



DIOCESE of CHRIST our HOPE

P.O. Box 52449
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Report to the 2018 Synod of the Diocese of Christ our Hope, ACNA

Rev. David Hyman
Canon for Clergy Care

Our prayerful aim is to be as intentional as possible with the resources we have to foster healthy clergy. To that end, we have developed a strategy which extend out to care for our clergy as well as resources to respond to clergy seeking care for themselves. This strategy is explained below.

Clergy Retreats

These offer annual 24 to 48 hour retreats for our clergy. The diocese covers a portion of the expense for these retreats in hopes of giving our clergy an affordable opportunity to pull away from their daily ministry for renewal, rest, and encouragement. There is time for teaching, reflection, prayer, and fellowship. Our clergy retreats are held in various locations throughout the diocese to make them accessible for all of our clergy. This year nearly 50 clergy will have attended a Clergy Retreat.

Episcopal Parish Visits & Well Being Inventory

Each year, a diocesan bishop visits each parish for a weekend of worship and fellowship. The rector and all local clergy of each church are required to complete a Clergy Well Being Inventory. During the parish visit, the bishop and clergy will review it together to evaluate seven areas of the clergy's health (emotional, intellectual, physical, sexual/marital, social/relational, and spiritual). Based on the bishop's assessment, clergy will be appropriately and compassionately supported.

Office of Clergy Care

The Office of Clergy Care receives inquiries from clergy or diocesan churches seeking routine or crisis care for clergy. This office responds to those needs by in-sourcing care (e.g. finding support resources within the diocese) or out-sourcing care (e.g. helping clergy connect with resources like spiritual direction, financial or psychological counseling, or crisis care).

Funding Clergy Care

Rather than honorariums to our bishops for their annual parish visit, we ask our churches to contribute \$500.00 annually to our diocesan Clergy Care ministry. This will enable our diocese to raise funds which can be used to ensure we connect our clergy with the vital resources they need to be cared for at any given time.



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Looking Ahead

In the year ahead, we are exploring several additional opportunities to support the health of our clergy.

- Clergy and Spouse Retreat: Planning is underway for a 2 to 3 day retreat for clergy and spouses and their children. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for clergy and their families to retreat together on an annual basis.
- Clergy Cohorts: In order to fight the isolation of ministry, as well as to encourage a culture of spiritual friendship among our clergy, we are encouraging them to connect in cohorts of 3 to 5. Our hope is that the community of these cohorts will be helpful for thinking through the complexities of pastoral ministry, normalize difficult emotions or spiritual experiences, and offer accountability for the sake of the integrity of the ministry.
- Ethics and Boundary Training: We are exploring ways to help clergy grow in their ability to create healthy boundaries in ministry. This will include content on personal and spiritual health, family and finances, and strategies for navigating the complicated relational dynamics of pastoral ministry. It will also include conversations about ministry in the age of social media.

In conclusion, in the brief life of our diocese, we have learned some things about offering clergy care that we did not before. We are still learning. Ultimately, it is our desire to create a culture where holistic clergy care is normative, effective, and available for all of our clergy and their families. May the Lord bless our efforts to pastor our pastors.

Please let me know how we can help or serve you.

Yours in Christ,
The Reverend Canon David Hyman
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