

What is the Ministry of a Bishop?

“The ministry of a bishop is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as apostle, chief priest, and pastor of a diocese; to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church; to proclaim the Word of God; to act in Christ’s name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church; and to ordain others to continue Christ’s ministry” (Book of Common Prayer 855 - “An Outline of the Faith”).

The word “*bishop*” comes from the Greek word for “overseer,” *episkopos*, (Acts 20:17; Titus 1:5, 7; 1 Peter 5:1) and is the basis for the name of The Episcopal Church, a church which is governed or presided over by bishops. They claim to be in the direct lineage of the Twelve Apostles of Christ, a line called Apostolic Succession. Part of the ministry of a bishop is to ordain clergy - deacons, priests and other bishops. Bishops, in the Episcopal Church, are elected for life but are required to mandatorily retire at the age of 72 years old.