

ACT ELEVEN

Of Self-Supporting Clergy

Introduction

- 1** This Act seeks to provide a formal basis in the Diocese of Natal for the utilisation of self-supporting clergy and in doing so –
 - (a) acknowledges the increasing role played by self-supporting clergy in the life and ministry of the Diocese; and
 - (b) further acknowledges the evolutionary nature of the self-supporting ordained ministry and thus does not purport to be an exclusive or final legislative measure.
- 2** Any matter addressed in, or omitted from this Act may therefore be addressed by further enactments of Synod, or by Episcopal Bylaw and/or by administrative guidelines.

Description

- 3** For the purposes of this Act, a self-supporting cleric is a person ordained as Bishop, Priest or Deacon, who has been granted permission to officiate or licensed by the Bishop, to exercise a ministry authorised in such permission to officiate or licence, but who is not entitled to receive a stipend, but who is entitled to receive all such allowances as may be prescribed or allowed by the Bishop.
- 4** A self-supporting cleric may be granted permission to officiate in any appropriate diocesan capacity.

Training

- 5** A self-supporting cleric must undergo and complete such education and training and/or practical experience as the Bishop may from time to time prescribe and may be required to attend particular training sessions or gatherings.
- 6** Failure to complete a prescribed course or attend required training sessions may result in either disqualification from ordination, or, if ordination has taken place, the withdrawal of the Bishop's licence or permission to officiate, as the case may be.
- 7** Subject to financial constraints and the approval of the Diocesan Board of Trustees, the Diocese may provide some financial support towards study and training costs, incurred in respect of prescribed study/training.

Participation in Organs of Church Governance

- 8** Parish-based self-supporting clergy may attend all meetings of the Parish Council and may speak but not vote at such meetings.
- 9** Self-supporting clergy have no right to attend meetings of, or participate in the workings of, the Parish Executive, unless invited to do so by the Incumbent acting with the consent of the Churchwardens. The same rule applies in respect of Chapelries and/or congregations.
- 10** Self-supporting clergy (unless the cleric is an Incumbent) have no right of attendance and participation in an Archdeaconry Council, unless invited by the Chairperson, acting with the consent of the Council, in which case that cleric may speak but not vote.
- 11** Attendance at and participation in Synod and /or Diocesan Council by a self-supporting cleric shall be in accordance with the Canons, Acts and Rules governing Synod and Diocesan Council and attendance at and participation in those two bodies.

Formal Agreements

- 12** A parish-based cleric must enter into an agreement with the Parish Council concerned, which has been approved by resolution of the Parish Council. The signatories to the agreement shall be the cleric, the Incumbent and the churchwardens. Where appropriate, the relevant chapelwardens should be co-signatories to the agreement.
- 13** Such an agreement must define the role and functions of the self-supporting cleric and may provide for the parish to reimburse the cleric for expenses specified in the agreement. No provision may be made for remuneration to be paid to a self-supporting cleric by a parish, unless special written authority for such payment has been granted by the Bishop.
- 14** Self-supporting clergy who are not parish-based, may be required to enter into an agreement with the Bishop or her/his nominee, as is appropriate to the role and function assigned to that cleric by the Bishop.

Retirement of Self-Supporting clergypersons

- 15** (1) Self-Supporting clergypersons are not remunerated by the Diocese nor are they members of an ACSA pension or provident fund. "Retirement" in this Act therefore means the lapsing of the Bishop's permission to officiate/licence to a person to be a Self-Supporting clergyperson in this Diocese. The purpose of this section is therefore to put into place procedures for the orderly regulation of this process.

- (2) Self-Supporting clergy like stipendiary clergy shall retire from active ministry at the age of 65 years and like stipendiary clergy may apply for the extension of the Bishop's licence in consultation with the Rector, parish council and Bishop.
- (3) If the Self-Supporting clergyperson does not wish to continue, he/she resigns and surrenders her/his licence/permission to officiate. If the Self-Supporting clergyperson wishes to continue but the Rector/Priest-in-Charge does not agree, the matter must be submitted to the Bishop.
- (4) The Bishop may grant or refuse the application after such consultations as he/she deems necessary. If an extension is granted, it shall be for such period and on such conditions as the Bishop may prescribe.

Amplification/Guidelines

- (5) The Bishop may amplify these provisions and provide guidelines for their application. This may include the issue of By-law(s).

Conclusion

- 16** Any matter which may arise and which is not covered in this Act, should be submitted to the Bishop in writing via the relevant Archdeacon. If appropriate, the Bishop may take action as contemplated in Section 2 of this Act.