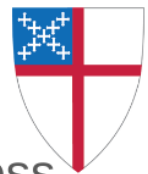




# Rector Search 2025



Frequently Asked Questions about the process

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## Initial Transition and Interim Rector

- *Q: What is an Interim Rector??*
  - A: An Interim Rector is a specialized ministry and serves as a sign of hope for a congregation. They carry out the duties and have the same commitment to a parish as one who serves on a more permanent basis. They maintain communication between the church and the bishop. When an Interim Rector is placed at a church that means that a church is in a time of transition. Once an Interim Rector is placed at St. John's they will help us see, with new eyes, who we are without Kara.
- *Q: In this diocese, who votes for the Interim Rector and full-time priest?*
  - A: In the Episcopal tradition the Interim Rector is decided by the vestry. The same is true for the full-time priest. The search committee will recommend the full-time rector to the vestry and the vestry will then vote.
- *Q: Why is the Interim Rector **not** considered as a candidate in the search for a full time priest?*
  - A: Because then it would be difficult for the Interim Rector to do their job. An Interim Rector's job is to show a church who they are - good, bad, and everything in between. An Interim Rector's job is to prepare the way for the church. Some churches have opted to have priests in charge, but Bishop Paula does not recommend that in St. John's case. An Interim Rector is a good option as St. John's seeks to understand who they are without Kara.

## Staff & Transition Process

- *Q: What will happen to the staff of St. John's during this transition?*
  - A: The Interim Rector will find existing staff at St. John's valuable. The Interim Rector will also be able to oversee these employees. The staff will provide continuity of leadership during this transition. An Interim Rector would be an asset for staff because during this time, because without an Interim Rector, all oversight of the staff would fall to the wardens/vestry.
- *Q: There are a number of extracurricular activities that St. John's hosts - how can we ensure those events continue to happen during this time of transition?*
  - A: Once the Interim Rector is placed at St. John's, they will be available during the week to ensure that these activities can continue. The Interim Rector may also decide to stay in the rectory, which can help with this

continuity as well. The vestry will be vital in determining what ministries should continue at St. John's.

***But WAIT .....there's MORE!***

- There **ARE** Congregational Expectations to Consider during this time of Hope/Transition:  
The congregation should:
  - continue to participate in the goals of the church.
  - be open to experimenting with new ways of being and doing.
  - be accountable to progressing on the goals of St. John's.
  - continue to improve communication skills.
  - continue to support the vestry.
  - Finally, the congregation should relinquish demands on the Interim Rector when the Interim Rector's work is done at St. John's.

## Congregational Assessment Tool

- *Q: Is the CAT assessment tool part of the full-time rector search?*
  - A: Yes, the Congregational Assessment Tool is the survey still recommended by the diocese to measure the energy and vitality of a congregation and it is used during the full time rector search.

## Our Next Rector

- *Q: I understand that the vestry will vote to determine the full-time rector, but will the congregation be allowed to meet with the candidates too?*
  - A: That is not customary in the Episcopalian tradition.
- *Q: Who is eligible to apply for the full-time priest position?*
  - A: When St. John's arrives at the point when they are ready to receive candidates, it will be a nationwide search. St. John's could also search worldwide, but that comes with added costs (i.e., work visas). The position is open to any priest in good standing. Being in good standing means that the priest is known by the bishop in their diocese of canonical residence. The Episcopal Church is in full communication with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and that is up to the vestry if they'd consider a priest from that order.
- *Q: Can St. John's invite candidates for the full-time priest position to apply?*

- A: Yes, it is a good idea to invite clergy in good standing that you know to submit their names.
- *Q: How will the positions of the staff at St. John's be affected by the placement of a full-time rector?*
  - A: When a rector begins their ministry, part of their responsibility is oversight of staff. If the staff is doing their job well and is a blessing to the community then it would be foolish for a newly placed full-time priest to dismiss them. However, if the staff is not fulfilling their role then things must change. The interim period will be 12 months (marked by the beginning of the search process). Searches are currently taking longer because there are not as many priests. In the meantime, staff at St. John's should be reassured by the vestry.

## Search Committee Co-chairs formation

- *Q: How is the search committee created and how many people are on it?*
  - A: The search committee is formed once an interim priest is in place. The Rev. Andrea Mysen will return to St. John's at that time and we will assemble a search committee. It is up to the vestry to decide the process and the skill sets for the search committee. It consists of 7-9 congregants, depending on the size of the parish, and that includes a chair and co-chair. The chair and co-chair will be the first to be appointed and they will then be part of the conversation with the wardens and vestry as to how to fill out the search committee.

### So ... what should I do, right now, today?

- Breathe in.
- Find intentional ways to mark the gratitude you have for Kara.
- Breathe out.
- Reach out to your wardens with any questions and/or concerns

## FAQ Update January 2025

### Search Committee Formation

- Q: How many people will be on the search committee?
  - **A: We are planning for a total of 8 people – 2 co-chairs (Laura Singer and Rich Gage) and 6 members at large.**

- Q: Who chooses the search committee and by when?
  - **A: The vestry and the two co-chairs. By February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**
- Q: Will anyone on the vestry also be on the search committee?
  - **A: No.**
- Q: What is colloquially known as the "Episcopal Dating Service"?
  - **A: This refers to the periodic, in-person and virtual conferences at which diocesan Transitions Officers present churches receiving names and candidates currently looking. Andrea Mysen will be our Diocese of Chicago contact.**

## The Search Process

- Q: Should St. John's parishioners encourage qualified individuals to apply?
  - **A: By all means.**
- Q: Once the search committee begins interviewing candidates, how many names/candidates will they be choosing from?
  - **A: Typically 5 to 12, but no guarantees.**
- Q: Who's eligible to apply for the rector position?
  - **A: The position will be open to any priest in good standing, meaning that they're known by the bishop in their diocese of canonical residence. Since the Episcopal Church is in full communication with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA), our vestry can choose to consider a priest from that order. Note that our Interim Rector won't be considered as a candidate.**
- Q: How many other parishes in the Chicago diocese are also in the search process for a full-time rector?
  - **A: 10**
- Q: What if St. John's search process exceeds our time commitment with our interim rector, Meghan?
  - **A: St. John's and Rev. Meghan have signed a contract for 1 year of interim work (August 2024-August 2025). The vestry and the search committee will regularly communicate with Meghan about our search progress. Note that during 2024, St. John's was able to function for two months without a full-time rector; while that's not ideal, it's something we're capable of due to strong lay leadership.**
- Q: How much will the search process cost?
  - **A: \$20,550 (Congregational Assessment Tool [CAT]: \$550; finalists's travel for in-person interviews: \$4,500; search committee expenses [meals, babysitters, etc]: \$500; moving expenses for full-time rector: \$15,000)**
- Q: How long will the search process take?
  - **A: Uncertain – it depends on the pace of the search committee's progress. We**

**hope that the committee will begin interviewing candidates by the end of summer 2025.**

- Q Will the congregation be able to meet with the candidates?
  - **A: No**

## The Rector Transition

- Q: What will we do about the rectory if the new rector doesn't want/need to live there?
  - **A: Yet to be determined. The vestry won't discuss publicly what will be done with the rectory until the new rector is hired. Whether or not the new rector will choose to live in the rectory will directly influence how much we will ultimately pay them. If they don't live in the rectory, we'll need to provide a housing allowance (the 2025 minimum being \$20,000, annually, per diocesan guidelines).**
- Q: What is the salary range for a full-time rector?
  - **A: The Chicago diocese's website has information on minimum salaries [here](#). Since minimums are intended for newly ordained priests, we'd need to offer more for more experienced folks.**
- Q: What is the expected value for a more experienced rector?
  - **A: A more experienced priest will 'hit the ground running' more quickly. A newly ordained priest would be both growing into self-understanding as a priest, and learning the ropes of being a rector. The diocese will provide strong mentoring for newly ordained folks and first-time rectors.**
- Q: How will St. John's staff positions be affected once the new rector begins?
  - **A: If the staff is doing their job well, it would be foolish for the new rector to replace them, but that would be their prerogative.**

More questions? Contact either Laura Singer ([laura.t.singer@gmail.com](mailto:laura.t.singer@gmail.com)) or Rich Gage ([RichardGage1951@gmail.com](mailto:RichardGage1951@gmail.com)).

**Note: this document will be periodically updated as the search process progresses.**