



Policy for Resigning Clergy

Regarding returning to the parishes from which they resign

As you anticipate your departure from a congregation, it is important to have in writing the expectations I hold of the resigning clergyperson. The relationship of the outgoing clergy to the congregation has a profound impact on the capacity of the congregation to accept the ministry of the incoming clergy. Therefore, not only are the parameters of departure important, but how you say goodbye to each other is important also. The books, *Saying Goodbye*, published by the Alban Institute, can be a useful resource for your reflection.

To facilitate clarity, the items of importance are listed below.

- The resigning clergyperson may not attend worship, provide pastoral care or officiate at any services of the church from which he/she is resigning. It is expected that the resigning clergy will worship at another Episcopal church, or a different congregation of their choice.
- If it is the wish of a member of the congregation to have pastoral ministrations rendered, it is incumbent upon the leaving clergyperson to refuse the request. Until there is another rector, or priest primarily responsible for the oversight of the parish, the retiring priest or deacon may not function in the parish.
- If at the wish of the next rector, the retired rector is asked to function as a supply priest, then the retired rector can accept or refuse the invitation.
- During the time between rectors, the retired rector or deacon may not function in the parish without permission of the Bishop and at the request of the Senior Warden.
- Because only clergy are under the discipline of the Bishop, these expectations apply particularly to the clergyperson. However, best practices indicate that the congregation is able to move forward with their life when the spouse of the clergyperson also lives into these expectations.

This is a wonderful, challenging and exciting time in the life of the clergy and the congregation.

The Standing committee affirmed the wisdom present in the Bishop's policy regarding retirement of the clergy from the parish. – March 2010

This policy has been in effect since July 2007.
Updated January 7, 2013