ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN CENTRAL & WESTERN NSW DIOCESE OF BATHURST

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CLERGY PASTORAL SUPERVISION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Biblical Background

It is significant that Paul urges Timothy to "watch your life … closely," (1 Timothy 4:16) and he places it, in this verse, ahead of doctrine. That is because mature leadership is based upon character, not knowledge and skills. That is why almost all of the pre-requisites for consideration for church leadership listed in the pastoral epistles are issues of character, rather than knowledge or giftedness.

As a diocese, we want to do everything we can to encourage and support our clergy to make ongoing character development and growth toward spiritual maturity their highest priority – for their own sake, for the sake of their families and for the sake of their parishes.

1.2 Historical Background

In December 2017, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse released their final report,[1] which included a number of recommendations with respect to Professional Supervision::

> **Recommendation 16.45**
> *Consistent with Child Safe Standard 5, each religious institution should ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry, including religious leaders, have professional supervision with a trained professional or pastoral supervisor who has a degree of independence from the institution within which the person is in ministry.*
>
> **Recommendation 16.5**
> *The Anglican Church of Australia should develop, and each diocese should implement, mandatory national standards to ensure that all people in religious or pastoral ministry (bishops, clergy, religious and lay personnel):*
>
> a. *Undertake mandatory, regular professional development, compulsory components being professional responsibility and boundaries, ethics in ministry and child safety;*
> b. *Undertake mandatory professional/pastoral supervision; and*
> c. *Undergo regular performance appraisals.*

At a national level, the Anglican Church of Australia has developed guidelines in this area and encouraged diocese to adopt a policy to give effect to these guidelines.

[1] See the Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (2017), Volume 16 'Religious Institutions.'

1.3 Commitment

The Diocese is committed to implementing the above recommendations across its ministry locations and portfolios. The Clergy Pastoral Supervision Policy (**the Policy**) deals specifically with Pastoral Supervision (see above Recommendation 16.45 and 16.5b).

1.4 Definitions

Pastoral Supervision is a relationship which provides a planned, regular and safe place where clergy can discuss and reflect upon events and issues relating to their ministry with an independent and experienced Pastoral Supervisors to promote better ministry practice and provide independent support for the clergy.

Pastoral Supervisor means someone who is approved by the Bishop to provide Pastoral Supervision in the Diocese, and who is:

- a senior member of clergy; or
- a person who has successfully completed a qualification or recognised training in Pastoral Supervision.

The **Goals of Pastoral Supervision** are to:

1. positively contribute to the spiritual, mental and emotional well-being and health of all clergy by providing independent, pastoral supervision and support;
2. enhance self-care among clergy by minimising the risk of burnout and maintaining a healthy work-life balance;
3. promote the development and competence of clergy, by encouraging them to operate in their parishes (or other specified ministry portfolio) with a strategic intent which is aligned with the diocesan mission;
4. provide a safe, supportive and independent environment for clergy to debrief and reflect on ministry experience and practice; and
5. form part of the Diocese's response to heightened community expectations for greater transparency, accountability and professionalism in all its practices.

1.5 Scope

This policy applies to all licensed, stipendiary clergy in the Diocese.

2. POLICY DETAILS

2.1 Pastoral Supervision

The Diocese recognises the wealth and breadth of ministry support networks that are available to clergy. It is with this in mind, that clergy are required to set up their own pastoral supervision by tapping into their own ministry support network, noting the policy requirements in this document.

Clergy who require assistance with this, in the form of referrals or other recommendations of suitable Pastoral Supervisors, should contact the Bishop or Clergy Development Officer.

2.2 The Diocese will

- develop and implement the Policy, in conjunction with Bishop in Council;
- communicate the requirements of the Policy to all relevant parties;
- assist all those requiring Pastoral Supervision to ensure they meet their requirements under the Policy;
- be responsible for the review and approval (or otherwise) of all Pastoral Supervision arrangements as required by the Policy; and
- maintain a register of clergy, their approved Pastoral Supervisor, and details of the supervisory arrangement (e.g. costs, commencement date).

2.3 Clergy will

- ensure they understand the requirements in the Policy and the standards outlined in *Faithfulness in Service*; and continue to uphold these in their ministry, and use these as baseline expected standards where relevant in supervisory sessions; and
- work with the Diocese to ensure they have Pastoral Supervision (as outlined in the Policy) in place, via the following steps:
    1. Provide to the Bishop and Clergy Development Officer for review and approval, the name of the proposed Pastoral Supervisor and details of their relationship history with the clergy, prior to any supervisory arrangements being confirmed. The Bishop reserves the right to approve or deny any proposals at his discretion.
    2. Upon approval, engage with their Pastoral Supervisor and enter into an arrangement for Pastoral Supervision which ensures a minimum of 6 sessions are attended over the calendar year.
    3. Provide to the Diocese, final details of this arrangement, including the name of the Pastoral Supervisor, their relationship history with the clergy, and any costs involved.

2.4 Pastoral Supervisors will

- be committed Christians who submit to the Bible as God's revelation to us: its words being divinely inspired, inerrant, infallible, and having ultimate authority in all matters of life; and who actively serve in the church of which they regularly attend;
- understand, and commit to the policy requirements set out in the Policy;
- be a current, or former vocational clergy (outside of the Diocese), who has experience with supervising other clergy (or is otherwise approved to be a Pastoral Supervisor by the Bishop);
- understand that the diocese does not provide any form of insurance for Pastoral Supervision;
- disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest to the diocese and clergy proposed to be supervised, prior to any Pastoral Supervision taking place;
- understand the intent behind the provisions of the Policy, including that experienced clergy have much experience and knowledge to offer less experienced clergy, and are therefore suitably positioned and motivated to faithfully use this experience to facilitate the growth of God's Kingdom, for His honour and glory;

- be prepared to discuss their suitability for the Pastoral Supervision of diocesan clergy with the Bishop or Clergy Development Officer; noting the possibility that any arrangement is at the discretion of the Bishop;
- ensure that Pastoral Supervision sessions cover the five **Goals of Pastoral Supervision**, as identified in the Policy;
- be available to engage with the supervised clergy between sessions, where any urgent matters require such engagement; and
- refer matters to the Bishop that arise during the Pastoral Supervision which in their opinion are not confidential, as well as those matters which need to be referred to the Diocese such as information which points to a breach of Faithfulness in Service or any other code of conduct for clergy adopted in the diocese; or any other matter as is required by law or court order to disclose.

2.5 Costs

Given the nature of the Pastoral Supervision relationships outlined in this policy (i.e., through clergy, or diocesan-provided ministry networks), the Diocese anticipates that supervision will be provided to clergy at no cost, or for an honorarium payment of an annual amount capped at $400 (calculated at 8 x $50 per session).

The cost of Pastoral Supervision will normally be covered in a split (50 - 50) arrangement between the clergy and their parish (or other ministry portfolio), up to the above capped amount (meaning parishes should expect to pay up to $200 per annum for this requirement).

Clergy who wish to engage with a Pastoral Supervisory arrangement with a higher cost, will be required to cover any additional cost over $200 per annum (noting that a parish may agree to contribute a further amount).

Where clergy or parishes are unable to meet the $200 annual cost, they should discuss with the Bishop and Clergy Development Officer, to decide on a suitable cost arrangement.

2.6 Review

The Policy, having been reviewed and modified during the 2025 calendar year, will continue to be monitored for suitability and amended where applicable.

Future reviews of the suitability and effectiveness of the Policy will determined whether the scope needs to extend to others in licensed ministry positions (e.g. stipendiary lay ministers; clergy with Authority to Officiate (ATO); other (non-stipendiary) licensed lay ministers).

2.7 Feedback

Please direct any questions or comments about the Policy to the Clergy Development Officer by emailing phil@bathurstanglican.org.au.