

Annual Report of a Parish, Mission or Chapel for the year ending 31 December 2024 Due Date: March 1, 2025

Name of Congregation: _____

Address: _____

PART 1: The Parochial Report (enclosed) is required by the Canons of the Episcopal Church. *Please return the completed form to the Bishop's office with your Annual Report.*

In addition to a printed Parochial Report being a part of this Annual Report to the Bishop, each congregation is required to file the Parochial Report with the office of the General Convention. The 2024 Parochial Report Filing opens **January 6th 2025**. If you haven't already done so, please take the time to review the updated form, as there are changes from previous years. You can access it by logging into the filing site <https://reports.dfms.org/login> or viewing the blank PDF available on the General Convention website <https://generalconvention.org/forms-and-instructions/>. Attached to this packet are also some written instructions that may aid you in your completion of this annual report (**See Appendix A: Reporting of Operating Revenues Instructions**). The deadline to file your report is **March 1, 2025**. After this date, the filing site will close to all users except diocesan administrators. If your report is late, you will need to coordinate with your diocesan office to have it entered online. If you have questions, you may also contact the Rev. Canon Morgan MacIntire at mmacintire@edola.org or by calling 504-895-6634.

It is possible to view and print an 11-year trend chart that displays average Sunday attendance, active baptized members and plate and pledge gifts for your church (and all Episcopal congregations and dioceses.) To access this chart go to <https://www.generalconvention.org/explore-parochial-report-trends>.

Parochial Report (a) completed, (b) filed online and (c) included: Yes _____ No _____

PART 2: Financial Statements and Normal Operating Income Reporting

Please enclose all financial statements (balance sheets and income statements) associated with your Parish, Mission, or Chaplaincy (including schools, day care centers, etc.) for the twelve-month period ending 31 December 2024.

Financial Statements included: Yes _____ No _____

Operating Revenues 2024:

Plate offerings, pledge payments & regular support \$ _____

Money from investments used in operations in 2024 \$ _____

Other operating income \$ _____

Unrestricted bequests used for operations \$ _____

Subtotal Normal Operating Income \$ _____

PART 3: Audits

Diocesan Canon 25.1.(d) requires that “all accounts shall be audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant, or by an accounting committee approved by the Vestry.” Please enclose the congregation’s audit report(s) for the twelve-month period ending 31 December 2024.

For congregations with a Normal Operating Income of less than \$500,000.00, the Executive Board has authorized the use of an *Alternative Audit Procedure*. If you have questions about the proper use of this alternative procedure, please contact the Canon to the Ordinary or the Diocesan Treasurer. CPA Audit Reports and Alternative Audit Reports are due **September 23, 2025**.

CPA Audit Report included: Yes _____ N/A _____

CPA Audit in process, to be forwarded when complete: Yes _____ N/A _____

Alternative Audit Procedure Report completed and included: Yes _____ N/A _____

Alternative Audit Procedure Report in process: Yes _____ N/A _____

PART 4: Discretionary Fund Certification

Clergy “Discretionary Funds” are church-owned funds utilized by clergy for pious and charitable purposes to relieve the indigent and to provide for parishioners in need. They are established by national canon (Title III Canon 9.5) for this purpose. They are to be independently reviewed on a quarterly basis in such a way as to insure both the proper use and confidentiality of monies.

Please enclose a letter from the vestry (signed by the Senior Warden) certifying that all such funds for the twelve-month period ending 31 December 2024 have been reviewed, and the procedures outlined in the Diocesan Policy on Clergy Discretionary Funds have been and are being followed. We also ask that each clergy person who manages a discretionary fund at each parish re-read the diocesan guidelines and sign below to acknowledge that they have done so. *(See Appendix B for Diocesan Policy on Clergy Discretionary Funds)*

Discretionary Fund Certification included: Yes _____ N/A _____

I have read, understood and will comply with the Diocesan Policy on Clergy Discretionary Funds:

Clergy Signature(s): _____

PART 5: Background Checks and Boundaries Training

To ensure a safe environment for our parishioners and visitors, and with the advice of the Church Insurance Company, the Bishop and Executive Board have set as a policy a requirement that all clergy, youth directors, and paid or volunteer staff working regularly with children or youth (four or more times per year or for an overnight event) undergo criminal, credit, and DMV background checks and complete the required Safe Church, Safe Communities trainings. More information can be found by reading the EDOLA Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth.

Other staff and volunteers are also required to complete certain Safe Church, Safe Communities training based on their roles. More information can be found on the EDOLA Safe Church, Safe Communities training chart.

Please provide a list of the names of those *who have and who have not* had these checks and training.

Background and Training list included: Yes _____ No _____

Name & Contact Information for Parish Safe Church Administrator: _____

PART 6: Contact Information

Please provide a printed copy of the names of the members of your congregation's staff and Vestry, as well as contact information for the members of the Vestry (mailing address, telephone number, email address).

In accordance with Canon 24, "In every congregation, the Wardens shall provide a written Register, securely maintained, in which the Rector, Priest-in-charge or Chaplain (or, in the absence of same, one of the Wardens) shall record the following data:" a listing of active members of the congregation. This list shall include Names, Mailing Addresses, Email Addresses, Baptism Dates, Confirmation Dates, Marital Status, and Adult (18+) or Child Status. At any time, the Bishop may request to see this register, so it is vitally important that you keep this list up to date.

Staff and Vestry Listing included: Yes _____ No _____

Our Membership Lists are current and in canonical compliance: Yes _____ No _____

PART 7: Termite Coverage

Please provide proof of termite coverage for all buildings under the control of your congregation, as well as the date(s) of the most recent treatment.

Termite coverage included: Yes _____ No _____

PART 8: Miscellaneous Documentation that has *changed since the previous year*

**"In-force" letter from insurance provider(s)
clearly stating coverages, limits, & naming the
Diocese as an additional insured included:** Yes _____ No new letter _____

**Letter(s) of Agreement signed in 2024
with members of the clergy included:** Yes _____ No new LoAs _____

Does your parish have a written Congregational Disaster Plan?: Yes _____ No _____

All new keys to church buildings included: Yes _____ No new keys _____

What is the anniversary (MM/DD/YY) of the founding of your Parish? _____

PART 9: PARISHES ONLY

Corporate Status in Louisiana current with the Secretary of State, and documentation thereof included Yes _____ No _____

(This may be found online and printed at <https://coraweb.sos.la.gov/CommercialSearch/CommercialSearch.aspx>)

Changes made in 2024 to Articles of Incorporation included Yes _____ No changes made _____

(Note: Diocesan Canons require permission from the Bishop be granted in advance of any changes to Articles of Incorporation)

Changes made in 2024 to By-Laws included Yes _____ No changes made _____

Date Completed: _____

Rector / Vicar / Chaplain / Priest-in-Charge

Senior Warden

Treasurer

To be completed by the office of the Bishop of Louisiana

Date Received: _____

Appendix A

Reporting of Operating Revenues 2024 Instructions

Basis of Reporting: Revenues and expenses may be reported on a cash basis or on the accrual basis. Just be consistent.

General Description of Operating Revenues: All funds, from whatever source, that are used for the general operation of the congregation are operating revenues. The general operation of the congregation includes—but is not limited to—compensation of clergy & lay staff, all expenses related to operating and insuring the building(s), expenses of the music program, church school, adult education programs, flowers and supplies for the altar, diocesan quota or assessment, and office expenses.

A General note about Restricted, Unrestricted, Designated, and Undesignated Funds: Funds are considered restricted (permanently or temporarily) only if the donor has specified that the gift, or income from the gift, is to be used for a specific purpose. Unrestricted funds may be designated by the vestry for a specific purpose.

A donor may restrict a gift for an operating purpose (e.g., the fuel bill or the rector's salary), and the income is considered operating income because the gift is used for an operating purpose. On the other hand, the vestry may designate a bequest or gift for a non-operating purpose, and report such gifts as non-operating income.

Read the following information for line-by-line instructions and examples that cover many different circumstances. If you have questions, please ask the diocesan office for clarification.

For purposes of this report:

- All funds that are available or used for operating expenses are operating revenues.
- All funds given or designated for non-operating purposes are non-operating revenues.

Operating Revenues

All funds available for operations.

- Plate offerings, pledge payments, & regular support _____

Include on this line all giving from individuals for the general support of the congregation. In most congregations this will be the largest income figure and will not be significantly below a congregation's operating expenses. Do not leave this item blank or report an absurdly low figure!

Examples of income to report:

- Loose plate offerings
- All payments toward pledges
- All amounts in regular offering envelopes, including the envelopes of members of the Church School
- All unpledged or undesignated offerings. Include Easter, Christmas, etc., if used for operating

purposes

- Payments from persons who made no pledge or declined to use envelopes.
- All donations “restricted” for operating purposes, e.g., donations for flowers, fuel oil, the diocesan assessment, support of the clergy, etc.
- Donations from visitors or persons not members of the congregation

Example B: At Grace Church the Easter and Christmas offerings are used for the operating budget, but the Thanksgiving offering is given to a local interfaith soup kitchen. The Easter offering was \$3,500; the Christmas offering was \$2,500. The Thanksgiving offering was \$750. The \$6,000 from the Easter and Christmas offerings is included on the plate/pledge line.

Example C: At Christ Church the ECW, which maintains checking and savings accounts, receives donations for flowers at Easter, Christmas, and throughout the year. The ECW purchases the flowers, as well as the bread and wine and linens for the Altar. To complete this report correctly, the Parish Treasurer must add the income recorded in the ECW accounts for flower donations to operating revenue and the Altar expenses to operating expenses. It is therefore suggested that the income and expenses for Altar flowers and supplies be deposited into and paid from the general checking account of the parish. If there is a separate account, it is an operating account of the parish, not an organization account.

- Money from investments, used for operations _____

Enter any amounts transferred from your investments to your operating budget. Some congregations call this the “draw on investments.”

“Money from investments, used for operations” does not mean investment funds that could be used for operations (i.e., the entire investment portfolio). It means all amounts from investments that were actually transferred into operating accounts or used for operating expenses during the current year.

Include interest from all operating accounts, dividends and interest from investments used for parish operating expenses and/or the Diocesan and General Church Program. If restricted investment income is used for operating expenses, include the income here. If withdrawals of principal or capital gains were made to cover operating expenses, include the amount of those withdrawals here.

If the congregation applies a total return policy to its investments whereby it reinvests all income and gains and draws out a percentage of an average value, the amount reported here will not equal changes in the value of the investment portfolio. Regardless of the activity in the investments, the amount to enter here is whatever amount has been transferred or spent from the portfolio (whether principal, interest, dividends or accumulations) to support the operation of the congregation.

To avoid double assessments of revenues by our diocese be sure to not report additions to investments as operating revenue. If a congregation reported income from plate and pledge offerings in one year (plate offerings line) but later transferred these funds into an investment portfolio, the principal of these funds need not be counted as operating revenue (under the money from investments line) in another year if they are transferred back into an operating account.

Note: Losses to an investment portfolio cannot be reported as “negative income” to be used to lower a congregation’s operating revenue. Changes to an investment portfolio are reflected in the size of the investment corpus (line 20). Only income transferred from investments to be used for congregational operations are included in the money from investments line.

Example D: St. Mary’s Church is the beneficiary of a trust. In setting up the trust, the donor stipulated that the income from the bequest could be used only toward the support of the Rector. The trust income St. Mary’s received this year was \$13,567. St. Mary’s fulfilled the restriction on the income by paying the Rector a total of \$45,000. The trust income is operating income reported on the money from investments line, because it was available and used for an operating purpose.

Example E: St. Matthew’s reinvests all interest, dividends and gains in a balanced portfolio. The Vestry draws out 5% of a three-year moving average of the total assets for the operating budget. The full 5% draw down is reported on the money from investments line.

- Other Operating Income _____

Include unrestricted gifts and restricted gifts used for operations, and contributions from congregation’s organizations

a. Rental of Property Income _____

b. Less Direct Expenses (_____) _____

c. Net Rental Income a-b=c _____

d. Fundraising Events Income _____

e. Less Direct Expenses (_____) _____

f. Net Fundraising Income d-e=f _____

The figures for Net Rental and Fundraising Income (lines c and d) are not to be used if negative; expenses in excess of income are included as an operating expense rather than as negative operating income.

Example F: Zion Church had a disastrous experience with a major outdoor fundraising event. Bad weather caused cancellation of the event, and the congregation was unable to recoup what it had paid out for rental of tents and other items. The event lost \$1,500. Zion reports \$0 for the event on the other operating income line.

g. Other income _____

Include surplus operating revenues from cemeteries, schools, real estate, special grants from non-church sources, principal of all undesignated gifts, and memorials that were used for operating expenses or for the Diocesan and General Church Program. Include also support of the operating budget by congregation’s organizations and foundations.

Total: Add (c + f + g) and enter subtotal on other operating income line

Example G: The ECW at St. John's sponsors events and raises funds. The group makes contributions to the Diocesan Altar Guild and many mission projects. The ECW also gives \$2,500 per year toward St. John's operating budget. The Treasurer reports the \$2,500 on the other income line.

Example H: St. Michael and All Angels has set up a separately incorporated foundation to manage its endowment. The foundation makes grants to support both the parish operating budget and capital improvement projects. The full amount of all grants for operations is included on other income line; the grants for capital projects are included in operating income.

Example I: The Friends of St. Luke's was established to allow members of the community who are not parishioners to be involved in the care of St. Luke's landmark buildings. "The Friends" have their own checking account. Sometimes, funds are given by The Friends of St. Luke's to the parish; sometimes the Friends pays bills on behalf of the parish. Last year the Friends wrote a check to St. Luke's for \$10,000 for the roof replacement project. Last year also, the Friends paid much of St. Luke's fuel oil bill by writing \$7,500 in checks directly to the fuel oil company. The Treasurer does not record the \$10,000 as operating income. The Treasurer must include \$7,500 on the other operating income line as Other Operating Revenue.

- Unrestricted bequests used for operations _____

Principal of all unrestricted legacies and bequests that were used for operating purposes.

Example J: St. Alban's received a \$25,000 unrestricted bequest. \$10,000 was used to pay operating bills; \$15,000 was invested. St. Alban's includes the \$10,000 on unrestricted bequests line.

Subtotal Normal Operating Income = (1 + 2 + 3 + 4)

Appendix B
Policy of the Diocese of Louisiana on Clergy Discretionary Funds REVISION - - As of 16 December
2009
Under the Authority of Diocese of Louisiana Canon 25.1.h

Clergy “Discretionary Funds” are church-owned funds utilized by clergy for pious and charitable purposes to relieve the indigent and to provide for parishioners in need. They are established by national canon (Title III Canon 9.5) for this purpose.

The source of these funds is alms provided by parishioners and other generous givers, as well as a portion of the offerings to the parish or mission at least equal to the unpledged offering at one Sunday a month in which a Eucharist is scheduled. Discretionary Funds are funds of the church and not the individual clergy person at whose discretion they are dispensed. Bank accounts for this purpose are to be entitled “(Clergy Position) Discretionary Fund” (e.g. “Rector’s Discretionary Fund”).

As per The Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs:

1. The “alms” canon cited above provides that gifts and “other offerings for the poor” collected in the parish are to be “applied to such pious and charitable uses as the Rector shall determine.” Pursuant to this canon, it has generally been recognized that the discretionary funds of a rector are to be used for aid to the poor and other purposes that the rector considers “pious and charitable,” and that these uses are regarded as consistent with the Church’s mission. It seems clear that the scope of permissible uses under the canon generally lies within the sound discretion of the rector.
2. The canon does indicate some limitations on the rector’s discretion. Since the alms are donated to the Church (the manner of holding the funds is discussed below), and the intended uses are to be “pious and charitable,” the funds may not be used as if they were gifts to the rector individually and personally. Thus, it would be improper for the rector to apply the funds for his or her personal use and benefit, that is, uses that are not intended to carry out the mission of the Church. Uses of the funds for personal or family clothing, entertainment, or basic living expenses may not be selected, whereas those same uses when intended to benefit other needy persons within or without the parish are commonly considered to be wholly appropriate.
3. Gray areas would include payments by the rector to institutions or causes that are charitable in nature but also inure to the benefit of the rector in some way. For example, a donation to the rector’s school or college may be considered inappropriate if there would otherwise be little or no reason for the parish to favor such an institution; donations to the rector’s seminary, on the other hand, may be regarded as appropriate if they are understood to be parish gifts in which the rector has joined.
4. To avoid potential confusion and criticism, the rector should inform the vestry when gifts from the discretionary fund are made about which there could be any question, particularly gifts to institutions as opposed to gifts to private individuals where pastoral sensitivity may well warrant confidentiality.

5. A further limitation on the rector's discretion can be seen in the canon's directive that gifts to the parish intended as alms be used at the rector's discretion. The inference to be drawn from this direction is that the canonical discretionary funds are not intended to be used for types of expenditures that are routinely made from a vestry's budget. Thus, it would seem to be inappropriate for the rector to use the funds on parish maintenance or projects, or even expenditures for the rector's liturgical ministry, such as vestments, that are generally funded through the parish budget. Expenditure for a purpose that the vestry has declined to fund, for example, would not seem to be an appropriate use of discretionary funds.

The following business practices will be used in the Diocese of Louisiana to account for clergy Discretionary Funds:

- Receipts and disbursements from these funds must be recorded in the official financial records of the church, including the balance sheet.
- Discretionary Funds must be audited in conjunction with the annual audit of the church. Any separate bank account must be approved by the Vestry and opened in the name of the church using the tax identification number of the church.
- Discretionary Funds are to be independently reviewed on a quarterly basis in such a way as to insure both the proper use and confidentiality of monies. Said review is to be reported to the Vestry. Names of assisted individuals do not have to be disclosed to the vestry if an acceptable method of coding such payments is established.
- Personal funds of the clergy person must never be commingled with the funds in a Discretionary Fund, though the clergy may donate to the fund.
- Checks to a Discretionary Fund must be made payable to the "(Clergy Position) Discretionary Fund" and not made payable to the member of the clergy individually. Checks to a member of the clergy individually are personal, taxable gifts to the member. This is so even if the member of the clergy deposits a check payable to him or her by name into the Discretionary Fund account.
- Payments to church employees including bonuses are generally considered wages by the Internal Revenue Code and should not be made from Discretionary Funds.
- The Discretionary Fund of a departing clergy person must be turned over to the vestry and must be audited immediately.
- Funds for specific mission related expenses, such as those related to overseas mission travel or disaster relief (such as Katrina or Hurricane Relief Funds), should be accounted for in a separate fund on the church financial records and not co-mingled with clergy Discretionary Funds.
- During the Bishop's annual visit to the Parish or Mission the balance and uses of all clergy Discretionary Fund accounts will be provided for the Bishop's review, along with other required documentation.

Canon 25.1(h): Funds available to be used at the discretion of the clergy and other employees of the Diocese or any of its Ecclesiastical Units or institutions, in carrying out their ministry, including those funds collected in accordance with National Canons III, Section 9.5(b)(6) and sometimes referred to as discretionary funds, are assets of the Diocese, the Ecclesiastical Unit or institution, as the case may be. Such funds shall be held in accounts in the name of the entity and shall use the entity's Federal Taxpayer Identification Number. The use, management and oversight of these accounts shall be in accordance with Diocesan accounting policies on such Discretionary Funds.