

APPOINTMENT OF A PARISH PRIEST

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PREAMBLE

It is often hard for benefices to say goodbye to their priest and begin the process of looking for the next person. We hope that you will find this booklet helpful and reassuring. The deanery and diocese will walk alongside you during every step of this vacancy and through the appointment process

Every benefice in the Church of England (whether it consists of a single parish or a group of parishes) has one or more **Patrons**, whose responsibility it is to nominate a new incumbent to the Bishop when the benefice is vacant. This is called the right of presentation to a vacant benefice.

The patron may be the Crown, the Lord Chancellor, the Diocesan Bishop or another individual, the Peterborough Diocesan Board of Patronage, a college, a society or (usually in the case of a united benefice or a team ministry) a group of individuals/bodies or a special board of patronage. If more than one person or body is involved, patronage is either exercised *jointly* or *by turns* depending on the provisions of the pastoral scheme which created the (united) benefice.

Under the provisions of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 the Bishop has the power to 'suspend presentation' to a vacant benefice in order to allow plans for pastoral reorganisation to be considered or implemented.

This paper describes the process of appointment used in the Diocese of Peterborough. It covers both the appointment of an incumbent, nominated by the patron(s), and of a 'priest-in-charge' when the bishop has exercised their power of suspension. As far as the PCC is concerned the processes are very similar, but different people may be involved at different stages.

Copies of all the forms referred to are to be found on the Peterborough Diocesan Registry website at www.peterboroughdiocesanregistry.co.uk. Patrons who do not have access to the internet should contact Anna Spriggs, Diocesan Registrar, c/o Howes Percival LLP, Nene House, 4 Rushmills, Northampton, NN4 7YB (Tel: 01604 258014 or 07305 055058) (Email: anna.spriggs@howespercival.com).

SUSPENSION OF PRESENTATION

If the Bishop suspends the patron's right of presentation, an 'incumbent' (called a Rector or a Vicar) will not be appointed. Instead the Bishop will normally appoint a priest in charge until the suspension is lifted.

Although a priest in charge is legally different from an incumbent, the responsibilities in the parish are identical. New appointments to either office are now exercised under common tenure and most parishioners are unlikely to know that there is any distinction between them.

If presentation is suspended, the usual provisions of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended) (see appendix 1) will not apply but the Bishop will endeavour to follow the spirit of the Measure and consult the Patron, the Rural Dean, and the Lay Chair as well as the people of the parish in the process of making an appointment.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS

1. Archdeacon's Visit to PCC

When the Archdeacon has been notified by the Registrar's Office or Bishops' Office that a benefice is about to become vacant, the Archdeacon will contact the PCC Secretary and/or the Churchwardens and arrange to visit the PCC to discuss the process of appointing a new Parish Priest, and the Archdeacon will normally be accompanied at this meeting by the Rural Dean and sometimes the Deanery Lay Chair. This is known as the Pre-Section 11 Meeting. The goodwill of the out-going parish priest is needed for the meeting to take place in advance of the actual vacancy but they must not attend. The Archdeacons' EA will liaise with the Benefice for a central contact to be agreed to help them with the vacancy process and distribute any information for relevant parts of the process.

During the Pre-Section 11 Meeting, the Archdeacon will explain the process of making a new appointment and discuss the implications of 'suspension' if there is the possibility of pastoral re-organisation. The EA sends the central contact the documents regarding the process along with some helpful advice after the meeting. The central contact will then distribute the documents. The Archdeacon will also encourage the benefice to begin the process of drawing up its profile by meeting with the Minister for Vacancy Support and Vision Planning. The Archdeacons' EA will provide a template and notes for this purpose together with a generic statement from the Bishop concerning ministry in the diocese.

The Archdeacon will also talk about Safer Recruitment Training which will be needed to be completed by members of the interview panel before the advertising can go ahead. The election of the panel would come later at the Section 11 Meeting. This is a national requirement and only those who have completed this can be included in the interview panel.

The meeting with the Archdeacon provides an opportunity for those present to clear up any queries they may have about the vacancy and appointments process.

2. Discussion at the Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee

Every vacancy in the diocese is considered by the relevant Archdeaconry Mission and Pastoral Committee, which will advise the Bishop about the need for suspension of presentation if there is the likelihood of pastoral re-organisation involving the benefice.

If the Pastoral Committee does not recommend suspension of presentation, the Bishop sends a formal notice of the vacancy (**Form 30**) to the Registrar, who is the 'Designated Officer' under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended). The Registrar will then send the formal notice (**Form 31** or **Form 32** in a case where the Crown is the patron – see Appendix 1) to the Patron(s), The Archdeacon and the PCC Secretary(ies).

If the Pastoral Committee recommends suspension, The Bishop will consult the patron(s), the PCC(s), the Rural Dean and Lay Chair and decide in the light of their comments whether to act on the Committee's recommendation. The Bishop must take any representations made by these 'interested parties' into account, but the decision belongs to the Bishop, who is not required to obtain everybody's agreement or consent.

When the Bishop issues the Notice of Suspension, they will invite the PCC(s) to prepare a profile of the benefice in exactly the same way as if an incumbent was to be appointed.

3. Special PCC Meeting (Section 11 Meeting)

When the PCC Secretary receives the Form 31/32 notice from the Registrar, arrangements should be made to call an extra-ordinary meeting of the PCC within six/nine months of the "start date" as specified in the notice. (If there is more than one parish in the benefice, this should be a joint meeting)

The meeting should:

- Be chaired by the vice chair
- agree the benefice profile (including the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish,
- take note of previous PCC resolutions, if any regarding the House of Bishops' Declaration made on 19 May 2014 (for the recommended form of declaration see Appendix 3, and an example of a Statement of Needs and Theological Conviction under the House of Bishops' Declaration see Appendix 4.),
- elect up to two lay parish representatives from each PCC to act as the PCC's representatives in the process of the appointment, including meeting potential candidates. (These representatives should be empowered to speak for the PCC(s). Each elected representative must undergo safer recruitment training (as mentioned in Section 1 paragraph 3 above),
- confirm that the vacancy is to be advertised, and if an incumbent is to be appointed, decide whether to request a joint meeting with the Patron and the Bishop (a 'Section 12' meeting), noting that the Bishop has already provided, through the Archdeacon, a generic statement in writing from the Bishop describing the needs of the Diocese and the wider interests of the Church. If a Section 12 is requested the post will not be advertised until after the meeting has taken place.

Notes:

- At least 14 days notice of the meeting must be given to all members
- The outgoing priest or the spouse or civil partner of the outgoing priest must not attend, nor the registered patrons(s) or their representative(s)
- None of the following members of the PCC shall be qualified for appointment as parish representative:
 - a) the outgoing priest, their spouse or civil partner; and
 - b) any deacon or lay worker licensed to the parish.

Note: Lay workers are a specific category of church staff and are not the same as Lay Ministers.
- If a PCC holds a Section 11 Meeting but does not appoint any representatives at that meeting then two churchwardens who are members of the PCC shall act as representatives. A patron who is also a churchwarden may not act as parish representative.
- If nobody from the PCC is willing to be appointed the parish is unrepresented in the appointments process.
- The meeting should produce one statement for the entire benefice. (This is the Benefice Profile).
- The Archdeacon requires an electronic advance copy of this draft, so that they, the Rural Dean and Deanery Lay Chair have the opportunity to comment upon the draft before the meeting.
- Each parish in the benefice should elect up to two representatives. In large multi-parish benefices the decision could be taken to elect one rep per parish in order to have a workable sized interview panel.

4. Action following the Meeting

If an incumbent is to be appointed the PCC Secretary should notify the Patron and the Archdeacon of the names of the Parish Representatives using **Form 34**. Documents required to be sent to the Archdeacons' EA are as follows:

- copies of the benefice profile
- the latest audited accounts
- the most recent Quinquennial Inspection Report
- confirmation that advertising is to take place
- request for Section 12 meeting if applicable
- the final profile as approved at Section 11 meeting
- Form 34 for each parish (if suspended, email the names and emails of parish representatives_
- Safer recruitment certificates for all parish reps.

5. Consultation

The Archdeacon will discuss the process of interviewing etc. with the patrons and parish representatives, and agree with them the date for the interviews and the arrangements for the candidates to visit the benefice. Spouses/partners no longer attend on the tour day or the interview day. The candidate and family are shown around the house by the Property Officer.

In some cases, the Patron, or the Bishop, may wish the parish representatives to meet one candidate rather than interview a number; this is usually the case if the Crown/Lord Chancellor is Patron of the living. In that case the same process is followed with the single candidate.

6. The Decision

After the interview(s) have taken place the interview panel will decide whether to offer the post to any of the candidates. Legally, the right of presentation rests with the patron and the right of appointments rests with the Bishop.

If all are agreed, the Bishop will offer the post to the successful candidate, subject to the receipt of the necessary disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

In the case of **an incumbent** the legal process involves the Patron completing **Form 36** seeking the Bishop's approval of their nomination, and **Form 37** for the Parish Representatives. When these have been completed and signed, the Patron sends **Form 38** to the Bishop which gives formal notice of their presentation.

Under the provisions of the Measure as amended by the Legislative Reform (Patronage of Benefices) Order 2019, if the Patron fails to appoint an incumbent within eighteen months of the date of the vacancy then the right of presentation lapses to the Bishop (or at the request of the PCC to the Archbishop of Canterbury). If this occurs, the Registrar and the Bishop will inform the parish representatives of the action which has to be taken.

7. Announcements

News of the appointment should be made simultaneously in the new benefice and the candidate's previous benefice and will take the form of Local Announcement provided by the Archdeacon; it is important that news does not leak out prematurely. Once the appointment has been locally announced in the benefice, and the DBS disclosure received, the notice of appointment is issued by the Bishop's Office.

COLLATION/INSTITUTION & INDUCTION or LICENSING & INSTALLATION

If the new priest is to be **the incumbent** of the benefice, the Bishop of Peterborough or the Bishop of Brixworth will agree a date for their institution (called a collation when the Bishop is the sole patron), and induction by the Archdeacon.

If the new priest is to be **priest in charge** of the benefice, they will not be instituted but licensed and installed.

If the new priest is to be associate or team vicar they will be licensed but not inducted or installed.

In practice, in each case, the Archdeacon will arrange the date and time of the service, in consultation with the Bishop, the Rural Dean (incumbent in the case of associate), the Patrons, the benefice and the candidate. The Bishop's Chaplain will then be in touch with the Rural Dean (incumbent in the case of associate) with regard to the order of service. The choice of which church in a multi-parish benefice hosts the service needs to take account of parish "turns", as well as practical issues such as access in darkness, parking, serverly and toilet provision. If necessary, the Bishop's Office will issue a supplementary notice of the appointment giving this date.

The various services are very similar and the template for the service will be provided by the Bishop's Chaplain. The hymns and readings are normally chosen by the candidate. The service template will be supplied electronically and the benefice should print its own copies, incorporating the chosen hymns and readings etc. The Bishop should be notified of these in good time (usually at least a fortnight before the service) and informed of any other relevant details.

The Rural Dean (incumbent in the case of associate) will arrange the rehearsal and advise the parish on practical details about the service.

Appendix 1 Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended) came into effect on 1st January 1989. Any benefice becoming vacant will be dealt with under the provisions of this Measure.

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEASURE

2. The Measure provides for the creation and maintenance in each diocese of a central register of Patrons of the livings of that diocese. The register will record the patrons, and in the case of there being more than one Patron, whose turn it is to appoint to the living next.
3. The second purpose of the Measure is to confine the exercise of Patronage to those who are actual communicant members of the Church of England or of a Church in communion with it. This means that when a vacancy occurs, the registered Patron is required to make a declaration that they are a communicant member of the Church of England, and if they are unable or do not wish (for whatever reason) to make that declaration, they will be required by law to nominate someone of their own choosing to act for them in making the appointment.
4. The third purpose of the Measure is to create a partnership in the making of appointments. A Patron is required to obtain the agreement of representatives appointed by the PCC as well as that of the Bishop before proceeding to offer the living to the priest whom they have chosen. The law formerly gave the Bishop little power in the matter, and gave to the Churchwardens only (not to the PCC) the right to make representations against the Patron's nominee. The Measure carries this a stage further and puts on a statutory basis what previously happened in good practice.

GENERAL NOTE

5. The statutory provisions are complex and detailed, and deal with various situations. In any case of doubt, the PCC should seek advice from the "Designated Officer", who in the case of this Diocese is the Diocesan Registrar, Miss Anna Spriggs, Diocesan Registrar, c/o Howes Percival LLP, Nene House, 4 Rushmills, Northampton, NN4 7YB (Tel: 01604 258014 or 07305 055058) (Email: anna.spriggs@howespercival.com).
www.peterboroughdiocesanregistry.co.uk
6. PCC Secretaries should pay careful attention to the time limits which are mentioned in this document and ensure that they are strictly kept.
7. Samples of the forms which will be used during the procedure for filling the vacancy are included in Appendix 2. (Numbers of these forms are given in brackets at the appropriate places in the main document.) When a Patron or PCC needs to use one of the prescribed forms, the forms in the appendix may be copied, or copies may be obtained from the Designated Officer, or downloaded and/or printed from the Diocesan Registry web site at www.peterboroughdiocesanregistry.co.uk
8. Where benefices are held in plurality, they are treated as a multi-parish benefice for the purpose of the Measure. Where there is a Team Council or a properly established Joint PCC, the Team Council or Joint PCC will carry out the PCCs' functions under the Measure.

9. Where His Majesty the King, the Duke of Cornwall or the Lord Chancellor ("the Crown") is the sole Patron of a benefice, or it is the turn of any of them to present to a benefice, the normal provisions of the Measure on filling a benefice do not apply, other than Section 7 (dealing with the notification of vacancies in benefices).
10. The PCC(s) have the right to send the presenting Patron a statement describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the parish (the benefice profile), and a copy of the profile must be sent to the Bishop and should be copied to the Archdeacon. A PCC is not entitled to appoint any representatives or to request a statement from the Bishop on the needs of the diocese and wider church in relation to the benefice (though the Bishop has produced a generic statement which the Archdeacon will make available), and none of the parties has the right to call for a joint meeting (Section 12 Meeting).
11. The provisions with regard to lapse do not apply to the rights of presentation belonging to the Crown, and the right to present remains until a priest accepts an offer of the benefice.
12. The right of His Majesty the King to present a priest to a benefice where the outgoing incumbent has been appointed to a diocesan bishopric, or where the presenting Patron is the diocesan bishop and the see is vacant, is preserved. In these cases, the benefice is treated as a Crown benefice and the provisions outlined in paragraph 9 above apply. Where the outgoing incumbent has been made a diocesan bishop and the Crown appoints their successor, the Patron whose turn it would have been to present on that occasion has the next turn.
13. Where a vacancy arises at a time when the Diocese has no Bishop (a vacancy in see) the Bishop's right of patronage passes to the Crown. This includes cases where:-
 - 13.1 The Bishop is joint patron, in which case, the Crown acts as paramount patron; and
 - 13.2 The Bishop has appointed but not inducted and instituted a candidate, in which case the Crown will present.

Appendix 2 - Forms

The following pages contain draft copies of the forms required under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended), when an incumbent is to be appointed. Their use is explained in the main document.

Form 15

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Declaration by Registered Patron (being an individual)

Complete either Part A (below) or Part B (overleaf) of this form

Diocese **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice _____

PART A: DECLARATION OF MEMBERSHIP

To the Designated Officer

I, _____ (Full Name)

- * being the registered Patron of the above Benefice
- OR * being the holder for the time being of an office which is registered as Patron of the Benefice
- OR * being the donee of a power of attorney made by the registered Patron

hereby declare that

- * I am an actual communicant member of the Church of England
- OR * I am an actual communicant member of a Church in communion with the Church of England, namely,

OR ** I am a clerk in Holy Orders

and I confirm that I will be acting personally during the vacancy of the above Benefice. All communications concerning the vacancy should be sent to me at the following address:

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____
Presenting Patron

Note: In accordance with Section 9 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended), this form must be returned to the Designated Officer within two months of the occurrence of the vacancy. Failure to return the form within that period will mean that the vacancy will be filled without recourse to the Patron.

* Delete as appropriate.

** Inset name of Church. Advice will be given by the Registrar as to which churches are in communion with the Church of England.

Form 15

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Complete either Part A (overleaf) or Part B (below) of this form

Diocese **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice _____

PART B: APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE

To the Designated Officer

I, _____ (Full Name)

- * being the registered Patron of the above Benefice
- OR * being the holder for the time being of an office which is registered as Patron of the Benefice
- OR * being the donee of a power of attorney made by the registered Patron
- AND
- * being unable to make the declaration required by the Measure
- OR * being unable to discharge the Patron's functions on this occasion

hereby appoint ** _____

of _____

to act as my representative on the occurrence of the vacancy or impending vacancy in the Benefice and authorise him/her to discharge my functions under the above Measure.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____
Presenting Patron

DECLARATION OF MEMBERSHIP

I, _____ hereby declare that

- * I am an actual communicant member of the Church of England
- OR * I am an actual communicant member of a Church in communion with the Church of England, namely, _____
- OR ** I am a clerk in Holy Orders

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____
Patron's Representative

Note: In accordance with Section 9 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended), this form must be returned to the Designated Officer within two months of the occurrence of the vacancy. Failure to return the form within that period will mean that the vacancy will be filled without recourse to the Patron.

* Delete as appropriate.

** Inset name of Church. Advice will be given by the Registrar as to which churches are in communion with the Church of England.

Form 16

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Appointment by a Body of a Representative (not being an individual)

Diocese **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice _____

I, _____ (Full Name)

of _____

being the Chair/Secretary/Clerk/† _____ of

the registered patron of the above Benefice declare that

_____ *

has been duly authorised to act as the representative of the registered Patron and to discharge the Patron's functions during the current vacancy.

Dated this _____ day of _____ .20

Signed _____
Chair/Secretary/Clerk/†

DECLARATION OF MEMBERSHIP

I, (full name) _____ declare that

** I am an actual communicant member of the Church of England

OR ** I am an actual communicant member of a Church in communion with the Church of England, namely,

*** _____

OR ** I am a clerk in Holy Orders

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20

Signed _____
Patron's Representative

† Delete as appropriate or insert designation of responsible officer.

* Insert full name and address (in capitals) of the representative acting.

** Delete as appropriate.

*** Inset name of Church. Advice will be given by the Registrar as to which churches are in communion with the Church of England.

Form 34
PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Appointment of Parish Representatives

Diocese : **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice :

To: Archdeacons' Office
The Presenting Patron

1. I hereby give you notice that, at [a] duly convened meeting[s] of the Parochial Church Council, which took place on _____ [and on _____] the following persons were appointed as the representative[s] of the Council in connection with the appointment of a new Incumbent:

Full Name ¹	_____
Address	_____

Email	_____
Telephone	_____
Full Name ¹	_____
Address	_____

Email	_____
Telephone	_____

2. I attach a copy of the statement prepared by the Council describing the conditions, needs and traditions of the Parish

3. The Council resolved:

- (a) to request the presenting Patron to consider advertising the vacancy ²;
- (b) to request a meeting under section 12 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as amended) ²
- (c) to request a statement in writing from the Bishop describing in relation to the Benefice the needs of the Diocese and the wider interests of the Church²
- [(d) [to pass][not to pass] a resolution under the House of Bishops' Declaration, (a copy of which is annexed to this form.)]³

Dated this day of 20

Signed _____

Secretary to the _____ Parochial Church Council

¹ Complete in BLOCK CAPITALS

² Delete or amend as appropriate

³ Delete or amend as appropriate.

Form 35

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Notice from Bishop or Patron to Parochial Church Council requesting a Section 12 Meeting

Diocese of **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice of _____

To the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council
of _____

I, _____, Bishop of the Diocese

or

I, _____

[the presenting Patron] [the representative of the presenting Patron]¹ hereby request a meeting
under Section 12 of the Measure

Dated this day of 20

Signed _____

[Bishop of the Diocese]¹

[Presenting Patron]¹

[Presenting Patron's Representative]¹

NOTE:

This notice must be sent to the Secretary of the Parochial Church Council not later than ten days after the Form 34 notice has been received

¹Delete as appropriate.

Form 36

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Approval by Bishop of Offer of Benefice

Diocese of **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice of _____

To the Bishop of the Diocese

I, _____

of _____

being the [presenting Patron] [Patron's representative]¹, hereby request your approval as Bishop to my making an offer to:

Full Name² _____

Address _____

Office _____

Dated this day of 20

Signed _____
[Presenting Patron] [Patron's Representative]¹

ENDORSEMENT (to be completed by the Bishop)

I hereby approve your making of an offer to the above-named priest to present them to the above benefice¹

or

I do not approve your making of an offer to the above-named priest to present them to the above benefice for the following reasons:¹

Dated this day of 20

Signed _____
Bishop of the Diocese

NOTE: Unless the notice of refusal to approve the making of an offer is received within four weeks beginning with the date on which this notice is sent, the Bishop "will be deemed to have given their approval."

¹Delete as appropriate

²Insert full name and address in block capitals and details of present office (if any).

Form 37

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Approval by Parish Representatives of Offer of Benefice

Diocese of **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice of _____

To the Parish Representatives

I, _____

of _____

being the [presenting Patron] [Patron's representative]¹, hereby request your approval as Parish Representatives to my making an offer to:

Full Name² _____

Address _____

Office _____

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____
[Presenting Patron][Patron's Representative]

ENDORSEMENT (to be completed by the Parish Representatives)

We hereby approve your making of an offer to the above-named priest to present them to the above benefice¹

or

We do not approve your making of an offer to the above-named priest to present them to the above benefice for the following reasons:¹

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20____

Signed _____

Parish Representatives

NOTE: Unless the notice of refusal to approve the making of an offer is received within five weeks beginning with the date on which this notice is sent, the Parish Representatives will be deemed to have given their approval.

¹Delete as appropriate

²Insert full name and address in block capitals and details of present office (if any).

Form 38

PATRONAGE (BENEFICES) MEASURE 1986 (as amended)

Notice of Presentation

Diocese of **PETERBOROUGH**

Benefice of

To the Bishop of the Diocese

1. I, _____,
being [the representative of]¹ the registered Patron with respect to the vacancy of the
above benefice hereby present to you for admission to the benefice:
The Reverend _____
at present² _____

2. I confirm that the requirements of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986 (as
amended) have been complied with and the approvals of the parish representatives
obtained.

Dated this day of 20

Signed _____
Presenting Patron

¹ Delete if inappropriate

² Insert present preferment (e.g. assistant curate, team vicar, incumbent, chaplain of _____, or as appropriate).

Appendix 3

House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests made on 19th May 2014

The recommended form of the resolution passed by the PCC is as follows:

'[For the sake of the unity of our Parish,] This PCC requests, on the grounds of theological conviction set out in the statement appended to this Resolution, that arrangements be made for it in accordance with the House of Bishops' Declaration on the ministry of Bishops and Priests.'

Appendix 4

[DRAFT TEXT]
**Statement of Needs and Theological Conviction
under the House of Bishops' Declaration
by the Parochial Church Council of
The Parish of [NAME OF PARISH]**

We reaffirm our desire to flourish within the life and structures of the Church of England, in accordance with the Five Guiding Principles set out in the House of Bishops' Declaration, and our commitment to Christ's mission in the Diocese of [NAME]. We recognize the diocesan bishop and other bishops of this Diocese as the true and lawful holders of their offices, and wish to maintain the highest degree of communion with them that is consistent with the theological convictions that underlie our Resolution.

The theological convictions set out below are held by a significant number of worshippers in our parish. The Resolution will ensure that the episcopal and priestly ministry exercised in our parish is such that can be received with integrity by all who worship here. Our Resolution contributes to the Church of England's 'wider commitment to sustaining diversity'.

Women have always exercised various ministries in the Church. However, those who are unable to receive the sacramental ministry of women as bishops and priests hold that neither Scripture, nor apostolic Tradition, nor the great majority of the Church throughout the world today endorse the ordination of women as bishops and priests. There is therefore doubt as to whether the roles of bishop or priest are, sacramentally speaking, roles that women can exercise. We ask that episcopal and priestly sacramental and pastoral ministry in this parish should be exercised by those whose sacramental ministry is not subject to such doubt.

The unique sacramental ministry of a bishop is to ordain bishops, priests and deacons. In receiving their ministry, we receive the ministry of the bishops who ordained them. If there is doubt about the sacramental ministry of women as bishops, there will be doubt about the sacramental ministry of those whom they ordain. **We therefore ask that episcopal and priestly sacramental and pastoral ministry in this parish be exercised**

- ❖ **by male bishops at whose consecration a male bishop presided and who stand in the historic, apostolic succession of bishops so ordained, and**
- ❖ **by male priests ordained by such bishops.**

We are pledged to maintain the highest possible degree of communion with the Bishop of [NAME OF DIOCESAN SEE] and the other bishops of this Diocese, and we reject any suggestion that ordaining women to the episcopate and priesthood renders a bishop's episcopal ministry invalid. However, our flourishing requires the flourishing of our priest. We understand that our priest can only flourish if he is in *full* communion with a bishop and with all those whom that bishop ordains to the priesthood – a full communion made visible when he stands together with them at the altar. Therefore **we request that episcopal sacramental and pastoral ministry in this parish be entrusted to a bishop who ordains only men to the priesthood.**

Approved by the PCC on [DATE]