

The Diocese of Virginia

TO: The Churches of the Diocese of Virginia
FROM: The Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston, Bishop (Coadjutor);
The Rt. Rev. David C. Jones, Bishop Suffragan
DATE: September 1, 2009

This is to announce that the 2010 schedule for episcopal visitations is now set and can be found on the diocesan website at www.thediocese.net. We apologize for the fact that the schedule has been delayed in coming out. You will understand that under normal circumstances, it is a very complex undertaking. In addition to those usual considerations, for 2010 we have had to adjust to the fact that we will have only two Virginia bishops available for visitations. Therefore we have been pleased to invite several guest bishops to help with this schedule. While this is a greatly appreciated (and certainly necessary) help, it has also been something of a task to work through the various considerations of the times and places where our guest bishops will be able to serve. Indeed, some of the visitations from guest bishops have yet to be set, but those churches who are involved should already have been contacted.

As a result, you may count on the following two points:

- 1) Every congregation in the Diocese of Virginia will be receiving a visit during 2010 (in some cases yoked congregations are visited together).
- 2) Almost one fourth of our congregations will receive a visit from a guest bishop.

Guest Bishops

The Rt. Rev. Michael Creighton, Bishop of Central Pennsylvania (Resigned)
The Rt. Rev. Robert Ihloff, Bishop of Maryland (Resigned)
The Rt. Rev. Jim Montgomery, Bishop of Chicago (Resigned)
The Rt. Rev. Martin Townsend, Bishop of Easton (Resigned)
TBA: The Rt. Rev. Ted Gulick, Bishop of Kentucky

You will have noted by now that guest bishops are also making visitations through the end of 2009 in order to cover for Bishop Lee's remaining schedule. In setting the schedule for 2010, we are prudently anticipating that, due to financial constraints, we will have to plan for guest bishops throughout the coming year. However, there is the possibility that financial conditions for the second half of 2010 might provide for the hiring of an assistant bishop for Virginia who could then take such visitations upon assuming that ministry. You will all be hearing more about such a possibility in the near future.

General Visitation Policies and Forms

The bishop's visitation always includes the Holy Eucharist with the bishop as celebrant and preacher. Baptism and/or confirmation are within the context of the Eucharist. The Propers of the Day, including all three lessons, are used for Sunday visits. The expectation is that the Revised Common Lectionary will

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be used beginning in Advent. When there is no confirmation or baptism, the service will include the renewal of baptismal promises on page 292 of the Book of Common Prayer. The Order of Service should follow these guidelines and the sequence of the liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer. Negotiate with the bishop scheduled to visit on any additions or changes in the Order of Service. Mail to the assigned bishop a copy of the Order of Service before the service takes place.

At least one month prior to the bishop's visit, you will receive information from the visiting bishop's office including a checklist to assist in preparation for the bishop's visit.

If an additional visit is needed, please contact the diocesan bishop's office to schedule such a visit.

Also found on the diocesan web site (www.thediocese.net → Diocesan Resources → Bishops) regarding the bishops' visitation schedule and procedures:

- 2010 Visitation Schedule (download as an excel spreadsheet or a pdf file listed by church or by date)
- Rites of Initiation
- Visitation Checklist for Preparation for Bishop's Visit
- Visitation Notification Form Prior to Bishop's Visit
- Visitation Reporting Form Following Bishop's Visit