

Parish Communication: Rector Transition Process

(rev: 03192025-1)

Purpose:

Define the general process involved with moving through the process of:

- 1) a Rector retiring
- 2) transition period to prepare for a permanent new Rector,
- 3) selection of a new Rector and
- 4) process to welcome a new Rector into the parish

Setting Expectations on the Timeframe:

The period from a Rector's departure to a permanent new Rector being present (leading Sunday services) can range typically from fourteen months to two years.

What contributes to the timeframe length:

- Candidate pool & availability
- Attraction of the parish: location, spiritual space (Sanctuary/grounds), examples of faith commitment to the Gospel & creating Christian community, financial stability, strong staff skills and lay leadership participation
- Transition time for a new permanent Rector to leave their current parish and relocate
- Willingness of parishioners to actively participate in the transition process as transition sub-committee members, sharing input to the profile development process, sharing parish tasks equitably or helping to maintain a constructive attitude that supports one another during this opportunity for growth

Phase I: Spring to Pentecost (6/8)

Priorities:

- Celebrate our beloved Rev. Karen's ministry!
- Start the grieving process with Rev. Karen's departure

Secondarily:

- Vestry becomes informed by the Diocese of Olympia (DOO) on how to manage the transition process to call a new Rector
- Vestry informs the DOO of our needs in an Interim Priest during the transition period and initiates discernment of candidates provided by the Diocese
- Inform the parish about the transition process and how to support it
- Vestry identifies potential candidates for the Parish Profile Committee

Phase II: Summer to Early Fall

- Vestry in consultation with the DOO finalizes the selection of an Interim Priest with the plan to have a start date no later than mid-Summer
- Profile Committee is assigned by the Vestry and starts meeting early-Summer to create a document that depicts our parish to potential Rector candidates in Phase III (the “Call”). They coordinate with both the Vestry and DOO for resources and guidance in the process. Importantly, they actively seek input parish-wide to accurately reflect our diverse and vibrant faith community. A final Parish Profile is submitted to both the Vestry and Bishop for approval
- Vestry starts identifying candidates for the Call Committee, also referred to as the Search Committee
- Rector’s Warden starts overseeing key administrative functions of the Parish during the transition period
- Vestry keeps the parish informed about progress

Phase III: mid-Fall to Winter 2026

- DOO posts the Rector vacancy nationally, utilizing the new Parish Profile. DOO screens all applicants before forwarding them to the Call Committee
- Call Committee starts to convene mid-Fall to define their process to recommend a Rector candidate. They stay directly in touch with the DOO for guidance and resources during their deliberations. The Vestry is kept advised of progress.
- One (1) Rector candidate is recommended by the Call Committee to the Vestry. If the Vestry agrees with the recommendation it is forwarded to the Bishop for approval and the Rector candidate is offered the job. If the Vestry rejects the recommended candidate, the Call process starts over again.
- Vestry keeps the parish informed about progress

Phase IV: Spring 2026

- Negotiations between the approved Rector candidate and Vestry are concluded re: salary, start date, etc.
- Plans are initiated by the Vestry to create a warm and effective welcome for the incoming Rector, ensuring an easy transition to the new job, and orientation to the wider Bainbridge Island community
- Vestry keeps the parish informed about progress

Phase V: Summer 2026 to early Fall 2026

- New Rector arrives!!
- Rector welcoming process is initiated
- The transition to a new Rector is completed!! Our collective new ministry together begins