

THE SEARCH

This is a Spiritual Process, not a hiring process. We seek God’s will for our congregation. We are not hiring an employee, but calling a Priest, Pastor, and Spiritual leader to be in relationship with us.

1. Rector/Priest-in-Charge depart
2. Vestry meets with Bishop Kevin or Canon Missioner
3. Vestry forms a Search Team
4. Search Team Develops Profile (see elements below)
5. Bishop’s Office posts position on-line and provides pre-screened candidates
6. Search Team / Vestry conducts Discernment Conversations with candidates and elects the Priest-in-Charge. The Senior Warden calls Bishop Kevin to tell him of their choice.
7. Bishop Kevin meets with final candidate. The Bishop then extends the call.
8. Bishop’s Office initiates Oxford Document Background Check
9. A Memorandum of Understanding is completed by the Senior Warden and Treasurer of the parish to be sent to the Priest-in-charge-Elect for his/her signature until a formalized Letter of Agreement is developed with the help of the Bishop and Staff of the Diocese.
10. Priest, Sr. Warden, and Bishop Kevin sign the Letter of Agreement
11. The New Priest-in-charge is Announced

ROLES

Bishop and Canon Missioner

- The Bishop / Canon Missioner provides resources, congregational metrics, information about the “clergy marketplace,” and needed supports

- The Bishop / Canon Missioner conducts “Red Flag” check and provides possible candidates to the vestry / search committee
- The Bishop encourages shared leadership conversations among congregations. The only way forward is together in partnership.

Vestry

- The vestry is elected by the parish and has responsibility for the call of the new priest
- The vestry may act as the Search Committee or form a stand-alone Search Committee and delegate portions of its responsibility to that committee.
- The vestry decides on the compensation package based on diocesan guidelines

Interim or Supply Clergy

- The Interim or Supply clergy’s primary task is to care for the congregation during the transition – providing coverage at Sunday services and pastoral support as requested.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Communication and Confidentiality

- Good communication is vital among vestry, search committee, congregation, and diocese.
- Keep in touch with the Bishop’s office all along the way. For any further information, support or clarification, please contact the Bishop / Canon Missioner 610-691-5655.
- The number of Candidates, Names, and Demographic data are kept confidential. The process, however is transparent to the whole congregation.
- A member of the vestry / search committee should make a regular announcement to the congregation, even if there is no new news

Budget

- The vestry should set a search budget (\$2,500 to \$8,000)
- Costs include
 - travel and hospitality for candidates
 - Oxford background checks for finalists (about \$200 each)
 - moving expenses for new priest

THE PARISH PROFILE

A parish profile essentially answers three questions:

- 1) What has been the identity of the parish in the past?
- 2) What is the current identity of the parish? and
- 3) What is the identity that God is calling the parish to develop and live into?

Current Identity:

- Mission Statement
- Who are you? Demographics & Activities including:
 - Worship to include music
 - Formation (children, adult, Bible Study, etc.)
 - Pastoral Care
 - Lay Leaders
 - Assessment of Strengths
 - Assessment of Challenges
 - Communications
 - Comments
 - Outreach
 - Other ...
- Who surrounds you?

What is the community like? Think about nearby schools, amenities, places of note. How is the church integrated into the community? Think about the parish's impact on the community: Who would miss you if you were no longer there? The links below can help you begin to answer these questions.
- Touch upon the Diocese and the parish's participation in the life of the greater body.

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/research-and-statistics/> then click on "Know Your Neighborhood" link which leads here:

<https://datastorycloud.com/episcopal/publicviewer/>

Census data may also be useful to you. The County Department of Planning may be helpful to you in accessing this data as well as interpreting the data.

There may be a separate section on the Building and the Grounds. What is important to note? How well is it taken care of? In the building or on the grounds, where is the parish's energy (or values?). Note whether there is a school, graveyard, or rectory and the parish's relationship with each.

Provide a section on Finances, including Stewardship efforts.

Historical Identity

- Brief parish history
- May include listing and tenure of prior clergy (not strictly necessary)
- May address concerns, issues, conflicts that the parish has faced in the past and whether/how the present is effected.

Current understanding of where God is calling you into the future:

Questions to answer to help you think through this section –

Where do you want to go?

What do you imagine the future looks like for you?

What qualities do you seek in your next clerical leader?

You may wish to have a section on how you weathered the pandemic.

What did you discover about yourselves?

How did you adapt?

What surprised you?

What did you find you no longer need?

Other suggestions:

Photographs, graphs and charts help a reader quickly grasp concepts you are trying to convey in the written profile. Think about what you want the reader to see in the photograph or graph or chart and assess whether the message is conveyed.

Do make sure your website is up-to-date. Much of what is on the website can be repackaged into the parish profile, especially for the “current parish” section of the profile. Provide a link to your website and any social media you may be using. If you use particular technologies that help in parish administration or pastoral care, be sure to mention them. Such resources might include Realm or Constant Contact or Mail Chimp to name a few.