

VISITATION CUSTOMARY FOR BISHOP JACOB W. OWENSBY

It is the bishop's custom to visit each congregation in the diocese within an 18 to 24-month period. Some churches are on a regular schedule due to the number of confirmations that need preparation. Most church visitations are on a rotation, with an eye toward having the bishop present in a different convocation each Sunday. Exceptions are made for holy days, special events and ordinations.

Schedule of services: Bishop Owensby is looking forward to his forthcoming visit, and to facilitate this, his office should receive the visitation form back a minimum of ten days prior to the scheduled visitation to the parish/mission/mission station. The bishop will be the celebrant and preacher at the main service and prefers to have the services combined into one main service when practical. If there should be an earlier service, the clergy in charge should take that service.

Meeting with Congregational Leaders:

Bishop Owensby will meet with the Vestry or Mission Council after any planned reception or meal. The agenda for the meeting should include a discussion/report out on:

1. Financial standing of the congregation
2. Congregational ministries and community partnerships
3. General updates and information for Bishop Owensby

Confirmation and Church Furniture: Please leave chancel furniture in its customary place. In other words, do *not* put the bishop's chair in the front. The bishop will sit in the usual celebrant's chair and confirm standing.

Meeting with Candidates: Bishop Owensby desires to have at least 20 minutes with those to be confirmed or received prior to the service. When scheduling this, be mindful of the need to prepare for the service itself and leave at least a 15-minute buffer between the end of this meeting and the beginning of worship.

Distribution of Communion: Bishop Owensby and clergy in the altar party will administer Communion. Licensed Eucharistic ministers will assist only in the absence of sufficient clergy.

Role of Deacon: If a deacon is present and participating, this person should perform all the prescribed diaconal functions and assist with the administration of communion. Deacons always stand to the right of the Bishop at the Altar.

Bishop's Chaplain: If desired, you may assign a young person (child or teenager) to serve as Chaplain to the Bishop at the primary liturgy if possible.

Liturgical custom: If there is a confirmation, switch to red only during green seasons. Stay with seasonal colors for all other seasons. When there is not a confirmation, stay with the seasonal color. If there is a confirmation and a baptism, the color for baptism (white) should be used. Always use the propers appointed for that day. Do *not* move the propers for a patron saint

Service Bulletin: a copy of the service leaflet should be sent to the bishop's office via email at least 10 days prior to the bishop's scheduled visit. Please send bulletins to Holly Davis at holly@epiwl.org.

Name tags: Please write the Christian name [only] of each candidate in clear, block letters on their name tag. Nametags should be worn on the RIGHT side of the candidate, and easily visible. In the lower right-hand corner of the nametag, please designate with a single letter as follows: C = Confirmation; R = Reception; and A = Reaffirmation.

Parking: Please reserve and clearly mark a parking space for the bishop. He will arrive approximately one hour before the worship service. Please also have someone available to greet him upon his arrival and direct him as needed.

Parish registers: Please have all the parish registers ready for the canonically required review by the bishop. This will include the service register, baptism, confirmation, communicant, marriage and burial records.

Return reports: A visitation report form will be sent you shortly after the bishop's visitation. Please complete the form and return it to Holly Davis. It is important that all individuals receiving confirmation, reception, or reaffirmation be recorded, in accordance with the Canons of The Episcopal Church.

The Bishop's Ministry Fund: The undesignated loose offering for the day should be remitted to the Bishop's Ministry Fund and be sent to the attention of his office after the visitation. Do not give the offering to the bishop to return to the office.

Please mail a check to:

**The Office of the Bishop
P.O. Box 4330
Pineville, LA 71361**

Note: Bishop Owensby will be pleased to inscribe Prayer Books and Bibles and asks that he be advised of this upon his arrival. He is also willing to participate in the taking of pictures should this be desired. He suggests a group picture for inclusion in the diocesan e-newsletter be taken immediately following the service if one is desired. Group photos and other captured moments may be sent to Lacey Brown at [lacee@epiwl.org](mailto:lacey@epiwl.org) for publication in the diocesan newsletter.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Executive Assistant to the Bishop, Holly Davis at holly@epiwl.org. Thank you.

8/25/2026