



INFORMATION SHEET ON LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

Background

As the church family at Silverstream grows, many who have joined the church family have no background in the Anglican Church and do not have a complete understanding of how leadership and governance in the Anglican Church is organised.

With the upcoming Annual General Meeting, it is a timely reminder that the parish family should understand how the leadership and governance operates and the responsibility of members of the parish.

One of the significant differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church (which was born out of the Roman Catholic Church) is how decision making is made. In the Roman Catholic Church, the decision making comes from the Pope delegated down through his Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops to the people. This is a top-down model of decision making, whereas the Anglican Church starts with the people and move upwards to the Bishop of each diocese.

All the authorities for each leadership and governance position are set out in the Diocesan Canons.

Vestry, People's Warden, and Synod Reps are elected every 2nd year at an Annual General Meeting of the Parish. This year is an election year.

Terminology

None of that makes sense without understanding the numerous terms (some of which are not used widely outside of the Church) and to understand how the governance and leadership is exercised. This is what these terms mean:

- Annual General Meeting** is an annual meeting of the **Parish** where the **Lay People** who are on the **Parish Roll** may vote in election appointments and **Clergy** and **Lay People** together decide other matters.
- Canons** are the legislation of the diocese and must be consistent with the Constitution and legislation of the **Province**.
- Church** is the worldwide Anglican Communion.
- Clergy** are ordained persons who are **Ministers** or carry out other ordained ministry as Priests or Deacons.
- General Synod** is the parliament of the **Province**.
- Lay People/Lay Persons** are the members of a **Parish** who are not **Clergy**.
- Minister** means a **Vicar** or a **Priest in Charge** appointed by the **Wellington Bishop** to lead ministry in a **Parish**.
- Nominators** are 4 **Lay People** appointed by **Vestry** to represent the **Parish** in assisting the **Wellington Bishop** in deciding on the appointment of a **Vicar**
- Parish** means the family who worship at St Marys but is also the local area for which the parish family provides care and ministry.
- Parish Roll** means the record of members of the **Parish**
- Peoples Warden** is elected by the **Lay People** of a **Parish** at every 2nd **Annual General Meeting**

<i>Priest(s) in Charge</i>	is <i>Clergy</i> licenced by the <i>Wellington Bishop</i> to minister where a <i>Parish</i> which does not have a <i>Vicar</i> .
<i>Province</i>	is the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.
<i>Regional Synod</i>	is the parliament of the <i>Wellington Diocese</i>
<i>Synod Reps</i>	are the <i>Lay Persons</i> of the <i>Parish</i> elected at the <i>Annual General Meeting</i> to represent the <i>Parish</i> at the <i>Regional Synod</i>
<i>Vestry</i>	is the governance body of the <i>Parish</i> .
<i>Vicar</i>	is the member of the <i>Clergy</i> licenced by the <i>Wellington Bishop</i> to be the full-time minister of the <i>Parish</i>
<i>Vicars Warden</i>	is the warden appointed by the <i>Vicar</i> and announced at each 2 nd <i>Annual General Meeting</i>
<i>Warden(s)</i>	are the <i>Peoples Warden</i> and the <i>Vicar's Warden</i> together
<i>Wellington Bishop</i>	is the Bishop of the <i>Wellington Diocese</i> (Bishop Justin whom we met on two Sundays late last year).
<i>Wellington Diocese</i>	is the region of the <i>Province</i> which is overseen by the Bishop of Wellington and includes Wanganui, Ohakune, Taihape, the Wairarapa and everywhere else south of those places in the North Island.

When a term is used it will be in ***italics and bold***.

The Leadership roles and Governance roles and responsibilities

Leadership and Governance is intertwined and no one person has the authority in every area. Every branch of the leadership tree is essential to be operating together.

Wellington Bishop

The **Wellington Bishop** is responsible for exercising the primary care and oversight of the Diocese.

There may be an Assistant Bishop who may be delegated by the **Wellington Bishop** to carry out such responsibilities as the **Wellington Bishop** requires.

The **Wellington Bishop** is responsible for ordination of **Clergy** (eg Kath, James, Julia & Heather) and licences **Clergy** as **Ministers** or other **Clergy** roles within the **Wellington Diocese**.

In our case, Kath has a licence from the **Wellington Bishop** to be the **Vicar** of the **Parish**. James and Julia each have a licence from the **Wellington Bishop** as joint **Priests in Charge** to undertake a church planting ministry at Stokes Valley.

The **Wellington Bishop** has the right to remove the licence from any **Clergy** if the **Wellington Bishop** is not happy with the leadership or ministry of that person.

The **Wellington Bishop** is also responsible for confirmations of **Lay People**.

Vicar

The **Parish** has a **Vicar** (Kath) as the **Minister** of the **Parish** and a Deacon (Heather) licenced to serve in a particular ministry both appointed by the **Wellington Bishop**.

In Stokes Valley, James and Julia are jointly **Priests in Charge** as **Ministers** at St Philips.

The **Minister** has access to and oversight of the use of the church buildings and all things necessary for or related to organising and leading the **Parish** worship.

By way of example, no form of church service may be used in a **Parish** without the approval of the **Minister**, but if the **Minister** wishes to use a form of service which

has not been approved by the **General Synod**, the **Wellington Bishop** must approve the use of the service after consultation with the **Vestry**.

The **Minister** has the overall responsibility and management for music for worship.

A **Vicar** is appointed by the **Wellington Bishop** in consultation with the **Nominators**.

Wardens

Each parish has two **Wardens**. One is the **Vicars Warden** and one is the **Peoples Warden**.

The **Wardens** are responsible for the operation of the **Parish** if the **Minister** is ill or incapacitated or is absent from the **Parish** or there is no **Minister**.

The **Wardens** are considered the principal lay leaders of the **Parish**, the spokespeople for the **Vestry** to the **Parish**, the spokespeople for the **Parish** in all matters except those for which the **Synod Reps** or **Nominators** are responsible.

The **Wardens** are responsible to ensure the decisions of **Vestry** are carried out.

Nominators

The **Nominators** represent the **Parish** for appointment of a **Vicar** for the **Parish**. Typically, the **Wardens** are **Nominators** and the **Vestry** selects two other persons.

We had **Nominators** when Kath was appointed **Vicar**.

Vestry

The vestry is made up of the **Vicar**, the **Wardens**, the **Synod Reps** and between three and nine other elected **Lay Persons**.

There are processes in the **Canons** for how the election is carried out and for how **Vestry** functions.

The primary calling of **Vestry** is to:

- Be a community of disciples in which the will of God may be discerned through corporate prayer, reading and scripture, reflection and fellowship.

- Promote the worship of Almighty God.
- Provide all things necessary for order and public worship.
- discern, articulate and be committed to the mission and vision of the parish and to membership of the diocese.
- Foster the spiritual growth and well-being of the parishioners.
- Lead parish congregational change where appropriate.
- Observe best practice and its governance of the parish.

To carry out its role, **Vestry** cooperates with the **Minister** and with others in the **Parish** to whom ministries and tasks are delegated.

Vestry is responsible for the financial administration and the overall stewardship and good management of the **Parish** property.

Irrespective of the roles of **Vestry**, the role and responsibility of the **Minister** for worship or for pastoral care, Christian education and spiritual wellbeing of the **Parish** cannot be limited by **Vestry** in any way.

In seeking to elect **Vestry** members **Lay Persons** need to consider **Vestry** members are expected to:

- Model high standards of behaviour in their work together, including appropriate means for regular communication with parishioners.
- Maintain a high level of confidentiality and loyalty.
- Be agents of reconciliation in the congregation.
- Provide opportunities for all groups in the parish to express their views to the vestry.

Vestry appoints its own secretary, treasurer, persons authorised to operate the bank account and **Nominators**. **Vestry** makes local appointments for the exercise of non-**Clergy** ministry. **Vestry** does have power to delegate some responsibilities.

Synod Representatives

Synod is the parliament of the **Church**. Historically, **Synod** and the British Parliament developed side by side and there are many similarities.

There are three houses of members in the **Synod** compared to the House of Lords and the House of Commons in the British Parliament overseen by the King.

The houses in the **Synod** are the houses of Bishops, **Priests** and **Synod Reps**. Effectively, our **Synod Reps** are our members of parliament in the **Diocese**.

Regional Synod is held each year. Our elected **Synod Reps** and **Clergy** are all members of **Regional Synod**.

Regional Synod is for the **Wellington Diocese**.

The **Regional Synod** elects persons to represent the **Wellington Diocese** at **General Synod**. This is a national parliament rather than a regional parliament.

At **Regional Synod** a resolution can only be passed or legislation adopted, if there is a majority in each of the houses of bishops, **Priests**, and **Synod Reps** from all the parishes in the **Wellington Diocese**. The same principles apply at **General Synod**.

Just as parliament passes Acts of Parliament and sets Regulations, the **Church** does the same. The equivalent to an Act of Parliament is called a **Canon**, and regulations and resolutions are also passed.

One of the roles of **Regional Synod** is to nominate bishops, in our case, for the **Wellington Diocese**. For a bishop to be nominated there needs to be a majority for that person in the House of **Synod Reps**, the House of **Priests** and the appointment is ratified by all the bishops of the **Province** and by members of **General Synod**.

How does this all tie together?

One of the great strengths of the **Church** is that nobody has all the power. The **Wellington Bishop** is the titular head in the **Wellington Diocese** and the **Wellington Bishop**, together with the **Nominators** working together agree on a **Vicar** for a **Parish**. The **Vicar** has the spiritual oversight of that **Parish** but working with **Vestry**.

The **Vestry** has the major support role of the **Vicar** and the governance of the **Parish** and is principally made up of **Lay People** elected at an **Annual General Meeting**.

Synod Reps are appointed by **Lay People** of the **Parish** at an **Annual General Meeting**.

The **Lay People** have the responsibility to ensure that the **People's Warden**, the lay **Vestry** members and the **Synod Reps** are elected for two-year terms at every second **Annual General Meeting** of the **Parish**. To ensure no one **Lay Person** has a continuing authority in a role, none of the **Peoples Warden, Vestry** or **Synod Reps** can be re-elected to the same role nor can the **Vicars Warden** be reappointed where the person has served 6 consecutive years in the same role.

Neither the **Wellington Bishop** nor **Clergy** can vote in the election for the **People's Warden, Vestry** members or **Synod Reps**.

The **vicar's** sole appointment for governance purposes is to appoint the **Vicar's Warden** who will also be a member of **Vestry**. The **Lay Persons** do not have any input into the appointment of the **Vicar's Warden**.

The **Lay People's** responsibility is to pray about the elections, ensure they are on the **Parish Roll**, possibly nominate a person for an elected position and attend the **Annual General Meeting** and vote.

The picture to me is of a community (the **Parish**) sailing on a ship. The **Wellington Bishop** represents the shipping line (the **Church**). The captain is the **Vicar** who is responsible for the course that the ship takes and the overall responsibility for the work carried out by the crew (people undertaking ministries) with the **Vestry** being the chief engineers and chief stewards to ensure that the ship is "ship shape". The crew are the **Lay People** and other **Clergy** carrying out their various ministries.

The point is the ship can go nowhere without everyone carrying out their respective roles.

Merv Gaskin
Vicar's Warden
10 February 2024