



THE
Episcopal
CHURCH IN

WEST MISSOURI

The Diocese of West Missouri
420 West 14th Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64105

Seeking & Calling a New Priest A Time of Prayer, Self-Study, and Discernment

- While there are similarities between calling a new priest and other job searches – it must be emphasized that this is above all a spiritual act to be surrounded by prayer and discernment at every step along the way. We are asking God to send us a new spiritual leader.
- The Vestry working with the Diocesan Transition Missioner initiates the process
- A period of self-study is initiated in the parish. This may take various forms, but typically means working with an outside consulting firm.
- Data is reported back to the Vestry regarding the time of self-study and listening sessions are held with the parish to report back the findings and to listen to responses.
- The Vestry appoints a Search Committee. It should be emphasized that people on the Search Committee should be open to the working of the Holy Spirit in this process. Confidentiality is a must for members of the Search Committee and Vestry in this process.
- The Search Committee is tasked with writing a prayer for the search that is shared with the Parish and prayed both collectively and individually.
- The Search Committee begins the task of writing/creating the parish profile. This information will be on the parish website and shared around The Episcopal Church.
- The Search Committee also works with the Transition Missioner to put the information together for The Episcopal Church's Office of Transition Ministry database.
- Once completed both profiles are shared widely. Some paid advertising may also be suggested.
- The Search Committee develops process and questions for interviews (multiple rounds) and process for onsite interviews.
 - First round (Zoom or other online platform) to focus on 4-5 questions around major goals plus any specific questions from candidate information. Leave time for candidate questions.
- The Diocese conducts initial screening of all applications received from priests interested in being considered.

This screening has two purposes. First, to simply make sure a Search Committee does not have to spend time reviewing and evaluating applications from candidates who clearly do not match what the committee says it is seeking in its next Rector — less experience, for example, or from outside a targeted geographic area if that is a criterion, or candidates whose compensation is well above the amount specified by the parish. Second, to learn if there are any issues of concern on their record in their current diocese.

- The Search Committee begins reviewing applications.
Determines which candidates should be interviewed and notify others they will not be interviewed, thanking them for their interest. The Committee may also review sermons of the candidate found online, view services from current parish, etc.
- The Search Committee conducts online interviews with selected candidates.
These typically are 30-40 minutes plus time for questions. At end of interview, ask candidate to send contact information by email for three references who can speak about the candidate's ministry.
- The Search Committee develops reference questions, calls references.
- The Search Committee decides which candidates will be invited for onsite interviews and informs Diocesan Transition Missioner who will coordinate visits with the Bishop.
- The Search Committee manages onsite interviews.
These may include Eucharist and sermon for the Search Committee ONLY, plus social time with committee, interview time and some time to tour the local area.
- The Search Committee decides whether it is ready to select single best candidate or needs to conduct further interviews
- The Search Committee selects single best candidate to recommend to Vestry as next Rector
- The Vestry may conduct interview
- Vestry votes to call candidate. The Senior Warden calls both the Transition Missioner and the Bishop. The "call" itself is made by the Bishop or the Ecclesiastical Authority.
- Candidate accepts and negotiates Letter of Agreement with Vestry designates* and Transition Missioner.
- Letter of Agreement is signed and sent to Bishop's Office for approval.
- Agreement is conditional upon satisfactory completion of background screens by Diocese.