

# Diocese of Algoma

## Deanery Officials Visitation to Parishes

### Information and Guidelines

Parish name & contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Scheduled date and time of next visit: \_\_\_\_\_

Regional Dean name & contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Lay Steward name & contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Lay Steward name & contact: \_\_\_\_\_

#### *Introduction*

The Deanery officials (Regional Dean and Lay stewards) are asked to visit every congregation within their deanery every year. The main purpose of the visit is to ensure that everything is in good order in terms of the fabric of the buildings; that the registers are up to date; and that the Screening in Faith policy is being monitored.

However, this is also a very good opportunity for you as a congregation to reflect on where you are with the mission and ministry of the parish (based on Vision, Vitality and Viability).

We hope that you will use this form as a basis for conversations within your congregation, and that you take the time to answer these questions with as many people in your congregation as possible.

Please keep a written record of your congregation's reflections.

This should be done annually, and answers could be recorded and reflected upon in future years.

This should be done ahead of the meeting with the Deanery officials.

#### *Preparing for a Visit*

A lot of information exchanges hands at an annual visit. Here are several things you can do to ensure the visit is focused and efficient. Please have ready for display, or email in advance if possible:

- Register Books (Vestry, Marriage, Funeral, Baptismal & Confirmation)
- Reflections from your Mission & Ministry Conversation (see 'Health&Vitality' form p.3-6)
- Screening in Faith Policy including job descriptions
- Latest financial statements, including any investments, reserves, and debts
- Latest Annual Vestry Reports
- Completed Parish Contact Form (see 'Parish Contact' form p.7)
- Property reports (see 'Immovable Heritage' form p.8-9)
- Parish Inventory for insurance purposes (see 'Moveable Heritage' form p.10)
- Proof of Insurance for any rental groups
- Latest T3010 Charity Information Return, due June 30<sup>th</sup> Annually
- If you have a cemetery, your latest annual BAO report
- Fire Safety/Emergency Response Plan

### *What Happens During a Visit?*

The incumbent of the congregation/parish should be present for the visit, as well as the wardens. Please feel free to include any additional ministry leaders as appropriate to your parish.

#### *Part one: The Church Property*

- The Deanery officials will want to look around the buildings, both inside and outside, consider the state of the building in relation to the last visit, discuss the repair and maintenance needs.
- Discuss any building projects (requiring deanery official/Executive approval or not) that have taken place since the last visit, and any plans for future projects. If there are plans in the works, please be ready to discuss how the parish plans to resource the project-both financially and in terms of people. Be ready to explain how the proposed building project supports or enhances the mission and vitality of your congregation.
- Please be prepared to tell us how your building supports or enhances the mission and vitality of your congregation. How is it used during the week, or days other than Sundays, by the parish or outside groups.
- The Deanery officials will want to check the general maintenance, care and safety of the grounds, and if you have one, discuss any issues relating to the cemetery and/or scattering garden, including BAO (Bereavement Authority of Ontario) licence and annual returns, burial records, and care and maintenance fund.
- If the parish has a rectory the Deanery officials would like to inspect it as well. Please give the incumbent's family or the tenants at least a week's notice of the intended visit so that they can plan accordingly. If no one is going to be at home during the visit, please ensure that the residents have given permission for this to take place.

#### *Part Two: The Church Finances*

Deanery Officials will ask for an up-to-date financial picture for your parish. Please be prepared to discuss financial concerns, resolution of debts, and forecasts for future financial viability.

#### *Part Three: The Congregation's Ministry and Mission.*

The attached 'Health and Vitality' report is divided into four sections, with a list of discussion questions for each section:

1. The worshipping life of your congregation
2. Stewardship: more than just money!
3. The Congregation's place in the community- near and far
4. The future of your congregation

These questions can generate a lot of discussion, and we hope they will help your parish identify and focus its Ministry & Mission priorities on an annual basis.

Please make note of the Property, Finance and Mission issues that are most important for your current *parish circumstances*. *We will focus our attention on these items during our visit and help you in any way we can!*



## HEALTH AND VITALITY REPORT

*Multipoint parishes may wish to report together or separately as best serves their needs. If you have answers to all the discussion questions; that's wonderful! If not, please identify a couple of questions or issues in each category that are most important in your current ministry context. Please add anything further you would like to talk about, so we remember to cover it on our visit.*

**YEAR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARISH NAME & ID NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Part 1. The worshipping life of your congregation.**

<p>Would you say that the worshipping life of your congregation is:</p> <p>___ Alive and growing- Missionally and theologically, not just numerically.</p> <p>___ Alive and static (those leaving are balanced by those joining)</p> <p>___ In decline but hope is on the horizon</p> <p>___ In decline with no hope of revival</p>
<p>What is the predominant book of worship (BAS, BCP, other):</p> <p>Services other than Communion (Morning Prayer, Taize, Healing, Ecumenical, other):</p>
<p>What is the predominant book of sung worship (Common Praise, other):</p> <p>Describe your Music Ministry:</p>
<p>Would you say that there is active leadership and participation in the worshipping life of the congregation from laity (including children and youth) as:</p> <p>___ Lay readers      ___ Lectors      ___ Intercessors      ___ Server/Crucifer</p> <p>___ Pastoral Visitors, Eucharistic Assistants licensed to bring the Sacrament to the sick or shut in</p> <p>___ Leading services of worship on days other than Sunday-(eg. Morning or Evening Prayer in the church or in Retirement/Nursing Home residences)</p> <p>Is training offered for these ministries? By whom? Are there any lay or ordained ministries currently being fostered?</p> <p>When was the most recent Baptism? When was the most recent Confirmation?</p>
<p>What are the predominant age groups of your congregation?</p> <p>How many on average on a Sunday morning in each group.</p> <p>___ 0-16      ___ 17-25      ___ 26-40</p> <p>___ 41-60      ___ 61-80      ___ 81+</p>

### **Part 1 Questions for Consideration and Discussion:**

1. Can you identify diversity within your congregation? (racial diversity, nationalities, blended families, 2SLGBTQQ+, developmental or physical disabilities).
2. How would you describe the ministry of hospitality and welcome in the congregation?
3. How does your congregation follow up on new members/guests? Who follows up -the clergy or the laity?
4. Is there an openness for change in your congregation in welcoming new generations in taking on leadership roles in the congregation's worshipping life?
5. Have you undertaken succession planning for the future?
6. Have any Fresh Expressions of church been developed in the last couple of years? Are there any opportunities for these in the future?
7. What opportunities are there for all ages to explore, grow and develop as disciples of Christ?
8. Do members of your congregation meet together in small groups for prayer and the study of God's Word? These may happen at the church or in-house groups. Who leads these groups – clergy or laity?
9. What other small groups make up the congregation's life?
10. How do you incorporate and encourage young members in the worshipping life of the congregation?

Answers and Notes from Part 1:

### **Part 2. Stewardship - More than just money!**

Background - The Diocese of Algoma is striving towards a holistic approach to stewardship.

We recognise that all life is a gift from God and that it is up to us to choose how we manage this gift.

A stewardship spirituality reminds us that as we grow in our capacity to share and to give, we grow closer to God. The more familiar word for 'steward' is 'manager' and so stewardship involves how we relate to others, how we use our time, how we give of our resources and how we manage money.

### **Questions for Consideration and Discussion:**

1. Is stewardship spoken about in the congregation, or is it a subject that is avoided? If the latter, why do you think this is so?
2. How do you speak about generosity in giving time, treasure and talents in the congregation?
3. Is the topic of stewardship preached about during the year?

4. Are both the clergy and the laity comfortable having conversations about stewardship?
5. Do you think your congregation has an understanding about the theology of giving?
6. How do you thank people for the gifts (time, treasure and talent) they freely and willingly give?
7. Are members of the congregation encouraged to use the EOP through the Diocese or the parish's bank, and to increase their offering each year?
8. Have you ever had a stewardship campaign in the congregation? How successful was it?
9. Is your congregation current with its stipend and apportionment to the Diocese? If not, what prevents it? What might help?
10. Does the congregation budget for outreach or missions (local, national or international)?
11. What about legacy planning in the congregation?

Answers and Notes from Part 2:

### **Part 3. The Congregation's place in the community- near and far**

What place would you say your congregation has in the local community (neighbourhood for city churches and town/village for smaller communities)? Choose one of the following.

- The church is key to the community; many community activities revolve around the church.
- The community is aware of church; church opens its doors to the community for various events.
- The church is 'just there' and some people know about it.
- The church is irrelevant to the life of the community.

1. Does your church have adequate signage indicating service times etc?
2. Does your church have a website, or other online presence?
3. What links does your congregation have to other denominations or to other Anglican churches within the community? If there are none at the present time, how can they be developed?
4. What organizations or agencies are you in partnership with (Mission centre, high school)?
5. Is there a potential for sharing buildings with other denominations or collaborating more closely with other congregations of the Anglican/Lutheran church? How open is the congregation to this kind of change?
6. Does your congregation have any national or international links?

Answers and Notes from Part 3:

**Part 4. The future of your congregation**

1. Has your congregation identified its mission and articulated it?
2. How is this mission lived out in the congregation?
3. If you have not identified or articulated your mission, based on your knowledge of the congregation, what would you say it is?
4. Does your congregation have a vision for the future?
5. Do you provide opportunities for all members of the congregation to engage in discussions and conversation about that vision?
6. What are your greatest hopes and dreams for your congregation?
7. What do you fear the most about the future of your congregation?
8. What are some of the greatest frustrations for you at the moment?
9. When you think about your congregation-what do you do really well, that you could share with other congregations?
10. When you think about your congregation-what do you feel you are weak at, and would like others to help?
11. What are the greatest changes you've observed in your congregation in the last year?
12. As new generations come along is there an openness to change?
13. Is your congregation able to continue into the next five/ten years? Might there be other options for you if you do not feel it is sustainable? Do you know who to talk to if you are interested in exploring these options?
14. Realistically, where do you see this church being in the next 15-20 years?

Answers and Notes from Part 4:

## IMMOVABLE HERITAGE (IH) PROPERTY REPORT

*Immovable Heritage* (IH): structures such as church, parish hall or rectory

*Reporting:* Please fill out one Immovable Heritage (IH) form per structure. Much of the IH information will not change from year to year, so your parish will only need to update amend the form in future years. The Deanery Officials will help your parish with the items that require amending or updating.

Structure Name & Address:	Features of historic or community significance:
Type of Structure ( <i>church, hall, rectory, etc.</i> ):	Year of Construction: Years of addition or renovation if applicable:
Exterior Materials ( <i>brick, siding, etc.</i> ):	Interior Materials ( <i>wood, plaster, etc.</i> ):
Roof Material & Age:	Parking ( <i>municipal lot, streetside, owned lot</i> ):  Barrier-free parking designated: YES ___ NO ___
Dimensions:	Capacity:
Documentation ( <i>survey, architects' drawing, etc.</i> ):	Barrier-Free: YES ___ NO ___ PARTIAL ___ If Partial, please specify:
Number of Stories; specify basement/crawl space:	Maintenance ( <i>staff, contractor or volunteer</i> ):
Type of Heating ( <i>oil, gas, boiler, electric, etc.</i> )	Furnace in utility room free of obstruction: YES ___ NO ___ N/A ___
Water Source ( <i>municipal, well, none, etc.</i> ):	Septic ( <i>municipal, bed, tank, none, etc.</i> ):
Type and age of electrical ( <i>knob&amp;tube, copper, 2-prong, 3-prong, mix etc.</i> ):	Air Circulation ( <i>forced, fans, window, etc.</i> ):



Continued...

<p>Kitchen: YES ___ NO ___ If NO, indicate where food consumed on premises is originally prepared: _____ _____</p> <p>If YES: Fridge ___ Freezer ___ Oven ___ Stove ___ Hood/Vent ___ Industrial Dishwasher ___ Domestic Dishwasher ___ 3-sink Method ___ Other major appliances or equipment: _____</p> <p>Food prepared under supervision of someone with Safe Food Handling Certification: YES ___ NO ___</p>
<p>Safety Features: Smoke Detectors ___ Carbon Monoxide Detectors ___ Fire Extinguishers ___ Fire Extinguishing Sprinkler System ___ Emergency Lights ___ Illuminated or Reflective Emergency Exit Signs ___ Entry Alarm System ___ Video Surveillance System ___ Building locked when not in use ___ Building checked every 2 days when not in use ___ First Aid Kits available &amp; identified ___ Defibrillator available &amp; identified ___ Changes of elevation marked (<i>paint, flooring colour change, etc</i>) ___ or n/a ___ Adequate lighting ___ Child-resistant caps on electrical receptacles ___ Hazardous materials stored securely and properly ___ Fire Doors where required ___ Doors Equipped with Crash Bars ___ Exit Doors working properly and free of obstruction ___ Non-fire Doors equipped with windows ___ Exterior walkways are kept free of ice, snow and other hazards ___ Emergency Response Plan posted in a visible location ___ Emergency Response Plan on file with local Fire Department ___ Emergency Lights, Extinguishers &amp; Detection Systems checked monthly ___</p>
<p>Possibilities for the 'greening' of the structure (<i>energy efficiency, outdoor space, etc.</i>):</p>
<p>Inspections (<i>vary by facility &amp; municipality: TSSA, Boiler, Backflow Valve, Annual Fire Extinguisher</i>):</p>
<p>Current concerns or plans:</p>

CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

For More Information: <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Keeping-Track.pdf>

Ontario Fire Code: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070213>

Emergency Response Plan: Contact your local Fire Department or go to <https://www.ihsa.ca>

## MOVABLE HERITAGE (MH) INVENTORY REPORT

*Movable Heritage (MH):* furnishings, art, books, linens, equipment, documents, stained glass windows  
*Reporting:* Please fill out as many Movable Heritage (MH) forms as necessary to serve as an inventory record. Accompany this form with pictures or a video tour if you are able.

Please keep a copy of the MH inventory on site at your parish, and a separate copy at a secure location off-site. Electronic copies are convenient to store on USB or online and can be easily updated.

It may help to draw a diagram of the building and note the location of each item on the diagram.

If your church already has an inventory system for its movable heritage that includes all the required information, please continue to use the system that works for you.

Parish Name & Address:	Type & Description of object ( <i>brass 10inch chalice, 3x2 foot stained glass window, etc.</i> ):
Terms of Acquisition (gift, purchase, etc):	Quantity:
Date of Acquisition:	Artist/Manufacturer:
Location within building:	Care & Maintenance Notes:

Inscription/Dedication:

CONTACT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

For More Information: <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Keeping-Track.pdf>