



# Search Process Overview

Concurrently during all phases:

- Canon to the Ordinary (CTO) receives inquiries from priests looking for new positions
- Vestry and Search committee maintain confidentiality of names of priests under consideration
- Vestry and Search committee communicate and share progress of search process as it unfolds with congregation
- CTO and Bishop survey landscape of wider church for priests possessing gifts which align with values, culture, and needs of the congregations in the Diocese
- CTO discusses candidates with Bishop for “Diocesan fit” and congregational options
- CTO discusses congregations in search with counterparts in other dioceses at regular intervals (more targeted activity during Phase III)

Phase I: Pre-search

1. Rector departs
  - a. Provide for interim clergy leadership
2. Vestry prepares search budget and selects search committee
3. Vestry shares search process with congregation
  - a. Vestry develops demographic profile for Canon to the Ordinary, including compensation package for next Rector

Phase II: Profile development

1. Search committee meets with CTO to receive detailed information about responsibilities
2. Search committee develops two profiles: Episcopal Church narrative, and Congregational Profile
3. Search committee gets feedback from CTO/Bishop and Vestry on profile and shares with Congregation



### Phase III: Candidate collection

1. Names are received from various sources, and initial background checks are completed
  - a. Search committee receives Interview phase training from Canon to the Ordinary or other approved resource
2. Suitable candidates are forwarded to Search committee for consideration

### Phase IV: Interviews

1. Search committee conducts interviews of candidates, and selects finalist
  - a. Background checks begin (may take several weeks)
2. Search committee presents finalist to Vestry
3. CTO meets with Vestry to review steps of the next Phase

### Phase V: Election and Call

1. Vestry takes formal vote to call finalist (now known as "Rector-elect")
2. Senior Warden informs Bishop and CTO of election; receives permission from Bishop to extend a call
  - a. CTO prepares draft Letter of Agreement based on compensation package determined in Phase I
3. Senior Warden issues call to Rector-elect
4. Rector-elect accepts call
5. Vestry and Rector-elect negotiate final details of Letter of Agreement
6. Vestry announces Rector-elect (identity, start date, etc) to Parish, coordinated with Rector-elect's current parish



## Search Committee Selection

A Search Committee is normally somewhere between 7-12 persons. One or two Vestry members should be appointed to serve on the Search Committee in order to act as liaison and information link between the two bodies. ***The main work of the Search Committee is active listening.*** As much as is practicable, the composition of the Search Committee should reflect the congregation's diversity, including people of different ages, race, gender, length of membership, and liturgical/musical preferences. ***This group needs to be equipped for the responsibility of assessing the knowledge, ability and skills of the candidates in light of the identity of the congregation, of which they are representative.***

Each member of the Search Committee must be able to represent the broad interests of the congregation at large. Thus, individuals who may be specifically focused on a single issue, activity, or otherwise are usually not good choices. Openly disaffected persons are generally not helpful to a Search Committee. ***It is not appropriate for staff or other clergy to serve on the Search Committee.*** Generally, the Senior Warden should not serve on the Search Committee because all of his or her energies should be devoted to keeping the church going during the transition period. No two people from the same household or immediate family should be on the Search Committee. Please note, this is not the time to recruit all those in the congregation with corporate human resource experience to become members of the Search Committee. Search Committee members will receive candidate names and learn appropriate interview skills. ***They are primarily asked to be part of a discernment and calling process which is a shared spiritual journey, not a secular hiring process.***

The Vestry should attempt to select people with open hearts and minds who will be sensitive to the culture and dreams of the congregation as a whole. ***Desirable characteristics for all Search Committee members are:***

- ***They must be involved in the church*** as a community of faith, regular in their attendance at worship, givers of record, who are actively involved in the programmatic life of the congregation.
- ***They must be good listeners.*** Regardless of whether they agree or not, the members of the Search Committee must be able to listen accurately and respectfully to a broad range of opinions expressed by all sorts and conditions of people.
- ***They must be able to maintain confidentiality.*** This is absolutely essential to the success of the search effort, and to the reputation of both the congregation and the candidates. Those who cannot resist the temptation to share a secret, or prove that they are "in the know" should simply not be on the Search Committee.
- ***They must be team players, have significant emotional maturity, and be able and willing to work productively with, and in the presence of, significant anxiety, tension, and potentially overt conflict.*** Search work requires a willingness to "speak the truth in love," to ask "difficult" questions, and to confront deeply held assumptions.

***Regular and faithful attendance at Search Committee meetings and an ability to travel are also essential.*** A good rule of thumb is to plan for one evening meeting each week for approximately six months. Some teams will work faster than this, some will need more time; there will be periods where the team may not meet for several weeks, there will be times when the team will meet several times in the course of a week. Thus "seasonal members" or those whose employment requires extensive travel or uncertain time commitments would not generally be considered effective members. Travel for candidate visits is an important part of search work.



# Search Process Timeline Worksheet

Action Item	Target completion date
Vestry develops compensation package, search budget, and appoints search committee	_____
Search committee meets with transition officer, selects a chairperson, and begins self-study process	_____
Search committee completes self-study and creates profile subcommittee	_____
Profile subcommittee prepares draft profile documents; forwards to transition officer	_____
Transition officer returns documents with feedback from bishop	_____
Subcommittee revises documents and presents to search committee; search chair forwards to transition officer	_____
Transition officer approves profile documents and disseminates to transition network	_____
Transition officer presents congregation at regional transition meeting(s)	_____
Names are received and vetted until	_____
Interviews are completed	_____
Candidates are presented to search committee by interview teams; finalist is determined	_____
Finalist is presented to vestry	_____



## Search Process Estimated Expenses

Professional services (web, print)	\$500
Transition Consultant	\$1000
Telephone	\$200
Oxford Documents Background Checks	\$155 per candidate
Interview team visits to candidates' congregations	\$300 - \$5000
Finalist visit to congregation	\$200 - \$2000
Moving expenses of new Rector	\$3000 - \$12,000
Celebration of Ministry	\$300



# Search Process Communications Plan

ROLE→	Search Committee	CTO/Consultant	Vestry	Bishop
PHASE↓				
Pre-Search			Ensures congregation is informed of rector's departure and plans for farewell	Offers advice and counsel to vestry and CTO regarding opportunities during transition; sets specific expectations or parameters for search
Pre-Search			Invites wider church to farewell opportunity	
Pre-Search			Informs congregation of plans for interim/search period	
Pre-Search		Meets with vestry to discuss compensation for next rector, search committee composition, and search budget		
Pre-Search			Informs CTO and congregation of search committee composition	
Pre-Search	Informs CTO of search chair selection			
Pre-Search			Educates congregation about search process and congregation's role throughout (as needed)	



Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan Rector Search for Vestries (2021)

Profile Development		Meets with search committee to discuss self-study and profile development; reviews strategies and best practices - establishes timeline for completion		
Profile Development	Informs vestry and congregation of plans for self-study			
Profile Development	Shares results of self-study with congregation and CTO			
Profile Development	Shares draft profile documents with CTO and Vestry for feedback	Shares draft profile documents with Bishop for feedback		
Profile Development		Provides feedback to search committee	Provides feedback to search committee	
Profile Development	If necessary, shares additional drafts with Canon; otherwise, presents final documents to CTO	Approves final documents for dissemination		
Profile Development	Arranges for documents to be posted to parish website(s). Shares documents with congregation		Informs congregation that search is moving into active name gathering. Names must be forwarded to CTO for vetting before search committee can "officially" consider them.	



Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan Rector Search for Vestries (2021)

Candidate Collection		Makes documents available in the transition ministry network		
Candidate Collection		Discusses position with interested candidates		
Candidate Collection		Vets candidates with resident diocese		Vets candidates with canonical authority (usually Bishop)
Candidate Collection		Meets with search committee to plan for interview process		Releases candidates to CTO
Candidate Collection		Releases candidates to search committee		
Interview	Informs vestry and congregation that interviews are underway			
Interview	Search chair contacts candidates to arrange for interviews/visits			
Interview	Informs CTO of finalist (or finalists, if appropriate)	Initiates background checks		
Interview	Presents finalist to vestry			
Election and Call			After election, Senior Warden informs CTO and Bishop that finalist has been elected	
Election and Call				Bishop/CTO notifies Senior Warden that election is



Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan Rector Search for Vestries (2021)

				approved (pending background checks)
Election and Call		CTO forwards draft Letter of Agreement to Senior Warden	Senior Warden notifies finalist (now Rector-elect) of election and extends the call.	
Election and Call			After LOA is negotiated between Rector-elect and vestry, Senior Warden communicates final negotiation details to CTO	
Election and Call		CTO prepares final LOA and coordinates signatures.		
Election and Call		CTO notifies Senior Warden of LOA approval		
Election and Call			Vestry announces call to the congregation and plans for leave-taking with interim clergy	

# Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan

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## Rector Search Process

*Revised 2/28/2021*

### **PRE-SEARCH PHASE**

Rector announces she/he is leaving or retiring

Vestry meets with Transitions Officer at first opportunity after announcement

Review “next steps”

Discussion/decision regarding interim clergy leadership

Plan for interim developed

Interim period begins immediately following rector’s last day

Interim period lasts twelve months to up to three years, depending on circumstances

Search committee is chosen before the projected end of the interim period.

### **PROFILE DEVELOPMENT PHASE**

Senior Warden informs Transitions Officer of Search committee composition. Transitions Officer meets with vestry to discuss budget for search process and next rector’s compensation package. Vestry informs congregation that Search committee has been formed and preliminary work is underway. Vestry invites congregation to pray for the Search process, participate as/when invited, and to feel free to ask for updates if it seems like news hasn’t been forthcoming recently. Discusses necessity of confidentiality and vestry-based polity (if appropriate).

Transition Officer/consultant shares examples of portfolios and data needed for online listings.

Transitions Officer discusses timing of semi-annual gatherings of transitions officers and impact on search timelines.

Search committee begins work on parish Profile and OTM portfolio. Profile (briefly) is a collection of information about the parish and community – core values, programs, location, history, desires for new rector, etc. OTM portfolio is church-wide database of positions including 11 narrative questions. Search committee may use a number of tools to gather input from wider congregation (and community, in some cases) such as town hall meetings, small group gatherings, surveys, etc. Search consultant can help with processes for these if desired.

Search committee completes Profile and online listing data and shares with Search consultant. (Search committee should also seek vestry input in profile.)

Search consultant may provide feedback for purposes of clarity, best practices, or if more information is needed. After Search committee responds to that feedback, profile is posted. Transitions Officer will post the listing with the Episcopal Church's online database. Search committee shares profile with congregation, and may post in other places if desired.

Status of the search process is updated online by Transitions Officer as it progresses.

### **CANDIDATE COLLECTION PHASE**

Transitions Officer receives names of interested individuals. As names are received, Transitions Officer begins vetting. Names received directly by the Search Committee should be forward to the Transitions Officer for vetting before they can be considered available for consideration.

During the period of receiving names, the Search Committee meets with the Search consultant to discuss the process of interviewing and identifying the finalist.

List of vetted names is given to the Search Committee for interviews. Search committee informs vestry and congregation that interviews are now underway. Vestry reminds congregation of commitment to pray for process and asks congregation to contain any impulse to glean for details or names because of necessity of confidentiality for candidates.

### **INTERVIEW PHASE**

Search Committee determines who will be interviewed. Phone/Zoom interviews are conducted for the first round; in-person interviews are conducted for the two or three finalists identified after phone interviews.

NB: Although there may be rare exceptions, in-person interviews occur at the candidate's location, NOT at your church unless authorized by the Transitions Officer. The goal is to see the candidate "in action" where she or he is currently serving.

When a finalist is identified, the Search committee informs Transitions Officer so that complete background check may begin. Search committee will conduct reference checks; Transitions Officer will complete additional reference checks, criminal history, sexual offender registries, and credit/motor vehicle records checks. This process may take up to eight weeks to complete.

The Finalist is invited to your location to see the parish, buildings, etc. and to meet with the entire Search Committee and 'meet-and-greet' the vestry. This visit occurs after the finalist has been visited in her or his current location, and

Should be coordinated with the Transition Officer so that the Bishop can also meet with the finalist, and should not occur on a Sunday or involve the candidate's presence during a worship service. Visits to the congregation are not appropriate because the selection process becomes congregation-based rather than vestry-based.

## Norms for Meeting at CHURCH

1. **We recognize that we are in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit “working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.”** Ephesians 3:20.
2. **We acknowledge that conflict is a normal part of the life of the Church, and we can work through it with God’s help.** Romans 14: 1-8, 17:  
Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s. . . . For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
3. **We agree that everyone in the room is sincere and cares deeply for the parish. We will assume goodwill.** Ephesians 4:32: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”
4. **We will speak the truth in love. This means that we will abstain from sarcasm, insults, raised voices, etc.** Ephesians 4:15-16, 29, 31: “Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love. . . . Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. . . . Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you;” Proverbs 15:1: “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”
5. **We will recognize the possibility that no one of us has the whole truth and understanding.** Romans 2:1: “Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.”
6. **We will demonstrate respect for one another.** See the Baptismal Covenant: “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? *I will, with God’s help.*”
7. **We will actively, carefully, and respectfully listen to one another, attending to the emotions as well as the substance of what is said.** James 1:19: “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.” Proverbs 12:15: “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.” Proverbs 18:13: “If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.”
8. **We will speak only for ourselves. We will not repeat what others have told us about conversations to which we were not a party.** See Proverbs 16:28: “A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.” James 3:3-8:  
If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by

a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

Matthew 18:15-17: "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

9. **We will be willing to be vulnerable (showing weakness and the other person's ability to hurt us) and to make sacrifices (such as being willing to admit when we need to change and being willing to change).** Luke 6:31: "And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them." (See also, Mt. 7:12.) Matthew 22:39: "And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
10. **We will be responsible for our own actions, regardless of how others might have related to us or treated us. We will not mirror behavior we find objectionable.** Rom. 12:17: "Repay on one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all." We are called to bless those who persecute us. (Rom. 12:14). Mt. 5:43-45: "Jesus says, "But I say to you, love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be like your Father in heaven, since he causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."
11. **We don't have to agree on everything we discuss in order to be able to work, play, and pray together for the good of the church.** John 13:35: "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
12. **We will strive to get to a place where we can encourage one another for the good of our Church and the Kingdom of God.** 1 Thess. 5:10-12: "He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." Hebrews 10:23-25: Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another. . . ."

At the end of the visit (or shortly thereafter) candidate is asked to reaffirm his or her interest in the position. If affirmed, the Search Committee formally recommends the candidate to the vestry. May choose to "present" candidate to vestry and answer questions about selection. If this is done, must be done in executive session of vestry; visitors may not learn names and other details until the call is accepted by the candidate. Search Committee's duties are now complete. Vestry is responsible for remaining tasks.

**ELECTION AND CALL PHASE (steps must be performed in the following order)**

1. Vestry votes to elect candidate as Rector, and approves compensation package offer. Vote is taken in executive session; visitors may not be present while the candidate is discussed and voted. Negotiable items are noted offline. Vestry begins planning for leave-taking celebration(s) for interim clergy.
2. Vestry notifies Bishop (with copy to Transitions Officer) by email that the candidate has been elected.
  - 2a. Upon receipt of the above email, Transitions Officer prepares draft Letter of Agreement based on compensation package approved by vestry.
3. Bishop notifies the Vestry that the election is approved; Transitions Officer forwards LOA to vestry. Normatively, consent is held in abeyance until the background check is complete, if it isn't yet by this time.
4. Senior Warden (or designee if approved by Transitions Officer) notifies rector-elect and forwards draft LOA to rector-elect for consideration. Rector-elect may accept call tentatively, pending outcome of LOA negotiation.
5. Rector-elect and vestry negotiate LOA. When agreement between vestry and rector-elect is reached, LOA is forwarded to Transitions Officer. Transition Officer reviews and coordinates review and approval by Bishop.
6. Transitions Officer notifies vestry of LOA approval.
7. Vestry announces call to congregation, and announces plan for leave-taking with interim clergy. This announcement **must be coordinated with the Rector-elect**, so that the Rector-elect's congregation receives the news **at the same time**.
8. Parish announces call to community; invites community and diocese to leave-taking celebration(s) for interim.

Transitions Officer: Michael Spencer, Canon to the Ordinary, 989-752-6020, [mspencer@eastmich.org](mailto:mspencer@eastmich.org)

## What is the relationship of rector and vestry? How is it similar or different to the relationship between a board of directors and CEO/Executive Director?

The governance of Episcopal churches is not identical to that of other churches or of other nonprofit boards. There are some key differences.

The rector and the vestry are a unified body, and at the same time, the rector and vestry have separate responsibilities. The rector is the chairperson of the vestry, and thus has all of the responsibilities of the presiding officer of any governance body modeled on Robert's Rules. The rector is responsible for organizing meetings, drafting agendas, presiding during meetings, and making sure the vestry has reasonable access to resources and support. Thus when we say "vestry" we are always including the rector in that reference. The vestry and rector, in this sense, are unified.

The rector also has separate responsibilities from the rest of the vestry. The rector is responsible for:

- Worship and spiritual life
- Selection and oversight of all staff, including assistant clergy
- Use and control of buildings and furnishings/equipment
- Education of all ages in scripture, the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal Church
- Preparation for baptism, confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation
- Proper use of the discretionary fund
- And other various tasks

The canons of the Episcopal Church assign specific tasks to the vestry (including the rector as chair):

- Serve as agents and legal representatives of the congregation in all matters concerning its corporate properties and the relations of the congregation to its clergy
- Ensure that standard business methods, as outlined in the Episcopal Church's *Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs* be observed
- When a congregation is without a rector, the vestry is responsible for the continuation of worship and for the calling of a new rector
- The vestry has responsibility for nomination of persons for holy orders

Wise rectors consult with the vestry broadly on the things that fall under their purview, and vestries have the right to ask questions about the rector's ministry and decision making. A healthy relationship between rector and vestry is characterized by good interpersonal communication, appropriate boundaries and role awareness, and candid and honest conversation and consultation on matters that are likely to be noticed by the congregation.

A key term to use when describing the relationship between vestry and rector is 'partnership.' While each have some distinct responsibilities, the vestry and rector as a unified leadership body work together to frame the vision of the congregation's response to God's call to mission and to equip the members of the congregation to respond to that call.

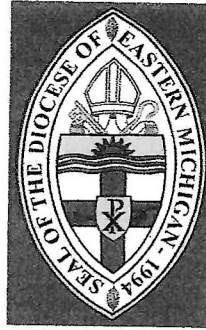
## What about accountability? How is the priest evaluated? How is the vestry evaluated?

As a cleric in Holy Orders, all priests are accountable to their bishop, who has canonical authority and responsibility to give guidance the clergy in their care. Bishops are also responsible for formal discipline in cases of misconduct.

Rectors and vestries are encouraged to engage in a process called Mutual Ministry Review once every two to three years. The MMR is a process designed to reflect on the entire congregational system, including those specific to the clergy and those specific to the vestry, to provide opportunity to identify things that are working well (to celebrate them), things that are not going as hoped/planned (to adjust or improve them) and to identify the things that are ready to be laid down and those new opportunities that might need to be started. MMRs are usually facilitated by someone from outside the congregation, to help offer an objective perspective and to navigate the process of confronting uncomfortable truths when necessary.

### In order to help clarify some basic questions that may still be lingering:

1. The vestry does not evaluate the rector in a formal capacity. The rector and vestry, in an ideal relationship, share mutual trust and honesty. Conversations about things of concern are raised as needed, and the rector and vestry practice listening, truth-telling, behavior-based feedback, and ask for aid when appropriate. Setting the tone for this kind of relationship helps model healthy interpersonal relationships for the entire congregation.
2. The rector does not report to the vestry in a formal supervisory capacity. Sometimes the language we use here helps frame the relationship. The vestry "calls" the rector, and in that process the rector is formally "elected." The rector is not "hired," and there is no "salary" or "contract." The rector has a "stipend" outlined in a "letter of agreement." These terms are used intentionally to help underscore the fact that this ecclesial relationship is fundamentally different from a board of directors and CEO.
3. The rector is accountable to the bishop, and the vestry can, if it feels compelled to do so, call upon aid from the bishop if the relationship appears to be functioning poorly. The bishop may get involved directly, or depending upon the circumstances, arrange for a member of staff or an outside consultant to offer assistance.



# The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan

*Pray + Learn + Serve + Grow*

## Budget considerations for Rector search processes

1. Search consultants
  - a. \$100-\$200 per on-site visit (four or more visits, depending on strategy and need)
  - b. Mileage, lodging, meals
2. Profile development
  - a. Design/layout
  - b. Professional writing/editing
  - c. Website update/redevelopment
3. Name collection
  - a. Advertising
4. Interviews
  - a. Search sub-committee travel for on-site visits
    - i. Two people; airfare, ground transportation, lodging, meals
    - ii. Two to four on-site visits
  - b. Finalist travel to parish
    - i. Clergy (and spouse/partner) airfare, ground transportation, lodging, meals, hospitality
    - ii. One (and rarely two) finalists
5. Relocation of Rector-elect
  - a. Moving expenses
  - b. Rectory updates

## A Prayer for Transition

Almighty God, look graciously on the people of \_\_\_\_\_ Church. Be with us and lead us as we seek a priest for our church. We ask your direction and guidance for those who shall choose our new spiritual leader that we may receive a faithful pastor who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries. Grant us perception, faithfulness, and joy, so that we may hear your voice in all our deliberations. Grant us also the desire and the ability to truly hear each other and those who have entrusted us with this process. Give us courage to respond and act as you lead us. We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan



## TRANSITION MINISTRY: INTRODUCTION

### **Who participates in Transition Ministry?**

The primary shepherd of Transition Ministry activities is **the Bishop**. When there is no Rector/PIC, the Bishop is responsible for the administration of the congregation. Bishop Ousley exercises that oversight in collaboration with the Vestry. Additionally, the Bishop oversees, in a general way, all of the activities of Transition Ministry, and gives or withholds consent to the calling/election of new Rectors/Priests-in-Charge.

Day-to-day support and guidance for congregations in transition is provided by **the Canon to the Ordinary (CTO)**, with occasional support from search consultants. The CTO is the primary contact for questions, support, and training regarding search processes, letters of agreement, interviews and visits with candidates, election/selection processes, and any other transition activities. During transition, the CTO will primarily communicate via Wardens and/or Search Committee chairpersons, but may attend Vestry meetings or congregational meetings as needed or upon invitation.

When there is no Rector or PIC in place, or upon imminent departure, **the Vestry** becomes responsible for daily oversight of the congregation, and assumes chief responsibility for communication with the Bishop and CTO. The Vestry will engage in discernment with Bishop and CTO about future options for clergy leadership, and will make provisions for interim or supply services. If a Rector search is initiated, the Vestry will appoint the Search Committee, and will provide for financial support of the search. Finally, the Vestry will actually elect (by vote) the next Rector, negotiate the letter of agreement, and oversee leave-taking of the previous Rector/PIC as well as welcoming the next Rector/PIC. Other than the election, the Vestry may appoint committees to assist in this work.

**The Search Committee** is responsible for numerous tasks during a search process, including such things as developing and administering a congregational self-study, preparing a congregational profile, interviewing candidates, and selecting a finalist.

**The congregation** is responsible for praying for the Vestry, Search Committee, and candidates throughout the process, participating in opportunities to provide input to the Vestry and Search Committee about options for clergy leadership, and respecting the confidentiality of the search process.