

#12 CANON 20: REGIONS AND REGIONAL DEANS

Moved by: The Reverend Joanne Neal

Seconder: The Reverend Shirley Cole

A resolution to amend Canon 20: Regions and Regional Deans, as crafted in consultation with the Canon 20 Task Force appointed following Synod 151, 2023.

Resolved that Canon 20: Regional Deans be amended by deleting the words struck out, and adding the words underlined, as follows:

CANON 20: REGIONS AND REGIONAL DEANS

2. APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF OFFICE

(1) The Diocesan Bishop shall appoint a priest, vocational deacon or licensable lay person living or serving in the Region as Regional Dean of the Region. ~~and, in doing~~

(2) When the proposed Regional Dean is a priest carrying out a ministry in a parish, the Bishop shall consult with the appropriate Archdeacon, the clergy of the Region, and the lay representatives to the Regional Council and inform the parish in which the priest who the Bishop intends to appoint performs his or her ministry, of the Bishop's intention to appoint that priest a Regional Dean, in order that the parish may have 14 days in which to amend the Covenant between the said priest and the parish to reflect the additional Diocesan duties of the said priest.

~~(23)~~ The appointment is at the pleasure of the Bishop.

~~(34)~~ Normally, a Regional Dean serves for a term of five years, renewable once.

~~(45)~~ A Regional Dean who resigns or ceases to live or serve as a priest in the Region ceases to be the Regional Dean.

~~(56)~~ Where a Regional Dean is unable to perform the Regional Dean's duties, the Bishop may appoint another priest eligible person to serve ~~serving~~ in the Region as Acting Regional Dean.

COMMENTARY:

The role of Regional Dean is a ministry of servant leadership, working to advance the mission, vision, and organizational culture of the diocese while supporting a given region in its canonical alignment and effective financial and asset management. The Regional Dean may be assisted by the charisms and skills of associate partners identified from CAPP personnel, vocational deacons, or laity of the region. Building a supportive collegial community amongst regional clergy through opportunities such as clericus, the Regional Dean reinforces the importance of the area's history and identity in relation to the diocesan family. The Regional Dean and regional parishes mutually engage in Gospel hospitality as they foster meaningful and fruitful relationships.

The task of this working group was to examine Canon 20 in light of our current context: clergy demographics and vacancies; shifts to the economic, social, and political landscape; changes to the makeup of congregations; and the practical imperative to consider different models of ministry.

Possibilities for enhancing the canon are given in the spirit of aligning it more closely with that context in order to further build up the body of Christ and to help us move forward as a diocese with hope and confidence.

Working group members included clergy and laity from a range of diocesan regions. They provided input based on a careful review of the current Canon 20, personal experience and insight, and informal discussions with other clergy and laity within their respective regions. Once an initial draft was completed, information sharing and input-seeking sessions were held with the Regional Deans and the Archdeacons of the diocese, with Bishop Sandra and Executive Director, the Reverend Ann Turner, present. A presentation was made to Diocesan Council in June, 2024. The report and recommendations for enhancing Canon 20 were accepted by Diocesan Council.