

Cople (Kinsale)

TYPE	DIOCESE	NAME
Congregation	Virginia	

TYPES OF WORK	POSITION TITLE/ROLE
Full Time	Rector/Priest-in-Charge

ROLE SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION

Cople Parish is a warm and loving Body of Christ devoted to a shared love of the teachings of the Gospel. A sense of community is at the forefront of what makes Cople Parish home for our congregants and we are actively focused on growing in that way. We are a group of people who walk into our worship spaces happy to be there.

Established in 1664, our Parish has three historic church buildings: St. James and Yeocomico, which have services most Sundays, and Nomini, which hosts occasional services. We have one Vestry and one budget. Though many parishioners worship at one church or the other, what brings us all together is our shared intention to live out the Great Commandment.

Each of the church buildings in our Parish stand in pastoral settings overlooking our local waterways, farm fields and woodlands. The peacefulness of these settings, looking upon the water from St. James' and into the woods and fields at Yeocomico, reminds us of the beauty God has bestowed upon the earth. Our parishioners feel that there are strength and comfort to be found for all who attend and visit our Parish in these rural spaces and we enjoy sharing them with the broader community.

We are seeking a Rector who:

1. Can provide pastoral care to and connect with people in all seasons of life, from children to the elderly.
2. Has strong spiritual and preaching/teaching skills, able to give sermons that people can understand and apply to their own lives.
3. Has the necessary skills and will be happy to help us develop a vision, mission, and strategy for how to steward our three historic church buildings and two congregations in a changing world while becoming a more tight-knit community. We endeavor to find a new season of ministry where we all work together to develop a vibrant future for Cople Parish.
4. Can help us learn how to develop and deepen broader community relationships and invite more organizations, people, and events in our spaces.

CURRENT STATUS	RECEIVING NAMES FROM	TO
Receiving names	03/22/2026	

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To apply, please email a letter expressing interest, OTM profile/Vocation Hub profile (if either is available), and resume to the Contact below:

Questions may be forwarded to the Rev. Will Dickinson, Diocesan Transition Minister, at wdickinson@episcopalvirginia.org

CANDIDATE NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

CONTACT

NAME	Drew Gladwell
ROLE	Discernment Committee Co-Chair
ORGANIZATION	Cople Parish
PHONE NUMBER	N/A
EMAIL ADDRESS	drew@gladwelldesign.com

POSITION DETAILS

ORDERS OF MINISTRY

Priest

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Mid-Atlantic

WORK ENVIRONMENT

In Person

MINISTRY SETTING

Rural

PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA

AVG. SUNDAY ATT.	ANNUAL BUDGET
44	228737

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW NARRATIVE

Since 1907, the community that cares about Cople has expressed that by establishing funds that contribute to the parish’s welfare. Our various funds have an overall value of \$3.6 mil. Some are restricted to using a yearly distribution only and for a few we can use the principal if necessary. We are also fortunate to have a group of experts in the congregation to help maintain, support, and make use of these funds.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE TYPE None

STIPEND, HOUSING, AND BENEFITS

COMPENSATION/SALARY DETAIL

RANGE \$75,001 - \$100,000

DETAILS

Range: \$85,000 - 92,000, commensurate with experience

HOUSING/RECTORY TYPE

TYPE OF HOUSING PROVIDED Cash Stipend

DETAILS

Housing Allowance as part of Salary (included in above number)

SECA REIMBURSEMENT DETAIL

REIMBURSEMENT OFFERED Half

DETAILS

In compliance with CPG (included in above number)

MEDICAL & PENSION BENEFITS DETAIL

PENSION PLAN

In compliance with CPF requirements

HEALTHCARE OPTIONS

Negotiable

DETAILS

Healthcare provided for Clergy, negotiable

VACATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, AND OTHER BENEFITS

VACATION & LEAVE DETAILS

Standard: 4 weeks inclusive of 5 Sundays

CONTINUING EDUCATION DETAILS

Standard: 2 weeks

SABBATICAL PROVISION DETAILS

TRAVEL/AUTO ACCOUNT DETAILS

EQUIPMENT/PHONE DETAILS

OTHER BENEFITS OR COMMENTS

DIOCESAN COMPENSATION INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE)

FORMAT WebPage <https://episcopalvirginia.org/jobs-transitions/compensation/>

MINISTRY CONTEXT AND DESIRED SKILLS

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S HOPES FOR THIS POSITION?

Cople Parish faces challenges that are not unusual for a rural parish community. Like many churches we have struggled with attendance due to an aging population (the median age in our county is 50). However, our area is attractive to retirees. Those newcomers have been and can continue to be a source of new parishioners. And we do have some very active younger members. The members of our congregation are dedicated to the working of the church however we do not have a deep bench regarding leadership and some members are taking on multiple responsibilities.

Our outreach efforts significantly serve our neighbors, but they don't often draw folks into our parish. We hope our incoming Rector will be able to help us learn to make deeper connections in the local community and think of new ways to invite folks into our spaces and to help us develop leaders for the next generation.

St. James' was built in the 1890s as an ecumenical mission chapel for the then remote village of Tidwells (a very small and isolated village populated by watermen on Lower Machodoc Creek, close to the Potomac River). Nomini Church, on the banks of Nomini Creek and the third church that bears this name, was built in the mid-nineteenth century. The original Yeocomico Church was built as a chapel-of-ease in 1655. It is believed that that original wooden structure is within the walls of the 1706 brick structure that stands today. Yeocomico Church is one of the oldest active places of worship in the United States spanning over 370 years of history. With a Declaration of Independence signer having been a member of our parish, it reminds us of the importance of our past. We embrace the responsibility of the stewardship of our historic churches, but we understand and experience that having three churches also poses a challenge when decisions are made regarding where to hold services and other gatherings. Some parishioners identify with one church building over another. These are issues we are willing to take an honest look at for the betterment of our whole parish family.

We are looking for a new Rector who can help us to develop clear and concise vision and mission statements and produce a strategic plan that will help us to determine the best use of our many buildings for a new season of ministry. We believe this will help encourage our members to continue their good work while also bringing new people into the fold.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Congregational Development, Strategic Planning, Community Engagement

MINISTRY SKILLS

Community Building, Pastoral Care, Preaching, Stewardship

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English

LANGUAGES WRITTEN

English

LANGUAGES REQUIRED TO LEAD WORSHIP

English

MINISTRY MEDIA AND LINKS

Church Website

<https://www.copleparish.com/>

NARRATIVES

2. Describe a recent ministry experiment or innovation in your congregation/diocese.

What did you try, why did you try it, and what did you learn - whether it "worked" or not?

In Cople Parish we value our history and traditions by bringing them into the present and sharing them with the next generation. The parish held its first annual Apple Butter Festival in the fall of 2022. A parishioner demonstrated making apple butter with a 200-year-old copper kettle and wooden paddle that he had learned to make apple butter with. He also taught our youth group how to make a venison stew over a wood fire using a 19th century iron pot. It has meant so much for our youth to be included that, even as teenagers, they have prioritized the event in their schedules. This parishioner told them that the iron kettle would pass to them to keep alive the tradition.

The event brings visitors from throughout our community to enjoy the fellowship and take tours of historic Yeocomico Church. This is an old parish with a deep history however the Apple Butter festival is an example of how we can make new traditions and use them to engage our congregation both young and old. We hope our next priest can help us leverage our traditions to invite new members.

4. How does your congregation/diocese discern and adapt to the changing needs of your community?

Share an example of how your congregation listened, responded, and experimented faithfully in your context.

Cople Parish and other local churches are regularly contacted to assist families in our area with emergency funds to help pay for things like heat and housing. To help centralize these alms requests, to assist us and other pastors, Cople Parish originated the idea behind the United Ministries of Westmoreland County (UMWC) in 2024. We recruited local churches, our county social services department, and other organizations to join us and develop the UMWC mission - "Providing assistance and referrals to Westmoreland County's individuals and families in two identified areas of need: housing and healthcare".

In our 1st year of operations, the coalition provided over \$50,000 in assistance to make a difference in the lives of over 275 County residents. (Westmoreland is a rural county with 19,235 residents. Nearly 4 in 10 renters and 1 in 4 homeowners spend too much of their income on housing, making it difficult to afford food, medicine, and other necessities – source: Bay Aging report.) Cople Parish is the fiscal sponsor and has provided the UMWC co-chair, treasurer, grant writer, client-facing administrative director, and membership/community awareness lead. Our multi-racial coalition now has 15 county churches with Baptists, Catholics, Episcopalians, and Methodists represented along with 8 other organizations, and we welcome and seek more.

6. In what ways is your congregation/diocese engaged in the wider Church or local community?

Whether through diocesan leadership, ecumenical partnerships, civic involvement, or community organizing, describe how your congregation serves beyond its own walls.

We at Cople think it is important to be in relationship with our wider community. We believe that service is ministry and one ministry that has been especially satisfying at our Parish is our connection with Cople Elementary. We have former teachers and others who delight in providing school supplies, coats when needed, and lunches and treats for the children as well as the hard-working teachers. The students particularly enjoy being introduced to interesting creatures. The most interesting to date was a pet Bearded Dragon. Our outreach to young people extends beyond the school. Many of our parishioners are parents and grandparents, quite a few of whom work hard to put on our annual Vacation Bible School. VBS not only provides a fun and educational time for those with Parish connections but also to children from the broader community. For some it is an introduction to what a caring church community can be, an introduction that might lead to a deep relationship with God.

9. What does stewardship mean to your congregation/diocese, and how do you practice it?

Describe how your community approaches generosity, resource management, and financial discipleship.

The Cople Parish stewardship approach is fairly straightforward and consistent from year to year. A letter from the stewardship chair is sent to all parishioners, typically at the end of October. The letter includes a pledge form, which is essential to our annual stewardship effort. Throughout the year, we make a point to thank and recognize the members of the parish who do the heavy lifting for each of our three churches as well as the broader community. Since we are not a young parish and do not experience an influx of new members each year, receiving timely pledge commitments is crucial to our budgeting process in January.

As pledges are received, the treasurer works closely with the stewardship chair and the senior warden to track responses and to follow up with parishioners who typically pledge but have not yet submitted their commitment. Several members who have moved away continue to pledge and provide meaningful support to the parish. Most of our parishioners are on fixed incomes, and while changes to our stewardship structure or timing may be challenging, we are a very loyal parish. This loyalty can span many generations and is often connected to one of our three churches and the surrounding communities they serve.

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11. What has been your congregation's/diocese's experience leading or navigating change?

Ministry often requires change. Reflect on a time your community embraced or navigated change - when it went well, when it didn't, and what it taught you about shared leadership.

Having three churches, it can at times be a challenge to determine how best to use them. For a while we would have 9 am services at St. James Church and alternate 11 o'clock services at Yeocomico and Nomini Churches. When our senior warden at the time managed to miss three Sundays in two months the priest and vestry realized that we needed to change. For consistency they settled on keeping 9 am service at St. James and moved the regular 11 am services to Yeocomico. Services are held at Nomini in January and on fifth Sundays in months that have them.

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