A Guidebook: The Search for & Recruitment of a New Rector

The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

www.diomass.org

Beloved of God,

I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ as you enter this season of transition. Times like these often bring questions and uncertainty, but they are also holy moments—opportunities to listen deeply for God's guidance as you prepare to call your next Rector and partner in ministry.

This is a time to pray together, to reflect honestly on the life you share in Christ, and to work closely with your Regional Canon as you discern who God is calling to serve among you. The search process is both discernment and recruitment. Telling your story with clarity and hope matters, as does honoring the vulnerability of clergy who offer themselves for this work. Confidentiality and mutual respect are essential. Woven through all of this is the joy of Jesus, who calls us together to share in Word and Sacrament and to witness to God's love in the world.

The Bishop's Office is here to support you every step of the way. We will walk with you through this process and hold you in our prayers. Your Regional Canon will be your first point of contact.

We are living into a new season in this diocese, shaped by our shared values of welcome, justice, joy, courage, and love. God is at work among us, opening new possibilities for growth, sustainability, and faithful witness. My prayer is that you will experience this time as one of hope—an invitation to discern God's dream for your community and to step faithfully into the future God is preparing.

I look forward to welcoming your new Rector and celebrating with you as you enter this next season of life together in Christ as we all seek to love and serve the world in Jesus' name. God bless you and keep you, God give you strength and courage in the season ahead.

Faithfully, and with love,

+ Julia E. Whitworth

The Rt. Rev. Julia E. Whitworth, Bishop Diocesan

Regional Canons

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Prayer for the Parish in Transition

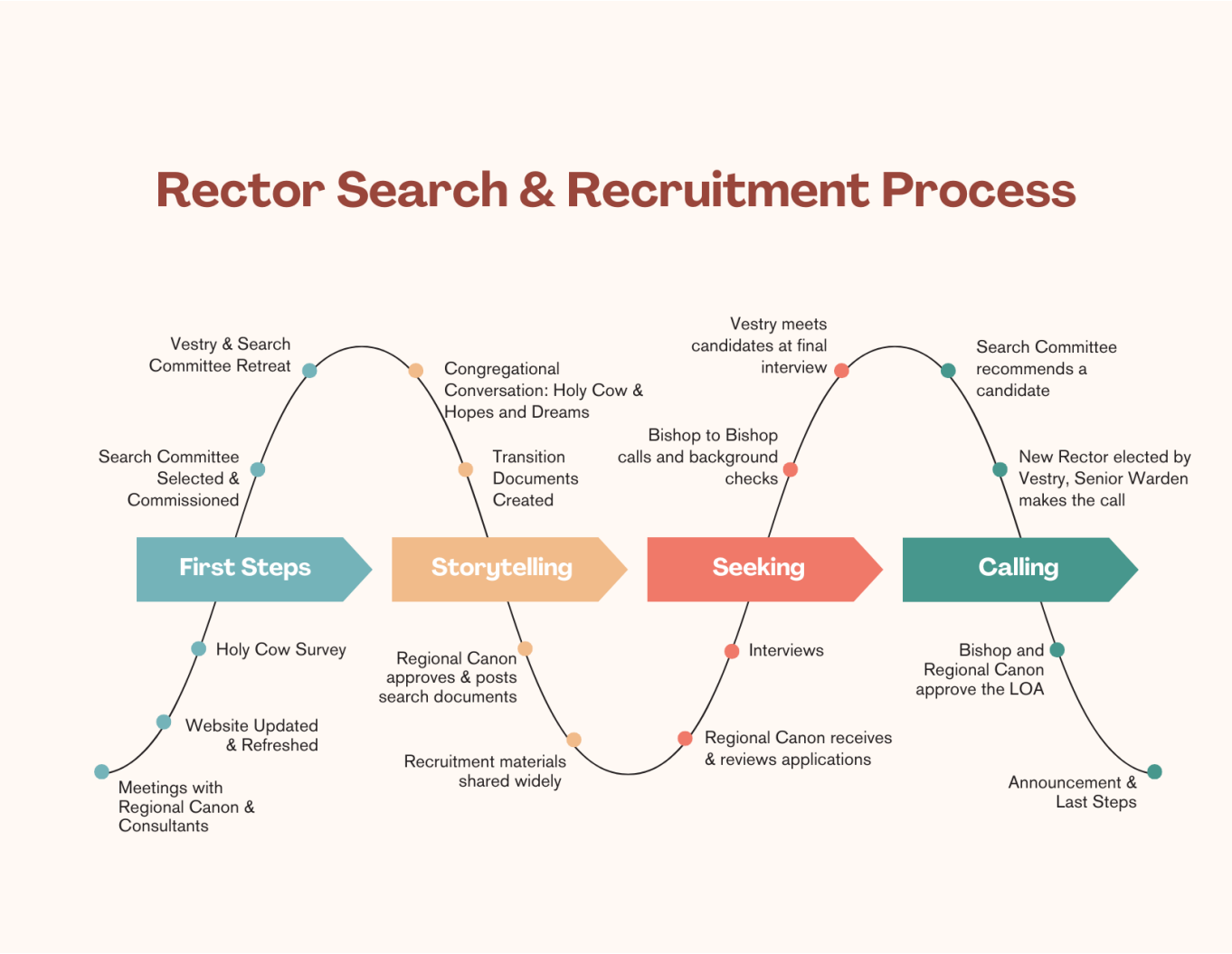
Almighty God, you know the needs of your Church in every place: Look graciously upon us, the people of [Your Parish Name], and grant us the guidance of your Holy Spirit as we seek a new Rector for this parish. Give us discernment, wisdom, and confidence in your timing. Guide the members of our Search Committee and Vestry as they labor to be faithful in seeking your will, and bless our parish life with mutual trust, respect, and courage as we walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. **Amen.**

Introduction

This document is intended to serve as a road map for a parish that is about to seek and recruit a new Rector. While each congregational situation and setting is unique, this document outlines the general phases and steps of the process. Throughout this process, the Bishop's Office will support you in a variety of ways. Your Regional Canon will be your first point of contact. You will also likely be matched with a Search Consultant who can help with the detailed work and writing involved in the process. We are all here to support you as you discern, pray, grow, interview, and ultimately hope to call a new Rector.

Parishes tend to move through this process at their own pace. If you are efficient and responsive, this process could run about 9-12 months. If a parish takes more time to work through each step, the process could take longer and be adaptable.

The process consists of four phases: First Steps, Story Telling, Seeking, and Calling. Each of these phases is outlined in this document and the major steps in each phase are noted on the diagram below. There is also another section at the end that focuses on roles and responsibilities for particular people throughout the process. Please note that various other documents and resources are linked to this document to support you. **Who's Who @ the end.**



First Steps

Notify the Bishops' Office

The transition process officially begins when the departing Priest meets with the Regional Canon to determine together when and how to make the announcement of their departure to the Vestry and congregation. Generally, a minimum of four weeks' notice should be given to the parish. In the case of retirement, four to six months may be appropriate. As soon as Wardens know that their Priest is departing, they should be in touch with their Regional Canon to schedule a conversation.

[Leaving Well Rubric, Exit Interview for Priest]

Meetings

The Regional Canon will meet with the Wardens to talk about the parish and the transition process. In the absence of a Rector, the Wardens and Vestry are the canonical leadership of the congregation until an Interim Priest is appointed. Your Regional Canon will work to identify an Interim candidate to meet with lay leaders and a Search Consultant who will aid in the transition. More details on the ministry of the Search Consultant are at the end of this document. If possible, the Search Consultant will join in these initial meetings.

During this time, the Regional Canon will also make arrangements to visit the parish, either for a Vestry meeting or for worship and a chance to meet with the congregation. During this meeting, the Regional Canon will share the various search options and provide an overview of the recruitment process.

Provision for Clergy Leadership During the Transition

Pursuant to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, the Bishop Diocesan, in consultation with the Wardens, appoints an Interim or Bridge Priest to provide clerical leadership to a congregation in transition. The Bishop will make an appointment after consultation with the Vestry. If an Interim and a Bridge cannot be immediately identified, the Wardens will seek supply clergy temporarily.

Website is Updated and Refreshed

At this time, after the Priest has left, the work on the parish website should begin. Whether you have a fully functional, new and beautiful website, or one that hasn't been updated in a while, this moment in the process is an important one. **Be mindful of how prominently images of your former Rector are displayed.** Website pages should be edited and refreshed to make sure all information is accurate and accessible. This is a great time to think through what information needs to be on the website and what doesn't. Much of the information for your profile will soon be housed on the website as well, so it's important to begin this work now. Your Regional Canon can advise, if needed.

Transition Review

After the departing Priest has left, a Transition Review begins. Your Regional Canon will assign a Business Consultant (BC) to meet with the Wardens and Treasurer. The BC will help the congregation to better understand the state of its current business and financial practices, ensuring that all canonical requirements are met in preparation for the calling of a new Rector. A parish cannot call new clergy leadership until all these requirements are met and sustainably planned for. A review of

financial results known as the Transition Review Report will be generated and shared with the Regional Canon. A crucial piece of this work is the assessment that the parish can properly compensate the new clergy person for the position the parish is seeking to fill, according to diocesan standards. This report will also be shared with the final slate of candidates. BCs are prepared to help guide a parish toward a place of financial vitality in preparation for making a call.

Congregational Assessment Tool

The Officers and Vestry will be responsible for beginning the work of the survey with Holy Cow Consulting. All parishes will engage with the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT), which provides insights and perspectives on the present life of the congregation and what they value. The results of this survey are used by both the Vestry in their planning and by the Search Committee in creating the parish profile. The Regional Canon will interpret the results with the Vestry and/or Search Committee. Following the meeting with Vestry and Search Committee, the Regional Canon will present the CAT to the entire congregation and invite everyone into a conversation about hopes and dreams for the future.

Search Committee Selected and Commissioned

The Vestry is charged with the formation of the Search Committee. The composition of the Committee should reflect the parish's diversity, including people of different ages, race, and gender. 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 and not be driven by particular agendas. Members of the Search Committee should also be people with excellent boundaries, able to hold confidentiality, people of prayer and discernment, people who can work well in groups and abide disagreement.

It is not appropriate for ordained Episcopal clergy, whether retired or still active in ministry, who are affiliated with the parish to serve as a member of the Search Committee. Nor is it appropriate for a member of the parish staff, or his or her spouse or partner, to serve on the Search Committee. A good target number for the Committee is seven to eleven members for a larger parish and five to nine members for a smaller parish. At least one member of the Vestry (whose term will cover the duration of the search) will serve on the Committee as a liaison to the Vestry. The intent of this is to keep the Vestry informed and connected, however, this member cannot share confidential material outside the Search Committee. Wardens should not serve on the Search Committee. The Vestry determines the budget for the search and should give that to the Search Committee in writing.

We recommend that a member of the Search Committee also serve as its Chaplain. This person should have some spiritual gifts and aid the Search Committee in prayer and reflection.

[Sample Charge to the Search Committee]

It is appropriate to commission the Search Committee during a Sunday morning worship service. Your Regional Canon can provide a template for this part of the service.

[Sample Search Timeline, Sample Search Budget, Sample Commissioning of Search Committee Members, Search Comm. Job Description]

Vestry and Search Committee Retreat

The Search Consultant will lead a retreat for the Vestry and the Search Committee. The purpose of this retreat is to build trust between the two bodies, to share hopes and dreams, to name any concerns or challenges on the horizon. If possible, the Regional Canon may be present in order to help support the day. If the results from the CAT have come back, the Regional Canon may interpret the results for the Vestry and Search Committee and include them in thinking through the Hopes & Dreams meeting that is a part of the next phase.

Storytelling

Where is God calling us as a faith community? What experiences and skills will our next clergy leader need to walk alongside us to live into this call? These are the essential questions that you need to answer as you create your profile. This section provides the tools and guidance needed to answer them and integrate them into the parish profile.

Congregational Meeting

The Regional Canon and Search Consultant will lead together a congregational meeting. There is a dual purpose to this meeting. The first is to share the results of the CAT with the entire congregation and to explore some of the implications of that data. Typically, this information would be shared with the Vestry and Search Committee first. The second purpose of this meeting is to allow the congregation to have some input into the process beyond the survey, to solicit their hopes and dreams, to allow the congregation to talk in small groups about who they believe they're being called by God to be in the season ahead. This second part of the meeting can be developed in conjunction with the Search Committee Chairs, who may wish to help develop questions and to facilitate some of the meeting.

[Suggested agenda for this meeting]

Transition Documents Created

After the CAT and the congregational meeting are completed, the Search Committee begins to write the "story" of the parish. The Search Committee will create two primary documents: a Parish Profile and a Transitional Ministry Conference (TMC) profile. Linked below is a short profile template that

can be used and adapted. However, you may choose to customize this document or to expand it, please note that the information asked for in the template is all required and must be included in the final document before the Bishop's Office will approve it for posting. The Search Consultant has great wisdom to share in this process and will be a support to the Search Committee as they do their work. When both documents are drafted, they are sent to the Regional Canon for approval. The Regional Canon may come back with questions, feedback, and input from the Bishop's Office that may require some adjustments to be made before approval.

At the same time, please keep in mind that the first place any potential candidate will go is to your website. Please continue to keep your website as fresh and up to date as possible. This should be a constant part of the search process.

[Digital Profile Template, example of TMC profile]

Search Documents Posted

When both the Parish Profile and the TMC Profile have been approved by the Bishop's Office, we recommend that the parish also post the listing on the Episcopal News Service. The Regional Canon will ask for your Parish Profile to be posted on the diocesan website and will post the TMC profile on that website. At this point, we suggest that you share the materials as widely as you can. Your Search Consultant and Regional Canon can support you in this process. The Regional Canon will help to circulate your postings in the wider church in order to help you recruit a broad range of candidates.

Seeking

Regional Canon Receives and Reviews Applications

At this point, the parish begins "receiving names" for a time, usually 4-6 weeks. Candidates will send their application materials to the Bishop's Office (search@diomass.org). The Regional Canon will do an initial red flag on the pool of candidates before sharing their information with the Search Committee. "Red flags" are defined as disciplinary or other action taken against a Priest that prohibits them from leaving their diocese or seeking another position. This is an effort to save time and work for the parish. The Regional Canon will also garner useful information from colleagues about the candidates and their work style that may be helpful for the Search Committee. Once the deadline for applications has passed, the Regional Canon will forward all material to the Chairs of the Search Committee for distribution to all members of the Committee along with any other information the Regional Canon may have on candidates.

The Regional Canon will communicate regularly with the Bishop and the Search Committee throughout the process. The Bishop reserves the right to add names to the candidate pool if the list does not reflect our diocesan commitment to diversity. The goal is to ensure the richest possible pool of potential candidates for the search committee to consider.

Communication and Confidentiality

In every phase of this process, communication with the parish is essential. Wardens and Search Committee Chairs should give regular updates to the parish as the process proceeds. However, in this moment it's incredibly important to keep confidentiality around the list of names and the deliberations about them.

Confidentiality is not secrecy. The Search Committee and the Vestry must assure the congregation that progress is being made, but cannot share any details about the candidates at all. It is vital that the identities of those who are discerning the position are kept completely confidential. If you have any questions about this, your Search Consultant and Regional Canon are equipped to help you better understand and to communicate this need for confidentiality to the parish. Members of the Search Committee must be committed to holding this confidence, even from spouses, even after the search is concluded. A lack of clarity or respect for these rules can be very damaging for the process and a detriment to the parish for years ahead.

Interviews

Once the period of receiving names has passed, generally four to six weeks, the Search Committee's task is to sort through the candidates' material efficiently and yet not arbitrarily, in order to narrow the field and to create a list of candidates to interview.

Following the review of materials for all candidates, the Search Committee decides which candidates to interview. Those not being interviewed should be notified and thanked for their application. The first round of interviews should take place virtually, on a platform like zoom. In this round, all candidates should be asked the same questions.

At the conclusion of the initial interviews, the Search Committee decides on a group of candidates to interview further and notifies the Regional Canon of their names. The Search Committee may choose to visit those candidates in their home parishes, but these trips are not required. The number of visits is usually driven by time and cost (e.g. if candidates are all serving in local congregations, it is much easier to plan a visit). If a Search Committee chooses to visit candidates' congregations, it is vital that they are discreet and prepared not to share any information. No more than two persons should visit since it is likely that the congregation is not aware their Priest is in an active search. Alternatively, a second virtual interview may well suffice. Whatever course is chosen, all candidates should be treated

equally in terms of what this second visit looks like. Further interview questions tailored to each specific candidate should be developed for this second round of interviews.

[Sample Interview Questions]

Bishop to Bishop Calls & Background Checks

The Search Committee requests, from the Regional Canon, background checks on candidates that participate in this second round of interviews.

Background checks concerning misconduct and criminal offenses are required for all clergy at any point of transition (pre-ordination, licensing, and employment) in the Diocese of Massachusetts. This differs from the preliminary background screening performed by the Regional Canon that simply insures that candidates are priests in good standing.

The parish is responsible for the cost of background checks, which vary depending on whether the candidate has previously completed a background check within three years for the Diocese of Massachusetts or for Province I (New England). Background checks typically take 10-14 days. The cost for background checks is noted in the sample budget for the search process.

Please talk with your Search Consultant or Regional Canon about how and when to notify a clergy person that they are no longer being considered for your position. It is important to remember that clergy in search often put their lives on hold or have to make important decisions with respect to their families' lives as their own search processes unfold. It is important to inform them in a timely manner and to thank them for their willingness to discern with you. Please inform them in writing with gratitude. Please do not send that notice to too many people too soon, particularly without talking with your Search Consultant and/or Regional Canon as you may leave yourself with fewer options than you need.

It is at this point that the Bishop will reach out to the candidates' Bishops to initiate a conversation.

The Final Interview

Working with your Search Consultant, the Search Committee will decide on a final list of two to four names. These names should be reported to the Regional Canon. It is the usual practice of the search committee to invite the final candidates and their spouses, to meet with the Search Committee at the parish. During this visit, the compensation package should be discussed with each candidate. The Search Committee should make candidates coming from outside the diocese particularly aware of the high cost of living (especially housing) in Massachusetts and share the transition review report.

This final interview has several additional steps:

1) Each candidate will need an appointment to meet with Bishop Julia. The sooner you can reach out to schedule these, the better. The Bishop's calendar is very full, so these requests should be made at least a month in advance. The purpose of this meeting is to acquaint the candidates with the Diocese of Massachusetts and to establish a relationship with the Bishop. This is normally done during the candidate's visit to the parish to interview with the Search Committee. The Bishop may choose to give feedback to the Search Committee after meeting with the candidates.

2) The Vestry has an opportunity to meet final candidates when they come to interview at the parish as well. This gathering with the Vestry is not intended to be an interview but should feel more like a meal or a meet and greet. Your Search Consultant can help with the framing of this event. What's important about this interaction is that the Vestry has the ability to get to know candidates so that they are ready to affirm the recommendation of the Search Committee at the end of the process.

[Best practices for Finalists' Visits to Parish]

Calling

The Search Committee Recommends a Final Candidate

Working with your Search Consultant, the Search Committee spends time together in prayer and reflection. Asking for God's guidance, they consider all the materials they've read, conversations with candidates, and the discernment the parish has done about the season of ministry that lies ahead. A special time of prayer should be set aside before, during, and after the final discernment conversation. Each Search Committee, with the help of their Search Consultant, will discern a final candidate. Pending approval by the Vestry, this concludes the work of the Search Committee.

If for some reason consensus cannot be reached within the Search Committee, your Regional Canon and Search Consultant will work with you on next steps.

The Call & Announcement

The name of the candidate chosen by the Search Committee is presented to the Vestry for consideration. The Search Chairs, in consultation with the Search Consultant, will share relative information and perspectives on why that candidate has been chosen. The Vestry discerns together, setting aside time for prayer. If the Vestry approves, they vote to call this person as Rector.

Before issuing a call, the Vestry must notify the Regional Canon who will inform the Bishop of the election and seek approval of the call. The Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church require that **no call is issued or announced without the consent of the Bishop.** Upon receiving the

Bishop's approval, a call is issued, a privilege traditionally enjoyed by the Wardens. Following that phone conversation, a Letter of Agreement (LOA) is crafted and signed by the Rector-Elect, the Clerk of the Vestry, Wardens, the Regional Canon and the Bishop. The LOA is a covenant between the Rector-Elect, the Vestry, and the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. Nothing is official until all parties have signed the letter. For this reason, **no announcement of the call is made by any of the parties until the letter is completed, signified by the Bishop's signature.**

Announcement of the call needs to be scheduled to everyone's convenience and ideally, simultaneously in each place. It is important to remember that that candidate will need time to review the proposed LOA and inform leaders of their congregation or ministry that they will be leaving.

The Vestry also determines the compensation and benefit package that it will offer to the new Rector. Diocesan policy stipulates that any full-time parochial Priest must be paid at least the minimum Total Clergy Compensation (TCC) which includes salary and housing. Pension, health insurance, and any other benefits are calculated in addition to the TCC. Conversation between the Search Committee and the Vestry is vital so that the Search Committee can give candidates an accurate description of salary, benefits, and housing. It's critical to be clear about all details surrounding compensation. A full description of Diocesan policy and the annual Guidelines of the Compensation and Benefits Committee, can be found online here or from the Regional Canon.

[Link to LOA Template + TCC Worksheet]

Last Steps

Materials left over from the search should be shredded or discarded in a secure manner since much of it is confidential in nature and inappropriate for parish archives. Feedback from the Search Committee on the experience of the search & recruitment process and any aspect of it should be solicited by the Search Consultant. Successful completion of the work of the Search Committee is also cause for celebration either in the context of a parish event or simply by the committee itself.

There are several important steps in this process:

1) Recognition of the ministry of the Interim Priest and bidding them goodbye should be carefully considered and planned. The Interim Priest is encouraged to make an appointment with the Regional Canon for both an exit interview & to discuss future plans.

2) A Committee should be appointed by the Vestry to welcome the new Rector. This Committee may do a great many things, but among them are: plan a festive celebration for the arrival of the new Rector (and their family, if applicable), determine any needs the new Rector may have around moving/settling in, aid the new Rector in meeting people, cleaning out and caring for the rectory and/or the new Rector's office, etc.

3) Recognition and thanksgiving for the work of the Search Committee.

4) Sometime after the new Rector's arrival, a Celebration of New Ministry & Institution of a New Rector should be scheduled with the Bishop's Office. It's appropriate for this to happen 3-6 months after the new Rector's arrival. The Bishop or a Regional Canon typically preside at this service. Please see the template for this service below. If you wish to adapt or deviate from this format, please be in touch with your Regional Canon.

[Sample Farewell Liturgy, Welcoming Your New Rector, Installation Template]

Who's Who and Does What During the Transition Period

The Bishop

The Bishop Diocesan has ultimate responsibility for the ministry of all congregations in the diocese. The Search & Recruitment process is an extension of the ministry of the Bishop through the Regional Canons.

The Regional Canons

Regional Canons assist the Vestry in appropriate closure of the out-going Priest's ministry, assists the Wardens and Vestry in planning for the transition process, assists in appointing the Business Consultant, the Interim Priest (if available), and the Search Consultant. The Regional Canon also coordinates with the Episcopal Church Office for Transition Ministry, screens candidates and consults with the Bishop about prospective candidates, and provides resources and training for Interim Priests and Search Consultants. The Regional Canon also provides resources and advice for the Search Committee, Vestry, and Wardens, while keeping the Bishop informed of the progress of all searches, and assists in the call of the new Rector. The Regional Canon may assist in the LOA negotiation.

The Wardens

The Wardens are the chief lay officers of the parish, responsible for many of the affairs of the parish in the absence of a Rector. When the knowledge of an opening occurs or is imminent, the Wardens notify the Bishop's Office by being in touch with their Regional Canon. The Wardens are responsible for working with the Regional Canon to obtain an interim priest and/or supply clergy and for communicating with the Regional Canon throughout the process, especially as they prepare to make a call. The Wardens also negotiate on behalf of the parish with the newly elected Rector and assists as their new ministry begins. This is a crucial season of building relationship and trust with the new Rector and it helps to determine the success of the season ahead.

The Vestry

The Vestry chooses the Search Committee, approves the diocesan appointment of the interim priest or other transition clergy and the Search Consultant, prepares the budget for the search process, and formulates the charge to the Search Committee. The Vestry assists the parish in participating in the

process and, when the process is complete, may elect the new rector subject to the parish's bylaws. The Vestry also sets goals in the Letter of Agreement and then takes part in a Mutual Ministry Review one year after the new rector begins their ministry.

Business Consultant

A Business Consultant is assigned by the Regional Canon. They help the congregation understand the state of its current business and financial practices, ensuring that such canonical requirements as parochial reports, audits and assessment payments are up to date. The transition review report also helps a congregation ascertain the scope of its future ministry, ensuring that the parish can properly compensate the new clergy person for the position the parish is seeking to fill.

Search Consultant

The Search Consultant works with the Wardens, Vestry and Search Committee throughout the time of search and recruitment. They assist the parish in evaluating their strengths and resources, identifying goals, dealing with conflict, and navigating the search process. The Search Consultant works with the Interim Priest, the Regional Canon to identify and responds to any needs and problems that emerge as the process unfolds. They are the principal resource and point of communication between the Vestry, the Interim Priest, the Search Committee, the Regional Canon and the Bishop.

[Search Consultant Role & Agreement]

Search Committee

The Search Committee fulfills the charge of the Vestry by conducting the search for a new Rector. Working with the Search Consultant, the responsibilities of the Search Committee include the writing of a parish profile; developing a system for screening, evaluating and notifying candidates as candidate materials are received; determining the various interview processes–written, telephone and face-to-face; communicating regularly with the Regional Canon in order that the various screening processes may be conducted.

Interim Priest

The term "Interim Priest" is used for those trained and experienced transition ministry. The terms of employment for an Interim Priest vary greatly, but responsibilities include presiding at worship, the continuation of pastoral ministries, and support of the parish program. The Interim Priest is specially trained to assist a parish in evaluating its mission and ministry, to make any needed changes in parish administration or program, and to help the parish prepare for the arrival of a new Rector. This work is

done in consultation with the Wardens, Vestry, Search Consultant and other parish leaders. However, the Interim Priest does not have a formal role in the search process and should not participate in meetings or conversations of the Search Committee.

Bridge Priest

A Bridge Priest serves for a specified period of time, usually two to three months. However, the appointment may be extended if necessary. At the Bishop's discretion, a Bridge Priest may be considered for appointment as Interim subject to the approval of the Vestry. The work of a Bridge Priest tends to focus on worship and pastoral care, though in some situations the Vestry may negotiate other tasks as well that tend to the life of the parish. A Letter of Agreement is written and signed like any other covenant of ministry between a parish and a Priest. The Regional Canon will assist in his process. During the tenure of a Bridge Priest, the authorities normally given to a Rector within the parish rest with the Wardens and Vestry.

Deans

The Diocese of Massachusetts is divided into twelve geographical units known as Deaneries. The Bishop Diocesan appoints a Dean to carry out certain pastoral, convening and communications responsibilities. The Dean should be informed by the departing Priest when clergy announce that they are leaving a position, and when possible, take part in their leave-taking. They should welcome new Interim Priests and call on the new Rector of a congregation as soon as possible. The Dean may, at the Bishop's request, preside at the service of Celebration of New Ministry and Institution of the Rector.

Final Notes

In the rare event that a Search Committee cannot reach consensus, the Search Consultant and Regional Canon, in consultation with the Bishop, will suggest strategies for reaching consensus. If no final decision can be reached in order to recommend a final candidate to the Vestry, the Search Committee Chair(s), in consultation with the Wardens, must decide on one of the following courses:

Reopen and receive new names with the current Search Committee
Reconfigure the Search Committee and discern where to begin the process from again (i.e. if the profile needs to be revised, the process would begin there).
Ask the Bishop to appoint a Priest-in-Charge. The Vestry would interview and approve (or not) the appointment.

The Letter of Agreement

The LOA is negotiated by the Rector-elect and Wardens using a template provided by the Regional Canon. It includes cash stipend, housing arrangements or allowance, moving expenses, benefits, and description of responsibilities. When a draft is completed, it is sent to the Regional Canon along with the TCC worksheet for review by the Bishop's Office. Once reviewed and approved, all parties receive the letter by email and are invited to sign it. The Bishop is the last person to sign, her signature means the covenant is complete and plans for the announcement can commence. The Letter of Agreement is a covenant of ministry between the new Rector, the Vestry of the Parish, and the Bishop Diocesan. No announcements can be made until the process is formally completed.

The Wardens will contact the diocesan human resources staff member for information regarding medical insurance and change of status for the Church Pension Fund. To facilitate a smooth arrival, the new Rector should have this information available upon their arrival.