

Diocese of Iowa, October 2023

171

Title Compensation for Non-Stipendiary Clergy

- 1 Resolved, That this 171st Convention of the Diocese of Iowa adopts the following resolution.
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3 All active currently non-stipendiary clergy of any order under the age of 72, canonically resident in and serving
4 in the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, and with a current letter of agreement with the congregation they serve,
5 be paid a minimum of \$25 per month and assessment be paid on their account to the Church Pension
6 Fund (CPF) beginning January 1, 2024, and
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8 Resolved, That
9 compensation may be paid as housing allowance with agreement of the clergy and vestry of the congregation
10 served, and
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12 Resolved, That
13 two or more congregations served by the same clergy person must agree in a timely manner upon the
14 fair allocation among them of the costs of the clergy's compensation and the related assessment to
15 the CPF. Those congregations must also in a timely manner decide on a process for paying those
16 amounts, which may require one congregation to be responsible for communicating with and paying
17 the CPF, and
18
19 Resolved, That
20 compensation paid under this resolution does not replace payment on behalf of the clergy by the
21 congregation or the diocese for the expenses of Diocesan Convention, Clergy Conference, continuing
22 education, discretionary fund, or mileage, and other expenses as may be established in the letter
23 of agreement.

Explanation:

Compensation for traditionally non-stipendiary clergy promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion for all who may feel called to ordination. Providing compensation for all our clergy is an investment in our future clergy.

At present, there are only 9 deacons and 3 priests in the diocese who would qualify for this compensation, but we want equity for our current and future younger colleagues.

The financial burden of formation and service as an unpaid clergy person (deacon or priest), is a barrier for many who need to balance costs and demands of their call with the practical needs of their lives.

Currently many non-stipendiary clergy are retired and in households where they do not need to earn a living. The demands of earning to support self and family and limited discretionary income are real barriers to answering God's call; these barriers are most felt by marginalized groups. Thus most deacons now serving live with significant privilege. Lack of compensation is an unwritten barrier to Christians who are young, are without adequate employment, are without resources to assist in planning for their futures.

God shows no partiality; the call to ordination is not limited to those with means and leisure; ordination should be inclusive and representative of all parts of society—by age, economic status, ethnicity, race, gender identity. At present, most non-stipendiary clergy in Iowa are older, white, and have adequate income, pension, and many have access to pension plans and financial planning.

The BCP bids that the “Minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families (p. 445, Thanksgiving for a Child). Access to the benefits of enrollment in the Church Pension Fund assists non-stipendiary clergy to do so.

We are told that the Church Pension Fund would like to assist all clergy; it cannot do so for clergy not enrolled with assessments paid to the Fund. Potential benefits for eligible clergy include (eligibility is very broadly defined):

- Pension (depending on years of assessment paid)
- CREDO every 5 years
- Access to financial planning
- Medicare supplement plan, a good plan at reasonable cost
- Disability benefits
- Mental health resources

Similar resolutions have already passed by at least 19 diocesan conventions [[AED website accessed 8/17/23](#)]; the issue is under study by a work group for the next General Convention. We ask the Diocese of Iowa to recognize that deacon compensation is a move towards equity and inclusion of marginalized groups who will be our future leaders. No additional cost is expected for the Diocese from this resolution.

Submitted by

Task Force on Deacon Compensation
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