Rector’s Warden

Qualifications and Gifts

• Have a love of God and demonstrate a commitment to following in the way of Christ;
• Be active in and knowledgeable about the congregation, its programs and governance;
• Be known as someone who is fair, interacts well with people, and is respected by members of the congregation;
• Have respect and, preferably, affection for the rector;
• Have an ability to “check one’s ego at the door,” to be a servant of the people without a need to be the most important person in the congregation or to be the one with the right answers to everything;
• Have an enthusiasm and vitality for this vocation.

Time Commitment

• Vestry meetings
• Vestry retreat
• Weekly worship services (rotating occasionally if more than one)
• Congregational events: coffee hours, meals, fundraisers, adult education programs
• Monthly meetings with the rector (people’s warden and other staff), if required
• Diocesan meetings as necessary
• Annual meeting

Responsibilities

• Meet regularly with the rector to review the life and work of the congregation, plan ahead, anticipate and resolve problems
• Provide leadership in the vestry to identify the vision, mission and goals of the congregation, make and implement plans, assess progress and celebrate achievements
• Provide leadership in the congregation by demonstrating a consistent positive attitude that seeks to solve problems and learn from mistakes, recognizes accomplishments and gives thanks for those things that build community and further the mission of the Church
• Pray daily for the rector, leaders and members of the congregation
• Be available to discuss any and all concerns with the rector; maintain confidentiality where appropriate
• Be available to discuss any and all concerns with members of the congregation; avoid making hasty judgments, encourage complainants to speak to those involved, discuss problems with the rector

• In cases where the rector, staff or vestry is beleaguered or unfairly criticized, foster understanding and reconciliation and distribute accurate information

• Ensure that policies and procedures regarding employee and volunteer misconduct are in place and enforced; take any questions, complaints and concerns to the rector and appropriate authorities immediately

• Take action to intervene promptly (with others as appropriate) in the event that the rector is charged with misconduct, has problems with drugs or alcohol, or is acting inappropriately; speak with the rector and bishop as necessary and appropriate

• Support the rector in taking action when employees or volunteers are charged with misconduct or inappropriate behavior

• In cases where conflict imperils the pastoral relationship between the rector and congregation, the rector or a majority vote of the vestry may ask the bishop, in writing, to intervene; the senior warden traditionally makes this petition on behalf of the vestry

• In cases where the rector is overworked, disregarding his/her health and well-being and that of the family, encourage the rector to take corrective steps, solicit the vestry’s support in reducing workload, adding staff, or funding a sabbatical as appropriate

• Assist in identifying persons for leadership roles, and participate in inviting them to serve in those roles

• Be prepared to assist the rector or to step in and do what is necessary (make an announcement, turn up the heat, write a letter)

• With the rector, announce the bishop’s pending visit and prepare a report on the spiritual and temporal state of the congregation to be discussed with the bishop during the bishop’s visitation (Title III, Canon 14, Sec. 1(e))

• Conduct the vestry meeting in the absence of, or when delegated by, the rector or priest-in-charge. While the canons designate the rector as the one to preside at meetings of the vestry, the rector may delegate this responsibility

• Visit anyone known to have a major problem with a program, vestry decision, or clergy person (in consultation with and usually accompanied by the rector)
**In the Absence of a Rector**

- If the congregation’s rector leaves, notify the bishop promptly and make provisions for worship services (Title III, Canon 17, Sec. 1)
- If the congregation is without a rector, lead the congregation, ensuring that the worship services, program and pastoral care needs of the congregation are met, that the selection process for a new rector is established, and that employee relations and communication with the diocese are maintained
- Prepare a Letter of Agreement with the proposed new rector
- Ensure that the name of the person proposed to be called as rector is submitted to the bishop thirty days before the election is to be held; deliver written notice of the election of a rector to the bishop (Title III, Canon 17, Sec. 2 and 3)

**Accountability**

- A covenant in which both the rector and warden agree on the roles and responsibilities of the warden is developed in conversation with the vestry
- A yearly mutual ministry assessment process should be established for the warden along with the rector, vestry members, and other leaders