



# *Competencies*

FOR ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD  
IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA



THE GENERAL SYNOD  
OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

2013



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*BCP: Book of Common Prayer*  
*BAS: Book of Alternative Services*

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The Commission has undertaken its work in the light of the following assumptions:

- This document has been created by the church for the church.
- The foundation of this work is our faith in Christ who is continually raising up a body for the work of God's mission in the world.
- The church in every age is guided by the Holy Spirit as it lives its discipleship within the tensions of mission and promises of ministry, and we trust that same Spirit to guide us in emerging and future contexts.
- These guidelines are only one part of the processes of identifying and discerning candidates for priestly ministry and for their on-going formation and support. Diocesan processes, spiritual direction, the Advisory Committees on Postulants for Ordination, and theological education processes themselves are partners in the process.
- The Anglican Church of Canada commits to making resources available to ensure that contextually appropriate pathways for education and formation for presbyteral ministry are available.

The document is intended to be used in a variety of contexts and ways, for example:

- As tools in early stages of candidacy processes, by local discernment and formation personnel and candidacy committees along with the candidates and postulants themselves.
- As guides in self-reflection by priests on their own vocation and ministry, to help discern areas for continued growth, formation and education.
- In ministry review contexts, by peers, bishops, archdeacons, and others who work with priests to develop excellence and health in ministry.

## PREFACE

In 2010 the General Synod (exercising its responsibility as described in the Declaration of Principles<sup>1</sup>), on advice of the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee in consultation with the House of Bishops, asked the Primate to establish a Commission on Theological Education and Formation for Presbyteral Ministry. The Commission was mandated to prepare competencies for those whom the church has called to exercise the ministry of priest in the Anglican Church of Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration of Principles: "6. Subject to the provisions of section 7 the General Synod shall have authority and jurisdiction in all matters affecting in any way the general interest and well-being of the whole Church and in particular: . . . (1) the basic standards of theological education, and the qualifications and training of candidates for the ministry of the Church . . ."

- In programmes of theological education, to help to guide institutional support for the church's ministry.

Any statement of Competencies will be limited. For example, it:

- Does not constitute a set of standards. A standard is something by which a competency is measured. The understanding, interpretation, and application of the competencies will vary appropriately from context to context. The companion Commentary provides some guidelines to assist dioceses in developing measurement and assessment tools in order to set their own standards.
- Is not a curriculum for theological education.
- Does not advocate a single-path approach. There will be multiple paths by which candidates may come to maturity in these competencies.
- Is not an ordered checklist but is rather a guide that will support judgments and allow them to be better articulated and explained.
- Does not provide a list of all skills that might be needed in all circumstances. A competency is a foundational proficiency, the growing maturity in which allows for particular skills to develop. Most skills required, whether in pastoral care or stewardship or preaching, necessarily are dependent upon the coalescence of a number of different competencies. How these skills are then developed is in turn much dependent upon contextual and personal particularities.
- Competency alone is not enough. Passion in ministry is an essential ingredient. Charism, call and character, those gifts assessed through the ACPO process, are the foundations, and need to be brought into dialogue with what is offered here in the Competencies. While competency without passion, character and call is ineffective, passion without competence can be destructive. These two parts of ministerial formation are intended to be brought together in every step in the life of ministry.

In the midst of the breadth of material covered in this document it is important to note that it contains only five basic competencies. A priest must:

- have a personal faith and spiritual life that is adequate to lead others;
- understand who we are as the people of God, our stories, our history and what it means to be an Anglican within the wider Christian family;
- be able to translate that rich tradition into the real life of the actual communities and contexts where we minister;
- have the capacities to provide effective leadership in the communities we are called to serve;
- be able to teach, mentor and support the development of the ministry of the whole people of God.

The document will have done its work when it has informed and inspired the development of those who are called to the ministry of a priest. It will also help with navigating various tensions, such as those which exist between local needs and the universality of the church, or between diocesan autonomy and a desire for common expectations. It will provide assistance in situations of ministry transitivity, as priests, whose orders are recognized across the church, move between different ministry contexts.

Detailed explanation of the *Competencies* is provided in the companion *Commentary on Competencies for Ordination to the Priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada*. Also treated in the *Commentary* are particular questions relating to issues of transitivity, assessment and measuring tools, guides for local adaptation, and suggestions for a variety of applications. The Commission is grateful to have been entrusted with this important mandate, and offers their work to the glory of God and for the strengthening of the church.

Members of the Primate's Commission on Theological  
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2010–2013:

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## I PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

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*"We hope that you will...  
continually pray to God  
the Father by the mediation  
of our only Saviour Jesus  
Christ, for the heavenly  
assistance of the Holy  
Ghost."  
—BCP*

*"Will you do your best  
to pattern your life in  
accordance with the  
teachings of Christ, so that  
you may be a wholesome  
example to your people?"  
—BAS*

A priest is one who has a personal faith and spiritual life that is adequate to lead others. He or she:

1. Displays a mature understanding of a call to ministry, service and study.
2. Demonstrates a commitment to loving service in the church rooted in a sustained and growing love of God in Christ.
3. Cultivates a disciplined life of prayer, rooted in the Anglican tradition of common prayer, which responds well to the demands of personal formation and the expectations of public ministry.
4. Shows evidence of personal and spiritual growth and healthy self-awareness.
5. Exercises appropriate care of self, accountability to others, and has an awareness of sources of support available when needed.
6. Shows a commitment to live his or her Christian faith within the Anglican Church of Canada.
7. Demonstrates a healthy and loyal but not uncritical relationship to her or his bishop, diocese, province and the national church.
8. Reflects with insight on her or his personal strengths and weaknesses, gifts and vulnerabilities.
9. Discerns God's presence and activity in her or his own life and in the lives of others.
10. Bears witness to his or her own experience of God's love and grace in acts of evangelism.
11. Demonstrates a capacity to deal maturely in personal relationships with family and friends.
12. Models stewardship as a spiritual discipline in response to God's gifts
13. Has read and continues to read the whole Bible in a systematic way.



## II CHRISTIAN HERITAGE AND ANGLICAN IDENTITY

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*"Will you be diligent in the reading and study of the holy scriptures and in seeking the knowledge of such things as will make you a stronger and more able minister of Christ?"*

—BAS

*"...that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, ye may wax riper and stronger in your ministry."*

—BCP

A priest is one who understands who we are as the people of God, our stories, our history and what it means to be an Anglican within the wider Christian family. He or she:

## II.1 SCRIPTURE

1. Continues to read Scripture in a systematic and holistic way, in personal devotion and study, recognizing them as, "containing all things necessary for salvation", for the shaping of personal life and public ministry.
2. Is able to exegete select texts from the Bible using appropriate theological, historical, critical, and literary tools.
3. Understands the significance of the different genres of the texts within the Bible.
4. Is aware of how the Bible is interpreted through the lenses of gender, socio-economic, historical and cultural perspectives.
5. Engages with the Scriptures and the traditions of Christian thought in faithful obedience and with openness to new insights.
6. Develops a practice of study and reflection, and a working knowledge of how to interpret and use Scripture in a range of different contexts.
7. Interprets the Bible in a way that makes it accessible to the community.
8. Is able to help the community read the Bible in the light of Christian tradition and God-given reason.
9. Understands a wide range of theological themes within the canon of Scripture, and is familiar with how these themes relate to basic credal doctrine and the teaching of major figures in church history.

## II.2 THEOLOGY

1. Understands the development of the Christian tradition and how it has been received and interpreted in Anglican thought.
2. Articulates core Christian doctrines, including their defences and their critiques, and the particularities of how they have been received within Anglicanism.
3. Understands the significance of philosophy as challenge and resource in the development and defence of the Christian faith.
4. Is familiar with the writings of a variety of major theologians, including key shapers of the Anglican tradition.
5. Understands the role and function of the creeds within the life of the Christian community.
6. Is familiar with the role and function of canon law — national, provincial and diocesan.

## II.3 HISTORY

1. Understands the development of the Christian tradition with particular attention to the patristic, medieval, Reformation and modern periods.
2. Appreciates the diversity of the Christian tradition, historically and globally.
3. Understands the significance of the relationship between the Christian faith and its Jewish origins and the subsequent influence of Islam in the development of Christian thought.
4. Is familiar with the history of missions in Canada and how that has shaped the heritage and character of the Anglican Church of Canada.
5. Is familiar with the history of Christian missions globally.

6. Has an understanding of the Anglican Communion worldwide — its character, history, diversity, successes, shortcomings and contemporary challenges.
7. Is familiar with the origins of Anglicanism within the English appropriation of the Reformation.

## II.4 CONTEXTUAL MINISTRY

1. Is aware of the challenge and promise of living as a Christian in a pluralistic and secular society.
2. Is familiar with the teachings and practices of partner Christian Churches, particularly those that are encountered in the Canadian context.
3. Is aware of the teachings and the practices of other faiths, particularly those that are encountered in the Canadian context.
4. Considers the place of the Christian faith in ever changing contexts and its implications for building of relationships with those of other faiths and, for sensitive and effective proclamation of the gospel.
5. Demonstrates a capacity to understand how the ministry of a congregation is shaped by the community it serves.
6. Is able to exercise creativity and imagination and good judgment to enable groups and communities to adapt in the face of changing contexts and demands.

## II.5 LITURGY

1. Displays an understanding of Anglican spirituality and of the centrality of liturgy in Anglican identity and self-understanding.
2. Demonstrates a thorough grounding in the authorized worship texts and resources of the Anglican Church of Canada.
3. Understands the role of liturgy in expressing and forming doctrine and ethics.
4. Presides effectively and graciously within worship, especially at Baptism and the Eucharist.
5. Preaches the gospel with faith and passion in a way that reflects an understanding of the role of proclamation within the liturgy.
6. Understands and participates in worship with a clear sense that it is the action of the whole people of God, and has an understanding of the particular roles of deacon, priest and bishop.
7. Demonstrates familiarity with the worship practices and resources of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.
8. Understands the contextual and missional implications of liturgical practice and is familiar with a range of recent developments in the life of the church.





A priest is one who is able to translate the rich tradition of Christian and Anglican thought into the real life of the actual communities and contexts where we minister. She or he:

1. Identifies the manner in which local context contributes to the shape of theology and the call to the church to participate in the mission of God.
2. Demonstrates awareness of the pains and stresses in their own context and of the spiritual and ethical issues raised there.
3. Demonstrates
  - a) an awareness of the cultural and social contexts that shape Anglicanism and
  - b) an understanding of how these shape ministry in a local context.
4. Seeks to transform unjust structures of society, and engages appropriately the tools of the social sciences and traditional knowledge bases to reflect upon issues of culture, race, class and gender and their impact upon theology and church practices.
5. Is familiar with issues of environmental and economic justice and is able to articulate theologically and pastorally what it means, "to seek to transform unjust structures of society", and "to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth."
6. Is sensitive to the global character of the Church and the relationship between the Canadian Church and the wider global communion.
7. Is aware of and attentive to the contributions of and challenges faced by indigenous people in our context, the ongoing heritage of colonialism, the aftermath of residential schools and systemic racism.

### III CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

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*"All baptized people are called to make Christ known as saviour and Lord and to share in the renewing of the world."*  
—BAS

*"Seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad."*  
—BCP



## IV CAPACITY FOR LEADERSHIP

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*Ye are called, "to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord."*

—BCP

*"Will you undertake to be a faithful pastor to all whom you are called to serve, labouring together with them and with your fellow ministers to build up the family of God?"*

—BAS

A priest is one who has the capacities to provide effective leadership in the communities we are called to serve. In order to exercise this ministry effectively and faithfully, he or she:

1. Demonstrates an understanding of and capacity for shared leadership:
  1. Shows willingness to work with the bishop in the leadership of the diocese.
  2. Demonstrates the capacity for effective collaborative leadership and an ability to work in teams in a range of settings, including ecumenical.
  3. Discerns the gifts of others and equips them to lead and to serve.
  4. Demonstrates an awareness of the church's role and opportunities in public life, and a capacity to collaborate in a well informed way with ecumenical partners, other faith communities and secular agencies.
  5. Shows a capacity to be able to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships in order to form community within and outside the church.
  6. Demonstrates the capacity to understand and consent to the promises and affirmations in the ordinal.
  7. Leads congregations in their calling to make disciples.
  8. Is prepared to submit his or her leadership to the discipline of those in authority over them as provided for in canon.

2. Demonstrate a capacity to exercise leadership pastorally:

1. Articulates the nature of priestly vocation and identity as it has been received within Anglicanism and
  - a. give an account of how her or his own vocation to ministry and mission relates to this,
  - b. demonstrate her or his readiness to receive and exercise this ministry as a priest within the Church of God.
2. Demonstrates familiarity with responsibilities appropriate to the newly ordained.
3. Exercises leadership in a manner that reflects good pastoral practice.
4. Preaches effectively in public contexts.
5. Demonstrates gifts and capacity to provide pastoral care.
6. Demonstrates the character of one able to develop a creative pastoral presence as leader and caregiver.
7. Understands the principles that support effective administration including stewardship of resources, prioritization, collaborative working, finance and accountability.
8. Demonstrates a capacity to assist a community in the process of visioning, planning, and implementing future directions.

3. Demonstrates a capacity to understand, reflect upon, and be guided by insights from a range of pastoral practices.

1. Demonstrates a capacity to reflect upon different types of ministry and understand the particular ministries to which individual priests are called.
2. Understands the complexities and challenges of change in the life of a community and demonstrate a capacity to use these understandings to lead change.
3. Does effective ministry planning.

4. Shows an understanding of the causes and effects of conflict, and responds appropriately to expressions of conflict within a community.
5. Assesses strategies for active justice-seeking mission.
6. Shows awareness of a variety of ministry settings, e.g., Indigenous, urban, northern and rural ministries, and is exposed to at least one context other than her or his own.
7. Demonstrates awareness of the public character of theology and is able to exegete and communicate theologically in the contexts of worship, personal interaction, group-study, and the media.
8. Demonstrates an understanding of the theory and practice of mission and evangelism, changing expressions of church life, and their relation to the local context.
9. Understands the implications of size and structure of parishes and ministry settings for style of leadership.



## V SKILLS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

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*"Will you endeavour so to minister the word of God and the sacraments of the new covenant, that the reconciling love of Christ may be known and received?"*

—BAS

*"to teach and to premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family."*

—BCP

A priest is able to teach, to mentor and support the development of the ministry of the whole people of God. Leadership requires the ability to nurture the faith of others and to draw out their capacities for baptismal ministry and leadership. He or she:

1. Is equipped to teach the Christian tradition.
2. Shows the capacity to gather, critically assess, integrate, and use insights, information, and ideas in support of the teaching ministry.
3. Shows a commitment to embrace wisely the resources that are available to support ongoing life long learning in support of the teaching ministry.
4. Develops communication skills, both oral and written, that are clear, engaging and effective.
5. Shows understanding of how children and adults learn in order to nurture others in faith development.
6. Integrates and assists others to integrate what is learned into life, ministry and practice.



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