



## A Guide for the Parish Advisory Committee

### So, your Incumbent has announced they're leaving. Now, what???

The bishop will have received notice from your incumbent indicating their intention to resign and will have communicated with the wardens and the territorial archdeacon regarding the next steps for the parish(es). In consultation with the territorial archdeacon, the bishop may also appoint a facilitator to help with the process to come.

The territorial archdeacon coordinates with the chair of the Parish Advisory Committee (the Committee)<sup>1</sup> to call the first meeting, normally following the current incumbent's departure<sup>2</sup>. The territorial archdeacon will review the expectations of the Committee and answer any questions that may arise. The committee will need to plan to meet several times during this process; discerning the next incumbent should not be rushed.

If not already a member of the Committee, the parish treasurer should also be consulted early in the process to establish if a full-time incumbent is viable. Depending on the specific situation, the Committee may wish, or be asked by the bishop, to give consideration to sharing ministry with one or more other parishes. If there is a decision to consider the sharing of clergy by more than one parish, a joint advisory committee will be established.

Remember, this is a process that requires much prayer and discernment. Don't rush the process, take the time needed and be encouraged to use the resource staff available to you.

### What is a Parish Profile?

Your parish profile is a document that is reviewed by prospective clergy for your parish. It is a document that should give an impression of life, worship and ministry, a vision for the future and a suggested leadership characteristic of your future incumbent. The Committee is responsible for ensuring it is written/refreshed.

You'll want to paint a realistic picture of the present realities of the congregation(s) and have done some discernment and consideration of future ministry possibilities (i.e., what is God at work doing in your area and what would He want your parish to be part of). This document may be the first impression for someone considering joining you in ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with [Canon Seven s.2\(3\)](#), the parish corporation appoints a Parish Advisory Committee at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting. The Committee will be comprised of (a) the two Church Wardens, (b) one member of the Vestry appointed annually by the Parish Corporation, and (c) two voting members appointed annually by the Parish Corporation, at least one of whom shall, if practicable, be between the ages of 16 and 35.

<sup>2</sup> After consulting with the current incumbent, the bishop may give permission for the work of the Parish Advisory Committee to begin before the current incumbent has finished in the role.

The profile provides the facts and information about the parish – ministry/mission, property, finances, demographics and community life. Additionally, it provides a vision for the future of the parish. This document becomes a discernment tool for any future clergy who are considering joining your parish. You'll want to consider the leadership style and giftings and how they align with the discerned vision for the future.

A template questionnaire for a parish survey and a profile outline have been provided as appendices to help get you started. Committee members should also read the suggested resources (Bishop's Charges, Five Marks of Mission, etc.) to assist in forming the profile, so that it is in line with the vision of the Synod and Bishop.

When your final draft is completed, it goes to your territorial archdeacon for their review. At this point, the archdeacon may return the document to the Committee with suggestions for further work and/or greater clarity. After this, the territorial archdeacon will forward the completed document to the bishop.

### **The Profile is Approved!**

When the Bishop has approved your parish's profile, an announcement will be posted by the bishop's office. The office will look after writing this announcement and the invitation for expressions of interest. This announcement will be posted to the diocesan website, clergy announcements and the national job listing.

The bishop will receive informal expressions of interest and perform an initial assessment of each enquirer. All clergy from outside the diocese are expected to receive the blessing/support of their current bishop before applying anywhere else. The bishop's office will then send those expressing interest a copy of the parish profile for their review and discernment. The bishop may also provide the profile who have not expressed interest for their consideration.

If an enquirer wishes to formally express interest to the bishop, they submit a CV with three references and a written statement outlining why they feel called to ministry in your parish and this diocese.

If multiple expressions of interest are received by any deadline given, the bishop will discern an order to present candidates to the parish(es). One expression of interest at a time will be sent to the Committee for review.

**From this point until a new incumbent is announced by the bishop, the Committee is to maintain strict confidentiality regarding possible candidates and the status of the process.**

If the Committee discerns that a given candidate is not an appropriate fit for the parish, they are not expected to proceed further with this person. In this case, the candidate will be removed from the process and the next expression of interest, if one exists, will be sent to the Committee.

If the Committee wishes to proceed, the bishop's office will help in coordinating a meeting/ interview. If the candidate is from outside the diocese or at a significant distance, the first interview can be done using a video-conference platform.

### **Meeting with a Candidate**

The Committee will meet to determine the format of the interview meeting and what questions to ask the candidate. Again, it is important to spend time in prayer as you prepare. An interview guidelines document has been provided as an appendix by the diocesan vice-chancellor to ensure your interview questions are in order.

Notes should be taken, including who was present, questions asked and answered as well as any other relevant information. At the end of the interview(s), the notes should be sent to the Synod Office to the attention of the Personnel Officer for filing.

The parish covers any costs of the candidate to attend an interview and, optionally, any further visit. If the parish is experiencing financial hardship, funding support can be made available through the Synod Office.

If both the Committee and the candidate prayerfully discern that they are the next incumbent for your parish, contacting the bishop's office is the next step. The bishop will have a conversation with the candidate and begins the process of the final steps.

If the Committee discerns that the interviewed candidate is not the right fit, indication is given to the bishop's office who will then notify the individual.

If a second (or first in-person) visit is possible, make sure time is budgeted for a tour of the community(ies), the buildings (including the rectory if the parish owns one), schools (if appropriate). Remember that this process is meant to be confidential and discerning; making an announcement or public/parish event would not be appropriate, but meeting with a few key people in the parish may be appropriate.

### **The Final Steps**

Once all parties (the candidate, the Committee and bishop) have confirmed that this candidate is called to the parish incumbency, the Diocesan Personnel Officer will become involved to discuss stipend, benefits, etc. (the diocese has a payroll scale). The start date will need to be negotiated; remember that if the candidate is leaving another parish, it is normal practice to provide three months' notice (so they will not be starting right away). When the details are finalized, the bishop's office will send a letter to the parish wardens to be read during the church service. The diocese covers the cost of the move, up to a negotiated amount.

Continue praying for your new incumbent (and family) and for your parish as you both prepare for this new journey together. Once the new incumbent has arrived and settled in, the bishop's office will begin coordinating a service for the *Celebration of New Ministry*.

## Resources

### Appendices:

- Prayers and Scripture for discernment
- Parish questionnaire template
- Profile outline (draft)
- Interview guidelines

### Additional Resources:

- [Bishop's Charges to Diocesan Synod](#)
- Anglican Communion's [Five Marks of Mission](#)
- Anglican Church of Canada's [Five Transformational Aspirations](#)

This document replaces Episcopal Directive 8-8-1 Parish Appointments Process Protocol.

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## Appendix: Prayers and Scripture for Discernment

### Prayers:

- Book of Common Prayer, page 45, Prayer #12 During the Vacancy of a Pastoral Charge

ALMIGHTY God, who knowest the needs of thy Church in every place: Look graciously at this time upon the people of this parish; and give to them a faithful Pastor, who shall feed thy flock according to thy will, and make ready a people acceptable unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- Book of Alternative Services,
  - page 676, Occasional Prayers #3 At a Time of Appointment

Almighty God, giver of all good gifts, look on your Church with grace, and guide the minds of those who shall choose an incumbent for this parish, that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and support us in our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- page 111, Litany #1 closing prayer

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications to you, and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together you will hear their requests. Fulfil now our desires and petitions, as may be best for us, granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come eternal life; for you, Father, are good and loving, and we glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, in the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

- Prayers within the Ordination of Priests service in the BCP (from page 644) or the BAS (from page 643) may also be adapted.

### Scriptures:

- The Church: Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 24:13-35
- The Laity: 1 Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 4:1-16; Matthew 28:16-20
- The Ordination of a Priest: Isaiah 6:1-8; 1 Peter 5:1-4; John 6:35-38; 10:11-18
- The Pastoral Ministry: 1 Corinthians 4; 1 Peter 5:1-11; Matthew 7:7-12
- The Priesthood: Hebrews 4:14-5:10; John 15:1-17
- The Cost of Ministry: Revelation 5:6-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17, 6:15; Matthew 9:35-10:39
- The Discipline of Ministry: 1 Corinthians 9:16-27; John 21:15-19
- The Prayer of Union: John 17
- Prayer for One Another: Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-19; Philippians 1:3-11
- The Faithfulness of God: Romans 8:31-39; Matthew 5:1-12, 6:19-34

## Appendix: Parish Profile Questionnaire Template

Parish of \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parishioner:

To help us construct our Parish Profile, the Bishop offers this questionnaire to members of our church community. The purpose of these questions is to help the Parish Advisory Committee identify the core values and beliefs of our parish and to make the individual voices of our parish heard. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.

### QUESTIONNAIRE

Referring to the list of activities below, or any you wish to add, please indicate which **FOUR** items you consider should be our parish's highest priorities over the next five years by circling "yes" in the far-right column. You may choose fewer than four but please choose no more than four.

	One of the top four (4) priorities
Increasing Sunday School and young family membership	Yes
Increasing personal spirituality in our churches (faith development)	Yes
Increasing excellence and diversity in worship	Yes
Expanding youth programs and participation	Yes
Increasing the variety and quality of music	Yes
Increasing the variety and quality of worship services	Yes
Reaching out to those who are not active in any church	Yes
Increasing our parish's voice in social issues	Yes
Increasing adult education and other programs	Yes
Expanding the adult congregation	Yes
Increasing our parish's role in the community	Yes
Increasing our parish's role in mission work at home	Yes
Increasing our parish's role in mission work overseas	Yes
Maintaining the historical significance of our church building(s)	Yes
Other _____	Yes
Other _____	Yes

Any comments you wish to offer about your choices on the previous page:

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Please indicate what you like best about our parish.

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If you could change two things about our parish, what would they be?

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What do you believe is the biggest problem/challenge facing our parish today?

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Consider how active you are in the life of the church. What factors/changes would encourage you to become more active?

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What do you believe the members of our parish most value?

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## Appendix: Parish Profile Outline (draft)



### Anglican Diocese of Fredericton

#### Parish Profile Outline

Your parish profile is what is a document that is reviewed by prospective clergy for your parish. It is a document that should give an impression of life, worship and ministry, a vision for the future and a suggested leadership characteristic of your future incumbent.

You'll want to paint a realistic picture of the present realities of the congregation(s) and have done some discernment and consideration of future ministry possibilities (ie: what is God at work doing in your area and what would He want your parish to be part of).

This document may be the first impression for someone considering joining you in ministry. It should be written as a narrative and less of answering questions.

The following is a suggested outline for your Parish Profile. It is recommended to include photos throughout the document to add to your profile – whenever possible, photos of the life of the parish, not strictly posed photos.

#### Cover Page:

- Name of Parish
- Website, Social Media, etc...
- Basic Contact Information
- Parish Motto

#### Page 1:

- Executive Summary
  - Summarize the content of the profile (life, vision, mission and desired qualities of candidate). This section should be written at the very end.
- Include addresses of buildings (for parishes with multiple points).

#### Page 2 and Beyond:

- About the Parish
  - Who are you? What is important to you as a parish?
  - Outline the Worship in the parish.

- Membership and Parish Population – include average attendance as well as number of identifiable givers.
- About Your Next Incumbent
  - What characteristics and gifts is the parish looking for in their next Incumbent. We all have different gifts and passions, you want a pastor who will be a good fit for your parish (ie: if community outreach is a high value for the parish, you want someone who is comfortable and gifted in this area).
  - Stipend, Benefits –
    - Salary is paid based on the diocesan clergy pay scale, including medical, pension, continuing education plan, etc...  
Vacation and education is encouraged to plan in consultation with the Wardens, to ensure coverage for the parish during these times. The parish encourages the Incumbent to continue in their education and formation.
  - Rectory or Housing Allowance?
    - If you have a rectory, share a little about it.
- About Your Community(ies)
  - Assume a potential candidate is from outside the diocese, share a brief summary of the community in which your parish is found.
- Other Information
  - Past Incumbents
  - Other parish employees (roles only), paid or volunteers
  - Other relevant information
  - List of PAC Members

## **Appendix: Guidance for Interviewing a Candidate**

Provided by Diocesan Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Kelly VanBuskirk, K.C., April 2021

In Ontario, their *Human Rights Code* has a "special employment" section which states that the anti-discrimination provision on employment does not apply to organizations which serve a particular protected grouping of peoples. For example, this section of the Ontario Code means that a religious organization can treat individuals who are outside of its religious beliefs differently in the limited circumstances regarding their employment.

In New Brunswick, our Human Rights Act does not contain a special employment provision. There is, therefore, no statutory exception to the rule against discrimination. That being said, the Supreme Court of Canada has provided a common law exception for the hiring practices of a religious organization to be able to ask questions pertaining to one's religious beliefs in employment interviews.

This is a very limited exception to the general rule that all people must be treated equally with respect to employment. It means that the Diocese can ask questions pertaining to religious beliefs for members whose job it would be to conduct religious services or sermons. This exception would not apply to general positions in respect of which religious beliefs are not relevant.

Questions should be focused on an individual's religious beliefs in a positive light and their willingness to follow church practices. Questions should not be worded in a manner which could offend any of the protected grounds under the Human Rights Act.

### **Questions that can be asked:**

- Are you a practicing Anglican?
- Are you prepared to follow the instructions of the Bishop in your daily life?
- What is your belief/practice regarding the Articles of Religion? The Book of Common Prayer? The BAS?
- Do you have a criminal record?
- Do you have a valid driver's license?

### **Questions that should be avoided:**

- Are you heterosexual?
- Are you married?
- What is your position on same-sex marriage?
- Are you divorced?
- Where are you from?
- Where did you grow up?
- Is your family Anglican?
- Is your spouse Anglican?
- How many children do you have?

- How many times have you been married?
- Do you have any disabilities?
- Are you on any medication?

Essentially, the limited religious exception to the general rule only allows for positive questions related specifically to religious beliefs. Other beliefs or lifestyle questions pertaining to age, race, place of origin, sexual orientation, family status, and politics must be avoided.

Sometimes these subjects can meld with religious beliefs; in those cases, we recommend that you focus questions on the religious component (i.e., following instructions from the Bishop) and avoid specifically asking controversial questions.

Whenever the interviews are being conducted, the panel should assign someone to be a scribe for the duration. Notes should be taking, including who was present, questions asked and answered as well as any other relevant information. At the end of the interviews, the notes should be sent to the Synod Office to the attention of the Personnel Officer for filing.