

## **Guidelines for the Bishop Skirving's Visits**

The following guidelines provide a sense of the Bishop's preferences for visits with the congregations of the Diocese, whether on Sunday mornings or at other times.

### **Upon Notice of the Bishop's Visit to your Congregation:**

+ In planning for the Bishop's visit, don't be afraid to be a little creative. You may invite the Bishop to be present for more than one service on Sunday morning or you may consider inviting the Bishop to be present before or after worship for such things as Christian formation classes, congregational Q&A sessions or meetings with the Vestry. Bishop Skirving prefers to sit down with one group for more careful conversation rather than popping in and out of a number of rooms, just to say hello.

- **Requesting an Additional Sunday Service:** When it is desired that the Bishop be present for more than one service on a Sunday morning please share time and reason for request.

- **Requesting Extra events:** These events should always be planned around any receptions or meals that are open to the whole congregation, so that the Bishop has the opportunity to greet as many people as possible. If there is a good reason for the Bishop to come on a Saturday or to stay through Sunday afternoon he will be glad to consider but will need advance notice to avoid conflicts with other commitments.

**Note: You do not need to wait until you receive your visitation forms to make a special request. As far in advance as possible, please email Hannah Jarman with the request in order to ensure that the Bishop does not already have other commitments. Please, do not announce to the congregation that the Bishop will be present for multiple liturgies or other events until your request has been confirmed!**

### **Two Months prior to the Bishop's Visit:**

+ The priest or senior warden will receive by email the forms that are to be reviewed, completed, and returned to the Office of the Bishop at least one month prior to the visit.

+ In planning worship for the Bishop's visit, please note:

- The Bishop will normally be celebrant and preacher when present for a Sunday morning visit. In planning the liturgy, you may choose from Rites I or II of the Book of Common Prayer or from Enriching Our Worship. When there are no baptisms, confirmations, receptions or reaffirmations of faith scheduled, please use the Renewal of Baptismal Vows on page 292 of the Book of Common Prayer in place of the Nicene Creed. When possible, a draft of the Sunday bulletin should be provided to the Bishop two weeks in advance of the visit, particularly if the text of the liturgy will be printed in the bulletin or in cases when the Bishop's input is desired prior to printing.

- The assigned collect and readings for the day are to be used, unless permission for alternatives is confirmed with the Bishop in advance. The assigned collect and readings may be found on-line at <http://www.lectionarypage.net>.
- The liturgical color for the Bishop's visit should be the color of the day, according to the liturgical calendar. When a different choice is preferred, this should be noted on the form.
- Based on the patterns of the congregation, the Bishop will be happy to wear the parish Eucharistic vestments, cope and miter, or rochet and chimere.
- Candidates for Confirmation, Reception and/or Reaffirmation should normally come forward to the Bishop one at a time. Bishop Skirving prefers to stand for these prayers. Candidates may either kneel or stand. This should be done at the chancel steps, at the sanctuary gate, or in some other practical place. Please call aloud the name of each candidate as they come forward. Please have the other candidates either sit or stand out of the way so that the congregation may see. Please make plans for a group photograph, during or immediately after the liturgy.

+Please have the parish registers ready for the Bishop to sign ahead of the service, along with any certificates or prayer books. If you would prefer for your certificates to be prepared by Diocesan House staff, please provide the necessary details on the "Visit Preparation Form" when you submit it.

+ Please notify the congregation of the Bishop's visit 4 to 6 weeks in advance with explanation that the offering on that occasion will be for the Bishop's Discretionary Fund to be used for needs of the church not covered by diocesan budget. Please do not give the offering to the Bishop during his visit, but have it counted and sent by check to Diocesan House at P.O. Box 1336, Kinston, NC 28503.

### **One Month prior to the Bishop's Visit:**

+Complete and return the "Visit Preparation Form" no later than one month preceding the visit. Be sure to include all the information that is requested. The form is available to print or to submit electronically. Once this form is received, the Bishop might request a telephone appointment with the priest or senior warden prior to his visit.

### **The Week following the Bishop's Visit:**

**+Please fill out and mail the "Official Record of the Bishop's Visit" to Diocesan House during the week following the visit.** If you do not have any confirmations planned, sign the designated place on the bottom of the form and send it to Diocesan House with the Visit Preparation Form. Please do not hand these forms to the Bishop during his visit.

### ***Questions?***

*Please contact Hannah Jarman via phone 252-522-0885  
or by email at [hjarman@diocese-eastcarolina.org](mailto:hjarman@diocese-eastcarolina.org)*