

LITURGICAL GUIDELINES FOR CELEBRATION OF A NEW MINISTRY (CNM)

General Principles:

The Ministry being celebrated is not only that of a new rector/vicar, but also the baptismal ministry of the entire people of God in the congregation. The Celebration of New Ministry (CNM) is an opportunity to launch a preliminary vision for shared ministry in the years to come.

A CNM is also a time to gather the larger faith community together: to involve our ecumenical partners, to welcome clergy of all Episcopal congregations in the Diocese of Maine, to set forth the broader context of connection and to express the congregation's local and regional commitments to shared ministry. Please make plans to invite your ecumenical and Episcopal peer partners in ministry and include them in the liturgy if appropriate.

A CNM is a feast! It is appropriate to make the liturgy glorious; filled with music and involving as many people as possible. This CNM will ideally be the only liturgy for that day, and the reception will be an occasion of radical hospitality offered by the people of the hosting congregation.

Invitations

Please send invitations (in the name of good stewardship, electronic is preferred) to all the clergy of Maine (my office has a complete and up-to-date email address listing available ~ please be in touch with Barb to request a copy). Invitations to community leaders, both secular and religious, as well as all ecumenical folks in your area, should be sent out as soon as possible after the CNM date is confirmed with my office.

Details:

In the Diocese of Maine, we generally schedule CNMs for a Sunday afternoon, so as to make this liturgy available to clergy and people who have other Sunday morning responsibilities. It should be the principal liturgy for that Sunday, and you may cancel liturgies normally scheduled for that Sunday morning. You are welcome to explore other scheduling opportunities; please be in touch with Barbara Martin to discuss those further.

The Bishop is the presider at all CNMs and will be the principal celebrant of the Eucharist. The new rector/vicar will concelebrate.

The new priest chooses the following:

- The Lections, which may be those of the Sunday or those of a Feast close to the date or the lections from the CNM liturgy (BCP p. 560-561).
- All music and hymns.
- The participants in the liturgy: Readers, Litanist, Gospeller/Deacon, Preacher, Presenters of Symbols of Office, the Ministers of Communion, etc.
- The Eucharistic Prayer (from any approved source).
- The people who will present the symbols of office.
- The preacher (usually not the bishop) ~ someone who will preach the Gospel and affirm that Baptism is the foundation of all ministries. Tributes and testimony about the new rector/vicar should be offered at the Reception, not in the sermon.

I prefer the CNM from EOW 4, but please feel free to “mix and match” using portions of from the Book of Common Prayer as well as any other approved resources. The Litany customarily used at this service is that specified for Ordinations (BCP pages 548-551). You may choose to shorten the litany, but please keep the ending portion where the Bishop participates (BCP p. 551). If another suitable Litany is chosen, please make sure it is not overly long.

The Presentation of the Symbols of Ministry

In addition to *receiving* symbols of her/his office the new priest may also *give* symbols to the congregation. It is totally appropriate for you to add some symbolic presentations to this section of the liturgy. For example, various new rectors/vicars have decided to formally present to the congregation (with appropriate presentation comments) such items as:

- A seedling tree, to be planted on the grounds of the church.
- A list of congregation members, with a vow to embrace them all.
- A set of Church School materials, to use in forming all members.
- A cane or magnifying glass, to symbolize welcome for people with various physical challenges.
- A book of Spiritual Reading, to urge the study of same.
- A seat cushion for the pews – to symbolize hospitality and comfort.
- Balloons to celebrate the entire congregation’s joy (but should *not* be released into the environment.)
- A map of the local area, with a promise to care for all those in the area.
- Toys for the church nursery to acknowledge our care for all ages.
- Use your imagination!

The Peace and Final Blessing

The Bishop will publicly ask the new rector/vicar to bid the Peace and to pronounce the Final Blessing.

The Offering

The offering will be given to the church for your Discretionary Fund.

The Reception

Remember that many people will have traveled some distance to be with you. An extravagant reception is not necessary, but ample amounts of food and healthy choices are appreciated by all. Alcoholic beverages are NOT appropriate given that people will be driving and that young people are present. During the reception, any other gifts the congregation wishes to give to the new (stoles, photos of the church, etc.) may be presented.

Other notes:

The Bishop will bring a Certificate documenting your new ministry as rector/vicar.

Please invite local media reporters to attend this event. Canon Heidi Shott 207.772-1953, or hshott@episcopalmaine.org can help with any preliminary information the local media may need. The Bishop is always happy to meet with local reporters covering this event and highlight the ministry of the local congregation. Please ask your amateur photographers to share a few of their best shots with my office.

Please return the "Eucharist Planning Sheet" to my office as soon as you can and I would also like to see a draft of the CNM Liturgy before it goes to print. Email attachments can be sent to my office at bmartin@episcopalmaine.org

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to be in touch. Barbara can be reached at bmartin@episcopalmaine.org or 207-772-1953 x 125.