

## **THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS POLICY CONCERNING ALCOHOL USE**

The policy of the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas concerning the use of alcohol in the congregations, schools and other institutions of the Diocese is set out in the following requirements and guidelines. It is the responsibility of the Rector/Vicar in consultation with the Vestry/Bishop's Committee to implement this policy in the local setting and to make it known to their congregations. The purpose of this policy is to provide a structure for the reasonable and responsible use of alcohol within congregational life; to honor and protect those who do not or should not consume alcoholic beverages; and to strengthen the health and well-being of the Church. This policy is not intended to limit the authority of a Vestry or Bishop's Committee to adopt additional requirements or guidelines for their own congregations.

### REQUIREMENTS:

- The serving of alcoholic beverages is to be done in moderation.
- The serving of alcoholic beverages is to be monitored and controlled.
- If alcoholic beverages are served, an attractive non-alcoholic choice must be readily available; and clearly labeled as non-alcoholic.
- Food and beverages containing alcohol, including wine and champagne punches, must be clearly labeled at the point of preparation and at the point of service.
- No church event should be centered around the drinking of alcoholic beverages.
- Even mildly intoxicated persons should be provided safe transportation home.
- Chemical usage other than alcohol is clearly controlled under federal, state and local laws and, as such, is forbidden at any church function.
- This policy applies equally to church events on and off church premises.
- This policy applies to diocesan institutions and parochial schools as well as congregations.
- Exceptions to this policy may be made only with the advice and consent of the Bishop or the Bishop's designee.
- Requests for exceptions must be received in the Bishop's office at least 21 days prior to the event.
- Non-church groups using church facilities must provide proof of liability insurance to the church.
- A responsible party for non-church groups using church facilities for events at which alcoholic beverages will be served must read and sign a copy of this policy, agreeing to abide by it.

### GUIDELINES:

- The Policy Concerning Alcohol Use is to be made known to parish/mission leadership annually, especially vestry members, Bishop's Committee members and those responsible for church events, including weddings.
- This policy should be posted in church kitchens.
- Wine and champagne, whether in glasses or bottles, should be served rather than left on dining tables.
- Unused alcoholic beverages are to be removed from church premises as soon as possible following an event.
- Beer kegs are not allowed on church premises.
- Hosts or servers should be used to monitor the serving of alcoholic beverages.
- Each congregation is encouraged to have a Recovery Sunday at least every other year.
- Serving adults alcoholic beverages at events that are intended primarily for children and young persons is strongly discouraged.

Adopted by Resolution of the Executive Board, May 6, 2010