

# **Second Renewal, Amendment and Extension of the Shared Ministry Covenant between Christ Episcopal Church, Portsmouth and Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampton**

## **Part I: The Discernment Team Recommendation**

**Whereas** ... In January, 2017, Bishop Hirschfeld directed that a Discernment Team be created to “explore how [the Shared Ministry in the NH Seacoast] can more joyfully pursue God’s mission while restoring a sense of partnership among us”; **and,**

**Whereas** ... The Discernment Committee met from March 2017 to October of 2017, presenting its final report to the Joint Bishop’s Committee on December 7, 2017, which included a recommendation that the Shared Ministry congregations combine governance and finances to become a single entity i.e. a single parish in two locations; **and,**

**Whereas** ... A **Discernment Review Team** was created to gather information from Congregants and other sources within the Diocese to determine a best way ahead, forums were held both separately and jointly at both churches in 2018 to hear members’ thoughts about the Discernment Team recommendation, and a final survey was undertaken of both congregations; **and,**

**Whereas** ... The final survey of members of both congregations favored continuation as a Shared Ministry, and a majority favored remaining as separate governing and financial entities as specified in our current Covenant; **now,**

**Therefore** ... The Joint Bishop’s Committees’ recommendation and intent is to continue as the **Shared Ministry of Christ Church, Portsmouth & Trinity Church Hampton without combining into a single entity**, interacting as outlined in our **Shared Ministry Covenant**. Furthermore,

## **Part II: Renewal of Covenant**

**Whereas** ... the Original Covenant Document, created in 2013, approved by near-unanimous votes of the members of Trinity Church, Hampton and Christ Church, Portsmouth [hereinafter “Shared Ministry”], and approved and blessed by Bishop Hirschfeld on November 16, 2013, *has been fulfilled*; **and,**

**Whereas** ... the Renewal and Extension document of November, 2015 - in which the Joint Bishop’s Committee elected to renew the **Shared Ministry Covenant** of 2013 exactly as is through November of 2018 - *has been fulfilled*; **and,**

**Whereas** ... the Covenant Review Committee has reviewed the Original Covenant Document and finds that the language, tone, and stipulations set forth therein still offer clear and comprehensive guidelines to continuing the Shared Ministry between our two churches, **except as regards to** addressing the process of succession to new clergy leadership when the current Vicar retires; **and,**

**Whereas** ... we acknowledge that our current Shared Ministry Vicar, the Reverend David “Chip” Robinson, will be retiring on or before June 30, 2021; **and,**

**Whereas** ... believing that the sharing of a common priest is pivotal to a dynamic and successful Shared Ministry, our two congregations strongly support the immediate start of our discernment toward the calling of a successor to our current priest, in order to facilitate the smooth and seamless transition to a new priest without the appointment of an interim, if at all possible; **now,**

**Therefore** ... the Joint Bishop’s Committees’ recommendation and intent is:

- 1) that the calling of our next priest be conducted through a joint discernment and search committee consisting of an equal number of participants from Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampton, and Christ Episcopal Church, Portsmouth; and
- 2) that our **Shared Ministry Covenant, as amended by this provision**, be extended for a period of another four years, through November 2022, to allow the new priest and the two congregations to mutually assess the continued work of the Shared Ministry.

\* \* \*

The above resolution will be submitted to special Congregational Meetings in both churches for adoption, with a two-thirds majority of those present and voting necessary for passage. The Renewal, Extension, and Amendment of the Shared Ministry Covenant shall become effective upon its being signed by the Bishop of New Hampshire.

## Signatures

\_\_\_\_\_  
Suzanne George, Warden, Christ Church

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William R. Main, Sr. Warden, Trinity Church

Attest:

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Elizabeth Malone, Clerk, Christ Church

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Phoebe Bischoff, Clerk, Trinity Church

Accepted by the Bishop and Vicar:

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The Rt. Rev. A. Robert Hirschfeld  
Bishop of New Hampshire

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Rev. David G. Robinson, Jr., Vicar

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Date