

OUTSTANDING PARISH SUPPORT

General

In the Anglican tradition, the diocese is the primary unit of the Church. We are a church episcopally lead and synodically governed and look to our bishop(s) as a symbol of the unity we experience as a family of God. The Diocese of Fredericton is a local expression of that one Anglican family of God. Its parishes care about one another and support each other because we understand that together we are stronger than we are as individual, congregational expressions of that same church family. The Diocese is the collection of those parishes and creates an environment in which support of one another is possible and encouraged. Supports and services both temporal and spiritual that can be more effectively realized together we see as “diocesan expenses.” By sharing in the responsibility we are able to assist one another in a diocesan family unit. While the Diocese (the collection of its parishes) is eager to provide assistance when needed, each parish has an obligation to everything possible to engage the local mission while at the same time taking seriously its responsibility to the other parishes in the diocesan family – the Diocese of Fredericton. The financial aspect of that responsibility to support one another is referred to as “Parish Support of the Diocesan Shared Ministry Budget.”

The Diocese recognizes that from time to time and, possibly for good reason, a parish may not be able to meet its obligations to the Diocese (its sister parishes). In such cases, the Diocese carries an unpaid amount owed by the Parish for two years, after which the amount owing, with the exception of employment-related arrears, is “written-off.” This “write-off” assumes the Parish makes a special effort to “become and remain current” in its budget support payments. Parishes which subsequently find themselves in a better financial situation are encouraged to overpay their current Shared Ministry Budget Support to cover the amount previously in arrears to, and written-off by, the Diocese.

While the Diocese may “write-off “ or forgive some or all of a parish’s Support of the Shared Ministry Budget (ie. debt more than two years old) the first priority is to support parishes in efforts to secure sufficient funds so as to realize financial stability. There are various ways the Diocese provides this support: leadership in strong stewardship initiatives implemented at the parish level; the provision of a team led by a territorial Archdeacon to support and give direction to parishes which cannot meet their financial obligations or, counsel and support directly from members of the Diocesan Finance Committee assigned when necessary.

If after three years of not being able to meet financial obligations to the Diocese the Bishop will consider a report, with recommendations, from the territorial Archdeacon concerning the viability of the parish and the type of ministry that can or should be provided in it.

Specific Steps

1. Very early in each new year the Diocesan Treasurer will identify to the appropriate territorial Archdeacon(s) and the Finance Committee those parishes which have not paid the annual Support of the Shared Ministry Budget for two consecutive years, and those parishes in arrears on employment-related assessments (stipend, pension, health benefits, etc.)
2. The Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair will write a letter to each parish outlining the steps to follow according to this policy and, specifically request that the vestry/parish corporation respond by telling the Diocese (through the Archdeacon) what they think caused the Parish to be in arrears and what they believe should be done to rectify the situation.
3. If it is deemed necessary and, depending on the response from the Parish, the territorial Archdeacon may convene a Support Team of about four individuals, including at least one lay person, a priest (both of whom shall be from outside the parish) and the Diocesan Treasurer, to help the Parish look at probable causes and possible solutions. In such cases, the Diocesan Treasurer, in co-operation with the Parish Treasurer and Church Wardens, will prepare a package of information (recent financial statements, number of identifiable givers, average giving, etc.) for the Support Team and the Corporation to use as a basis for discussion. The Archdeacon and the Support Team will meet with the Parish Corporation to help them address the reasons for the financial shortfall and what might be done to “turn things around.”
4. The Parish Corporation will prepare and submit to the Archdeacon an action plan which includes specific steps to be taken by the Parish, beginning immediately, to ensure Parish Support of the Diocesan Shared Ministry Budget can and will be paid in future. The Archdeacon will table this report with the Finance Committee no later than April 30.
5. By the end of June, the Parish Corporation will submit a progress report to the Archdeacon and may, if necessary, request further help from the Support Team.
6. If the Parish has not been able to meet its commitment to the Shared Ministry Budget by the end of that year (ie. for the 3rd consecutive year), the Archdeacon will prepare a report with recommendations for consideration by the Bishop. This report will reference the reasons why the Parish is not able to meet its financial obligations and what can or should be done in order to avoid continued deficits by the Parish.

Important Note: If the Parish falls behind in employment-related assessment payments, the above procedures will be put into place immediately. (See also [Regulation 7-2 Schedule F - Parish Payroll Arrears](#))

Adopted 23 January 2013