

The Diocese of West Missouri's Policy on: **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

The following policy is a localized adaptation of a resolution passed by General Convention in 1985 (A-083) establishing a policy for TEC on the serving and consuming of alcoholic beverages on church property and at church functions.

The Episcopal Church has never endorsed prohibiting the use of beverages containing alcohol among members of legal drinking age. Scripture offers Jesus' example of the use and serving of wine in his first miracle at a wedding in Cana and in the institution of the Holy Eucharist. If an adult member elects to use alcohol, however, moderate usage is expected. Church members should be educated regarding those conditions that might consequently compromise the health and safety of oneself or others. The Church also supports and has a responsibility to those people who abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages for whatever reason. Many churches do not serve alcoholic beverages at social functions, but, for those which do, the following guidelines are promulgated:

- Recognizing the effect of alcohol as a mood-altering drug, parishes and congregations of this diocese are advised to consider this matter in advance and to formulate a policy that: 1.) lists the acceptable types of functions at which alcoholic beverages may appropriately be served, and 2.) governs when and where alcoholic beverages may be served.
- All applicable federal, state and local laws should be obeyed, including those governing the serving of alcoholic beverages to minors.
- Alcoholic beverages and food containing alcohol must be clearly labeled as such.
- Whenever alcohol is served, non-alcoholic alternatives must always be offered with equal attractiveness and accessibility.
- The service of alcoholic beverages at church events should not be publicized as an attraction of the event.
- Any outside group or organization sponsoring an activity or event on church property, at which alcoholic beverages are served, must have permission from the appropriate governing body of the parish or congregation (i.e. the Vestry or Bishop's Committee; such permission may be established in the parish's or congregation's aforementioned policy statement). Such groups or organizations must also assume responsibility for those persons who might become intoxicated and must provide alternative transportation for anyone whose capacity to drive may thus be impaired.
- Chemical usage other than alcohol is clearly controlled under federal, state and local laws and, as such, is forbidden at any function.