeks Prior to the Parish Visit**

- Complete scheduled call with the Bishop to touch base on the upcoming visit.
- Send a final copy of the final service bulletin and liturgy to the Bishop and Canon Art Going.
- Contact Canon Ben with any final questions or clarifications.

## **Financial Responsibilities**

### **Clergy Care Fund Donation**

- In lieu of covering the cost of a parish visit, we ask that each parish make a donation of at least \$500 to the diocesan Clergy Care Fund. This Fund provides the means for the diocese to intervene in times of critical spiritual need in the lives of our clergy. At the discretion of the bishop, it will be used 100% for clergy support, such as counseling for personal or marital crises, financial counseling, interventional help for issues which threaten the viability of a clergy person's ministry or spiritual well-being, emergency provisions for rest and recovery in the case of burnout, etc.
  - Please make checks payable to **Diocese of Christ Our Hope with Clergy Care Fund** in the memo.
  - Mail to: **P.O. Box 52449, Durham, NC 27717**

### **Bishop's Discretionary Fund Donation (Optional)**

- In addition, the diocese has a Bishop's Discretionary Fund, the purpose of which is to offer financial assistance to those in need at the discretion of the Bishop. While the Clergy Care Fund is specifically and only for the care of clergy within our diocese, the Bishop's Discretionary Fund encompasses a broader range of mission, both inside and outside our diocese. Please consider donating to the Bishop's Discretionary Fund.
  - Please make checks payable to **Diocese of Christ Our Hope with Bishop's Discretionary Fund** in the memo.
  - Mail to: **P.O. Box 52449, Durham, NC 27717**