

Vestry Qualifications and Duties

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Lebanon, TN

The Vestry is a body of non-ordained persons in the Episcopal Church, duly elected by the members of the church to provide oversight with the rector/priest in charge of the spiritual and material concerns of the parish.

The Vestry seeks to enable clergy and lay ministries to take place in order to expand the Kingdom of God in Lebanon and Wilson County.

The Vestry specifically authorizes all financial obligations of the church and oversees the church properties.

In accordance with the Canons of the Diocese of Tennessee, the Vestry shall consist of between six to twenty-one persons, each of whom shall be elected for a term of three years. The Church of the Epiphany Vestry consists of seven persons. Persons who have served a three-year term or a two-year term to complete an expired term are ineligible to serve for a period of one year. Vestry members who have served to complete a one-year unexpired term are eligible to serve a full three-year term.

Duties

The Vestry meets monthly or more to review activities of the church, hear reports from the priest and wardens, and treasurer. There is at Vestry Orientation retreat in February.

The Epiphany Vestry takes turns serving as the Sunday Vestry Person of the Day, opening and locking the doors on Sunday, making coffee (or delegating it) for coffee hour, picking up donuts from the Donut Time Shop.

There is an expectation that those who serve on Vestry will attend (and help set up/ breakdown) church events such as potlucks, Epiphany party, Pancake Supper, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week Services, Lessons and Carols, other events. Happily more helpers are arising to assist but ultimately it falls to Vestry members.

Vestry members are required to complete a background check and the online Diocesan Safe Church Course. The trainings are good for five years and then must be renewed.

The Nomination and Election Process

A nominating committee will serve to receive and to make nominations to the vestry. The committee will consist of the senior warden as chair, the outgoing members not eligible for election and the rector/priest in charge as pastoral consultant. The committee will meet following the December vestry meeting. Recommendations will be solicited from the congregation at large in the Enewsletter. The committee will meet in December or Early January with those who have been recommended.

During the following week, these persons will fast and pray concerning whether God is calling them to serve on the vestry. Those who feel led will be nominated, and information on the nominees will be published in the Enewsletter.

The election for the new vestry members will be held at the annual meeting after worship church usually the fourth Sunday in January.

Canonical Requirements

Confirmed communicants in good standing at Church of the Epiphany and at least 16 years of age.

Spiritual Requirements

1. To have a commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to subscribe to the Core Values statement of Church of the Epiphany.
2. To have been active in the life and ministry of Epiphany for one year.
3. To commit to spiritual growth, with a discipline of Bible study and prayers. One evidence of this commitment is that the person attends, teaches or leads a small group or Sunday school class.
4. To be a faithful steward, a track record of financial pledging and committed to proportional giving with the tithe as a goal.
5. To have family relationships that reflect Christian commitment and support the person being a vestry member.

The Vestry Covenant

We, the Vestry of Church of the Epiphany, agree to:

To open and close with prayer.

To trust and show respect for one another, the group, and the group's work.

To follow the agenda and complete discussion on one task before moving to another.

To begin and end on time.

To have a commitment to attend.

To encourage and honor all views.

To listen carefully to one another with one person speaking at a time.

To pray for one another and for the direction of the group.

To be honest with self and others.

To encourage exploration.

To speak to someone directly if he or she has wronged you.
(per Matthew 18:15-22)

To have the freedom to disagree with love.