**DIOCESAN POLICY FOR RETIRED CLERGY SERVING AS PRIEST-IN-CHARGE**

**The Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast January 2018**

**I. RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY**

A. The following policy is established in response to the subsequent canon from the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, 2015.

**Title III Canon 9 Section 8. Resignation** On reaching the age of seventy-two years, a Priest shall resign from all positions in this Church, and the resignation shall be accepted. Thereafter, the Priest may accept any position in this Church, including, with the permission of the Ecclesiastical Authority, the position or positions from which resignation pursuant to this Section has occurred; provided,

(a) tenure in the position shall be for a term of not more than twelve months, which term may be renewed from time to time,

(b) service in the position shall have the express approval of the Bishop of the Diocese in which the service is to be performed, acting in consultation with the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Priest is canonically resident.

(c) Anything in this Canon to the contrary notwithstanding, a Priest who has served in a non-stipendiary capacity in a position before resignation may, at the Bishop's request, serve in the same position for a term not to exceed twelve months thereafter, and this term may be renewed.

**II. GENERAL**

A. This policy is based on the following principles: The ministry of clergy does not end with retirement; the ministries of retired clergy are a great treasure of the Church. To that end, when it is mutually beneficial to a congregation and said retired priest, and upon the appointment of the Bishop of said priest as priest-in-charge the following conditions will be met.

B. This policy includes the ministry of canonically resident and non-canonical priests in the diocese.

C. Retired priests: This policy pertains to a priest who is receiving retirement benefits from CPG who seeks to serve as a priest-in-charge of a church in the diocese. IT DOES NOT PERTAIN to the ministry of an active priest appointed as priest-in-charge to a church.

**II. THE POLICY**

**A. ANNUAL REVIEW AND PERMISSION**

Per canon, all clergy functioning in this Diocese not associated with a specific congregation by a Letter of Agreement, who receive income for services rendered from any place other than a congregation, institution, or the retirement fund of this Church, or who otherwise fall outside the normal compensation parameters of priestly service, must receive annual permission to function in a priestly capacity from the Bishop of the Central Gulf Coast.  In certain circumstances, the Bishop may, with the written approval of the vestry, appoint a Clergyperson to be Priest-in-Charge of a congregation. Details of an employment agreement are to be negotiated between the priest and the congregation, with the approval of the Bishop. The agreement shall be submitted each year to the Bishop for annual review and permission. It is the responsibility of the vestry of the church and the priest to make such a request of the Bishop in writing by December 31 of each calendar year.

**B. DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF MINISTRY**

1. The Priest-in-Charge will bear the duties, responsibilities and authorities as specified in Canon III.9.6 of the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

2. The Priest-in-charge will work closely with the vestry, but will still be directly accountable to the Bishop.

3. The Priest-in-charge should be identified with a single congregation and so named as such in the Journal of the Diocese.  As such, the clergy person should observe the normal courtesies and expectations discouraging pastoral and/or sacramental care beyond parish boundaries.

4.  The Priest-in-charge is expected to attend all general clergy gatherings called by the Bishop in each calendar year. Attendance at the annual Convention is expected unless excused by the Bishop 30 days prior or at the Bishop's discretion in emergency situations.  
  
5.  The Priest-in-charge is expected to participate in continuing education and submit an annual report of completed education as a part of the church’s annual request to the Bishop.   
  
6. The Priest-in-charge must be physically capable of presiding at the Eucharist unassisted.  
  
7.  The Priest-in-charge must have demonstrated the capacity to perform normal pastoral duties as well as celebrate the Sacraments.  
  
8.  The Priest-in-charge must be current with the guidelines of all peripheral training requirements of General Convention and the Church Pension Fund.

**C. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR REVIEW AND PERMISSION**

The following documents shall accompany a letter from the vestry asking for permission for the priest to serve as priest-in-charge. It is the responsibility of the vestry of the church and the priest to make such a request of the Bishop by December 31 in writing of each calendar year.

1. A copy of this document signed by the Senior Warden and the clergyperson.

2. A resolution of support signed by a minimum of 2/3 of the vestry of the church.

3. A report of the continuing education completed by the priest during the year of service.

4. A signed letter of agreement between the church and the priest. This agreement shall be reviewed, updated and signed annually by the priest and a majority of the vestry.

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Senior Warden Date

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Priest Date

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Bishop Date