

## Steps once a Discernment Committee is ready to make a recommendation to the Vestry/Bishop's Committee

Below are the steps for nominating someone to the Bishop for the ordination process.

Please note the following prerequisites!

- The Nominee must be baptized
- The Nominee must be a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in the congregation nominating him/her

A. The **Discernment Committee** should write a report to the Vestry/Bishop's Committee. The report needs to include the following items:

1. A description of *how often* and *how long* the Discernment Committee and the Nominee met
2. A description of the *process* that the Discernment Committee followed
3. An explanation of *why* the Discernment Committee is making the recommendation that they are. If they are recommending that the person proceed in the ordination process, they must specify to which order (deacon or priest) they feel the person is called, and explain why they believe this. The explanation should refer to the ordination rites from the *Book of Common Prayer*. (*The Examination in the ordination rite [pp. 531-532 for a priest; pp. 543-544 for a deacon] outlines the characteristics and expectations of each order. The Discernment Committee is essentially answering the question, "How does the Nominee fit these expectations?"*)

B. The **Vestry/Bishop's Committee** then decides whether to nominate the person to the Bishop for proceeding in the ordination process. If yes, they need to write a letter to the Bishop. The letter needs to include:

- A pledge to contribute financially to the Nominee's preparation for ordination
- A commitment to involve itself in the Nominee's preparation

The letter must be signed by 2/3 of the Vestry/BC, as well as the Rector/Vicar (or other Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight of the congregation). To prevent later questions as to whether two-thirds of the Vestry signed it, the best method is to type the name of each member of the Vestry/BC with a space for each to sign above his/her name. The signature space should be left blank for those who are not present or do not agree.

C. The **Nominee** writes a letter to the Bishop accepting the nomination. The letter should include:

- Full name and date of birth
- The length of time resident in the Diocese
- Evidence of Baptism and Confirmation
- Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any Diocese
- A description of the process of discernment thus far, from the Nominee's perspective
- The level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned and areas of specialization. The Nominee also must provide *official transcripts* from any college(s) attended.

D. The **Bishop** then does the following:

- Determines that the Nominee is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing
- Confers in person with the Nominee
- If the nomination is being made for the Priesthood, the Bishop will consult with the Nominee regarding financial resources available during the preparation for ordination
- The Bishop might ask the Nominee to meet with the Commission on Ministry. At any rate, if the Bishop admits the Nominee to Postulancy, the COM will then meet with the person to review the application and prepare an evaluation of the Nominee's qualifications.

For more information and for the definitions of some of these terms, see Title III, especially Canons 5–10, of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, and also *Guidelines for the Discernment of Ministry in the Diocese of Hawai'i* from the Commission on Ministry.