

# **THE CONGREGATIONAL CONSULTANT PROGRAM IN THE DIOCESE OF NEWARK**

## **Requesting a Consultant**

- Initial calls are usually directed to the Canon to the Ordinary
- An appropriate consultant is identified and contacted concerning interest and availability.
- The congregation's own initiative is crucial to the success of any consulting relationship. Hence, it is up to the congregation to make the first contact with the consultant once the name is given to the congregational leadership.

## **Types of Consultation Offered**

The Episcopal Diocese of Newark has recruited and trained a group of experienced laity and clergy members who have a base of skills in congregational development. The aim is to help healthy congregations to become even more so. Consultants are available for assignments such as:

- ✓ Strategic Mission/Ministry Planning
- ✓ Short-term Expectations/Goal Setting (New Clergy situations)
- ✓ Mutual Ministry Review
- ✓ Conflict Resolution
- ✓ Vestry Role and Responsibilities
- ✓ Leadership Training & Development
- ✓ Gifts Discernment
- ✓ Identity, Vision, Mission
- ✓ Community Awareness/ Connecting with Community (Percept, Demographics, Asset Mapping)
- ✓ Financial/Budget issues
- ✓ Capital Campaign
- ✓ Stewardship Planning
- ✓ Evangelism/Radical Hospitality
- ✓ Communications (Website, Internet, Print) Planning
- ✓ Music and Worship Planning
- ✓ Clergy Search/Parish Profile

## **Role/Accountability of Consultant**

Congregational Consultants act as consultants for our congregations and are provided by the Diocese as part of our resource system. In some circumstances, a congregation may wish to contract with a consultant from outside the system. The services and fees for such consultants vary, and a congregation is advised to be clear with the consultant about the terms and conditions of its engagement.

Congregational Consultants do communicate with the Canon to the Ordinary as needed in order to provide high quality assistance to our congregations. However, it is primarily the responsibility of the congregational leaders to communicate with the Canon to the Ordinary about the congregation's progress, plans, follow-up, or issues needing attention.

## **Consultation Planning**

Once the congregation has made initial contact with the consultant, a planning meeting will be arranged with appropriate congregational leaders to determine the nature and scope of the project.

The consultant and the appropriate congregational leaders develop an agreement about the work, which is summarized in writing and confirmed by both the consultant and the local leaders. This summary should answer these questions:

- What is the overall purpose of the consulting work?
- How will the work be carried out?
- How many sessions are proposed, and how long will they be?
- In brief, what will happen in each session?
- What are the achievable outcomes for this work? (That is, how will congregation and consultant measure progress when the work is complete?)
- What consulting fees and expenses (based on diocesan guidelines) does the congregation agree to pay?
- How will the results of the work be captured in writing?

## **Role of the Congregation**

Throughout the consulting process, the congregation's initiative and commitment is essential. This includes:

- Making sure the consultant has a complete picture of what is happening in the congregation—all major issues, even if they may not seem to have a bearing on the specific subject of the consulting work.
- Prompt communication with the consultant if there is a question or concern about the project the consultant is working on or about the consultant's own work.
- Making arrangements for appropriate meeting space, meals/refreshments, and other needs, such as flip charts or projectors.
- Following through on agreed tasks and immediately contacting the consultant if there is doubt that a task can be completed as agreed.
- Keeping in touch with the Canon to the Ordinary. It's very helpful when congregations take the initiative to forward summaries and plans that emerge from consulting work, as well as information about other congregational needs and initiatives.

## **Financial Responsibility**

Every congregation is responsible to contribute financially to the cost of the consulting assistance it receives, to keep it clear that the congregation is requesting this service voluntarily and is committed to making good use of the help it receives. The modest payment received by the consultants acknowledges the time they have invested in initial training and ongoing learning, as well as the time spent with each congregation, and makes it possible to sustain this consulting service over the long-term.

Every congregation will have access to consulting services, regardless of their financial capacity. Upon requesting consulting assistance, congregational leaders should discuss with the Canon to the Ordinary any concerns they have about covering the projected fees and expenses. Supplemental assistance is available when it is needed.

### **Consulting Fee Arrangement**

Diocesan guidelines for fees are based on the number of time blocks the consultant works with the congregation or its leaders, including the initial planning meeting. A time block is generally one meeting, up to three hours. An all-day meeting would involve two time blocks. Travel time to and from the work location is not included in the time block.

The suggested fee for each time block is \$250. In addition to the fee, the congregation is responsible for covering the consultant's travel expenses, and incidentals such as duplication of handouts. If a lengthy engagement is contemplated, the parties may wish to consider a fee covering the entire length of time for which consulting services are needed.

When the work is completed (or when one phase of the work is completed), the consultant submits a statement of fees and expenses to the Canon to the Ordinary, with a copy to the congregation. The consultant will in turn be paid by the Diocese. The Diocese will then send a bill to the congregation. The congregation then remits to the diocesan office its invoiced amount of the consultant's fees.

### **Further Information**

For further information about the Congregational Consultants Program or to arrange for a consultant to be assigned to your congregation, please contact: The Rev. Canon Gregory A. Jacobs, Canon to the Ordinary, 973-430-9915, [gjacobs@dioceseofnewark.org](mailto:gjacobs@dioceseofnewark.org)

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