

Parish Transition Process in the Diocese of Easton



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A Word before Beginning . . .

The Search Process Is a Spiritual Endeavor

Come, Holy Spirit;
Make your presence known.
Give to us eyes to see the mystery,
Ears to hear your Word,
And a heart to follow you. Amen.

Discernment in calling a new rector involves being open and available to the Holy Spirit's movement. Each moment in the search process welcomes the Spirit's presence. Throughout committee meetings, town meetings, focus groups, profile development, budget preparation, and interviewing, the Holy Spirit can lead and guide. The search process is a way to focus our energies on God's vision and imagination and not our own.

When we are willing, the Spirit inspires us to be changed and renewed as members, vestries, search committees, as congregations in transition, as clergy called to serve in new places in new ways.

During your time of transition, may your prayer as vestry, as search committee, as congregation, be: Come, Holy Spirit.

The Interim Process in the Diocese of Easton

Resources and Options When Your Rector Leaves

Introduction

The calling of a new rector is a time pregnant with challenge and opportunity, a time, which if properly used, can result in important growth for the parish. While an opening in the office of rector is a relatively infrequent event in the life of a parish, the coming and going of clergy is a normal occurrence within the diocese and the larger Church. Especially in the last twenty to twenty-five years, Episcopalians and many others have gathered and analyzed their experiences and have agreed that this is a critical moment in the life of a parish.

This booklet provides an overview of the interim process. It is not, nor should it be used as, a step-by-step guide. The interim period may be understood in four stages: 1) Separation & Planning, 2) Congregational Assessment, 3) the Search, and 4) Start-Up.

Separation & Planning

Notify the Bishop

The interim process begins when the rector announces his or her intention to leave. The rector should consult with the bishop before this announcement is made. It is important that the bishop and the transition minister (formerly known as deployment officer) be part of the process from the very beginning.

Saying Good-bye

Whether the rector is leaving because of retirement, a call to another parish, or even because of differences between clergy and the parish, the elements of the separation process remain the same. Much of the energy of the parish during this time should be devoted to saying "good-bye." Even in those instances where relations between clergy and parish have been less than harmonious, it is always possible to find things that have been good, things to be grateful for, and things to celebrate while acknowledging any conflicts or challenges. It is important that the separation be graceful because a parish that does not feel good about the departure of its former rector is handicapped in establishing a relationship with the new rector. Working with the wardens and vestry, the transition minister can offer suggestions to help the parish arrange a leave-taking that affirms the past and lays the groundwork for the future.

Until the rector leaves, the *only* tasks are to arrange an exit interview, appoint a transition committee to plan the current rector's departure, and provide opportunities for people to say good-bye. It is important to celebrate what has been accomplished and to allow both the priest and the congregation the opportunity to acknowledge that a relationship is ending. The outgoing priest, no matter how much he or she is beloved,

must *not* be part of the planning process. He or she is now part of the past, a treasured past perhaps, but the past nevertheless. It is a natural thing for clergy who have been planning activities for years to want to continue to be helpful, but they should not try to plan a future of which they cannot be a part. It compromises the parish's transition process by preventing people from dealing with the loss of relationship.

Wardens & Vestry

Once the departing rector leaves, the senior warden has a number of responsibilities during the interim period. With the bishop's help as well as that of the transition minister, the senior warden and executive committee must make arrangements for the conduct of worship and for pastoral care until an interim rector begins. While they should be supported in this by the vestry, it is not appropriate to divert their attention and energy to a "mini search" for interim or supply clergy.

Arrangements for supply clergy or the call of an interim rector are to be done by the senior warden, or if a parish has one, by the executive committee.

The interim period will very likely be twelve to eighteen months and sometimes more unless a shorter search option is chosen by the vestry and approved by the bishop. Ideally, the senior warden will secure the services of an interim rector, one who will serve the parish regularly during the interim period. The transition minister will assist in these arrangements. At a minimum, arrangements must be made for clergy to serve on a supply basis and to respond to urgent pastoral needs. Arrangements also must be made for administration of the parish and for continuation of programs. Finally, working with the transition minister, the vestry will develop its plans for the search, discussed at greater length below.

The Services of Clergy

Interim Rector: In the Diocese of Easton, the term "interim rector" is used for those trained and experienced in the ministry of transition. The terms and conditions under which an interim rector is employed may vary with local circumstances, but generally the responsibilities include the conduct of public worship, the continuation of pastoral ministries, support of programs, and whatever else contributes to the maintenance of the normal parish program.

Of particular importance, the interim rector is trained to facilitate the developmental process of an interim period, to assist a parish to evaluate 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, and other parish leaders.

There are five developmental tasks: 1) coming to terms with history; 2) clarifying identity; 3) nurturing new leadership; 4) renewing the relationship with the diocese; and 5) welcoming the new rector.

In the Diocese of Easton, the interim rector functions like a rector in all matters excepting tenure, including the supervision of the parish staff. The interim rector presides at meetings of the vestry. Interim rectors must be paid no less than the diocesan minimum standard of clergy compensation including benefits. The appointment of an interim rector must be approved by the bishop since he or she is an extension of the bishop's ministry just as a rector is an extension of the bishop's ministry.

Supply Clergy: Clergy serving a parish during the interim period whom do not have training and credentials as interim rectors are termed supply clergy. When a supply priest agrees to serve for a prolonged period, he or she is identified as an "extended supply priest." The appointment of an extended supply priest must be approved by the bishop. Extended supply priests are not eligible to be considered as candidates for rector.

Preparing for the Search

The vestry lays the groundwork for the search itself, and establishes a search budget. The budget will include the costs of producing the parish profile, the cost of the search consultant, the costs of visiting candidates, the expense of visits to the parish by the candidates, relocation expenses including meals and lodging if needed, background checks, and incidentals that might include such expenses as postage, the reimbursement of costs for telephone interviews, or the cost of renting a post office box for the use of the search committee. As the needs of the parish become better defined, the vestry appoints and charges a search committee to whom responsibility for identifying prospective clergy is delegated. The search committee is appointed only after an interim rector is in place.

The vestry must decide on the compensation package that it will offer the new rector. The search consultant and the transition minister can be of assistance in suggesting salary levels in comparable parishes, and evaluating other portions of the package such as housing and other allowances. It is diocesan practice that any full-time parochial priest be paid at least the minimum annual compensation as determined by the Compensation & Personnel committee and approved by Council. Additionally, a parish must be able to demonstrate its ability to pay the minimum clergy compensation for three years in order for a search for a full-time rector to begin. The same is true in a search for an assistant or associate rector. Compensation guidelines are available from the diocesan office.

With the guidance of the search consultant, a descriptive booklet about the parish and the community will be prepared. (This booklet is called the parish profile, and is to be distinguished from the CDO position profile, which is a computer form sent to the Church Deployment Office in New York.) This task is the responsibility of the search committee. The booklet is used to introduce prospective candidates to the parish and the local community. Topics addressed in the booklet may include mission or identity

statement, a brief history of the parish, a description of the Diocese of Easton, the community where the parish is located, parish programs, distinctive features of the parish, finances and stewardship, facilities, staffing, key statistics (membership, worship attendance, etc.), goals, and desired characteristics of the next rector.

A draft of the booklet must be reviewed and approved by the bishop, prior to approval by the vestry, and while there is still opportunity for additions and corrections to be made. The profile is the first impression many candidates have of the congregation, and should be developed with broad congregational input. When completed, a copy may be posted on the parish's website, a limited number of printed copies should be available, and several copies are to be sent to the transition minister at the diocesan office.

The Search Consultant

A search consultant is appointed to assist the vestry and search committee. Search consultants are experienced in church affairs, trained in helping groups understand and express their objectives, dealing with conflicts that may arise, and knowledgeable in the mechanics of the search process. The search consultant serves as the principal link with the bishop and the transition minister in providing resources and guidance during the interim period and search process. The transition minister will provide the senior warden with the name of at least one consultant willing to work with the parish.

Communication

Communication with the parish is essential. While the content of the deliberations and the names of nominees are confidential, it is important to communicate on a steady basis the progress of the process – even if that means simply informing the congregation that the committee will not be meeting for three weeks. Parishioners must be assured that the interim period is being well managed and that progress, however invisible, is being made. Otherwise, the parish may complain that “nothing is happening.” It is essential that the vestry and the search committee maintain good communication with the parish and each other through the interim period. For example, weekly or monthly notices in the Sunday bulletin or regular newsletter could announce something along these lines: “The search committee has had four meetings and is currently working on a narrative profile for nominees.” In addition, the chair of the search committee might give oral updates during announcements or parish functions. If new members are elected to the vestry in the course of the search process, it is important to bring them up to date on the status of the process.

Congregational Assessment

Transition Minister Meets with Parish

As soon as possible after the departure of the rector, ideally on the following Sunday, the deployment officer will be the preacher and celebrant at your Sunday services. This gives an opportunity for the parish to participate in a theological reflection upon the challenges and opportunities of an interim period and to share with the transition

minister questions and concerns. It also provides the transition minister an opportunity to share with the parish the bishop's policies for filling clergy vacancies and the reasons for those policies. After the services and an opportunity to meet with the parish, the transition minister may also meet with the vestry to assist in future plans if that has not already happened.

Congregational Self Study and Assessment

Working with the search committee, the search consultant will arrange for a series of meetings of the whole congregation that will include as many parishioners as possible. These meetings will take place only after the rector has left the parish. In the first part of the process, the parish is encouraged to explore its history, consider who they are and whom they serve; assess its needs and the needs of others to whom they minister; and assess the resources they have to offer. The second part of the process asks the parish to consider what God seems to be calling it to do at this time, in this particular place. A question which might be asked is, "Who in our community is missing from our church?" The third part of the process directs the parish toward the future. It may be that the ministry of the past few years is affirmed and continued. It is also possible that while the former direction of ministry is affirmed, the parish will recognize that new challenges call for new directions. The parish is encouraged to develop a vision of its future. Only after this is done is a parish truly able to identify the particular gifts and skills for the clergy leadership it needs. The information gathered during this self-study process forms the basis for a large part of the parish profile.

The Search

The Search Committee

The search committee is appointed by the vestry, and is to be broadly representative of the congregation. It is important that there be widespread agreement on the part of the vestry in the selection of search committee members. It is never appropriate for a member of the parish staff to serve on the search committee, or to be assigned to assist the search committee. Members of the staff will report to the new rector, and should not be privy to the materials or deliberations of the committee.

The search committee must maintain strict confidence about the candidates being considered. For them to do otherwise is to risk great damage, both to the candidates and to their parishes. Most candidates do not know they are being considered until the initial contact. Their congregations also do not and should not know until the decision is made. The search consultant will explain in detail the reasons for this confidentiality and will remind you of it frequently. It is very harmful if a search committee member "leaks" information to anyone in the parish, including a spouse or other family member. It is also important to provide for the security of search committee files.

The Charge

It is important that the vestry give a charge to the search committee, and to determine the number of names to be presented to the vestry. By the time the search process is complete, the search committee will know a great deal about the finalists, much of it subjective knowledge that cannot be communicated readily or easily to others. The search committee members must all agree to support the slate given to the vestry. The names must be in alphabetical order. We recommend that the search committee's report include a brief paragraph on each candidate being presented describing the characteristics of the candidate that seem a particularly appropriate match for the congregation.

Search Options

In consultation with the bishop, the vestry decides which search option will be used and communicates this in a charge to the search committee.

Option #1 - Full Search

After completion of the parish profile, the search committee completes the parish search request form and forwards it to the diocesan transition minister. While the request is processed, the search committee collects names from the bishop and transition minister, members of the parish and friends, and from interested clergy who apply for the position. The opening will also be published in the Positions Open Bulletin and the Deployment Ministry newsletter. The opening will be listed for at least a month to allow as many candidates as possible to apply.

The transition minister will do initial background checks on all candidates who express an interest in being considered. Those names will be given to the search committee for consideration. When the search committee has narrowed its lists to those candidates being brought in for interviews, appointments with the bishop need to be made and formal background checks done.

Option #2 - Limited Search

After the completion of the parish profile, the search committee requests a short list of candidates from the transition minister specifying the number of names desired. The transition officer compiles a list of names from various sources, and determines the names given to the committee based on the parish profile. The search committee will then follow the steps as outlined in option #1.

Option #3 - Nomination of a Single Candidate by Bishop

With this option the bishop is asked to take full responsibility for the search for a new rector. The search committee interviews the candidate and decides if they wish to recommend the candidate to the vestry. With this option, the parish still engages in congregational self-study through congregational meetings.

Option #4 - Priest-in-Charge under Special Circumstances

In rare circumstances, the bishop may offer a congregation the option of the appointment of a priest-in-charge rather than engaging in a search process. When such an appointment is made, the following standards are the norm for the relationship between the parish, the priest-in-charge, and the bishop:

- 1) One or more names of clergy for the position of priest-in-charge are offered by the bishop. Names may be suggested by the vestry but are subject to the approval of the bishop.
- 2) The bishop will appoint the priest-in-charge with the approval and consent of the vestry. The priest-in-charge will exercise the canonical duties of a rector subject to the authority of the bishop, with the exception of tenure.
- 3) The priest-in-charge and the parish enter into an agreement for a period of at least one year. (This can be extended by the bishop if appropriate.)
- 4) An evaluation of the relationship, conducted by the office of the bishop, will take place at six-month intervals. This is not a mutual ministry review, but an assessment based on criteria previously agreed to by the bishop, vestry, and priest-in-charge.
- 5) The letter of agreement between the parish, the priest-in-charge, and the bishop will follow the diocesan guidelines for such letters of agreement including termination provisions should the priest-in-charge not be elected rector.
- 6) The bishop may also elect to appoint a consultant to work with the parish.

Decision Making

The norm for decision making for both the search committee and the vestry is by consensus. The search committee must be able to support whichever candidate the vestry selects. That is why alphabetical order is important versus ranked order. If candidates are ranked, and the vestry chose the "third" candidate rather than the "first," the search committee members might not be as supportive of the new rector as they should be.

The vestry is also charged with consensus making. All of the vestry members must agree on the person to be called. If there is not agreement when a call is made, the call may not be a good one. Those on the vestry or the search committee who do not agree with the call will continually remind others of their reasons for not agreeing to the call, thereby undermining the new rector.

Policies

There are certain policies of the bishop that must be kept in mind concerning possible candidates for the position of rector, regardless of which option is chosen.

- 1) An interim rector or an interim supply priest is not eligible to be considered as a candidate for rector. This made clear in the letter of agreement.
- 2) An assistant or adjunct priest also will not be approved by the bishop for consideration. Any clergy serving a parish in transition may only be considered if he or she leaves the position and is absent from the parish for a minimum of one year.
- 3) As mentioned above, a parish must be able to demonstrate its ability to pay the minimum clergy compensation for a period of three years in order for a search for a full-time rector or assistant to commence.
- 4) All searches in the Diocese of Easton are undertaken on a non-discriminatory basis. Requests for the elimination of certain categories of people, based on such matters as race, color, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by the canons, will not be granted.
- 5) All finalists must be approved by the bishop following a personal interview. This is normally done during the candidate's visit to the parish for a personal interview. Appointments may be arranged by calling Lynn Astatt, executive secretary to the bishop. She may be reached at 410-822-1919.

Background Checks

Background checks concerning sexual misconduct and criminal offenses are required for clergy at any point of transition (pre-ordination, licensing, and employment) in the Diocese of Easton. All finalists must have a complete background check. This differs from the preliminary background screening by the transition minister that simply insures that candidates are priests in good standing.

The usual time needed to complete a background check is two to six weeks. Because the bishop cannot approve the election of a rector by a vestry or the appointment of an assistant rector until such investigation is completed, all finalists are investigated to prevent undue delay at the end of the search process. The Diocese of Easton has contracted with the Oxford Document Management Company, an independent agency specializing in these investigations.

A background investigation is initiated by contacting the transition minister. The usual charge is about \$100.00 per background investigation with additional cost if special rush services are requested. The cost of a background investigation is subject to change. The parish is responsible for this expense. The business office will send an invoice requesting reimbursement to the diocese for the expense of the checks. In the case where this would be a hardship for the parish, the senior warden should contact the transition minister.

Decision

When the search committee has completed its interviews and reached a decision, it presents its candidates in alphabetical order to the vestry. The chairs of the search committee will make the presentation. After receiving the report and reviewing the material the vestry may choose to invite the candidates back to meet with the vestry.

Election or Appointment & Start Up

Election or Appointment

The vestry acts to formally elect the nominee. Before doing anything else, the vestry must notify the bishop of the election. The bishop must be notified so as to give a response as required by national canon. Upon receiving the bishop's approval, a call is then issued. The call should be in writing (following a telephone call) and be accompanied by a proposed letter of agreement that includes proposed stipend, housing, benefits, allowances, vacation and continuing education, special expectations, and so on. The transition minister and the search consultant can provide guidelines and sample agreements. The letter of agreement should be sent to the bishop and the transition minister for review.

Only after, and not before, the call has been formally accepted by the nominee, should the vestry announce the election to the parish and the public. There are a number of opportunities for the process to go astray between the decision of the search committee, the election by the vestry or appointment by the bishop, and the final acceptance of the call. It is potentially embarrassing to both candidate and parish if premature announcements are made.

There are important procedural matters to be considered throughout this phase of the process. Your interim consultant and the transition minister are familiar with the canonical requirements and should be consulted.

Farewell

When the call has been issued and accepted, the interim rector is notified, so plans for his or her departure can be made. It is important to celebrate the ministry in whatever ways are customary to the congregation. Following the departure of the interim rector, it may be necessary to arrange for supply clergy for a period of four weeks to allow some closure before the new rector arrives.

Welcome

When the call has been issued and accepted, it is appropriate for the vestry to appoint a transition committee to serve as a committee of welcome, to introduce the new rector and his or her family to the community, to help in relocation, and to assist in the beginning of the new ministry. For example, the transition committee might plan coffee and dessert for small groups to assist the new rector in meeting people, provide

groceries for the first week, see to it that the rector's office is ready to be occupied, or provide maps and contact information. (See Appendix II.) Usually, the new rector is already employed in another parish. He or she must allow time for a responsible departure, for saying "good-byes," perhaps for a bit of vacation, and for packing and moving before the new ministry begins. It is often at least two months after acceptance of the call before the new rector is in place and not uncommon for a longer period of time to be required.

Honoring the Search Committee

The gift of time and talent given by the search committee needs to be recognized and honored by the congregation. One way to do this is for the vestry to sponsor a reception, possibly a special coffee hour, for the members and their chairs after the call of the new rector has been accepted. When the new rector arrives, it may also be appropriate to recognize and thank the members for their service in the context of Sunday worship with brief prayers. The *Book of Occasional Services 2003* contains a prayer on the occasion of retirement or change in work that might be adapted.

Celebration of a New Ministry

The service of Celebration of a New Ministry may be arranged by contacting the office of the bishop. Remember to invite those people who have been helpful throughout this process, including especially the search consultant, the interim rector, members of the bishop's staff, and any clergy who have served the parish during the interim period.

Conclusion

The new rector is in place, at last. This is, in itself, a significant accomplishment, but hopefully it is not the only benefit a parish has received from its involvement in the interim process. Much of a parish's involvement and benefit depends upon the extent and enthusiasm of participation, and that, in turn, depends upon the leadership of wardens and vestry. Many parishes report discovery of exciting new dimensions in their ministry, an increased sense of identity and purpose, newly identified resources in lay leadership, or a new recognition of its relationship with the bishop and the wider church. May all these blessings be yours, and many more.

Finally, the Diocese of Easton will continue to provide support during the first two years of the new ministry through a program called Fresh Start. The bishop expects all clergy in new ministries to participate in the program.

It is recommended that the rector and vestry arrange to meet with the original search consultant after one year to review the original profile, reflect on the developments of the first year, and set goals for the year ahead. These goals will then establish a foundation for a Mutual Ministry review beginning a year from the start of the new ministry.

APPENDIX I

Significant Points during the Interim Period

Separation & Planning

- Rector consults with bishop
- Bishop formally notified by senior warden of clergy resignation
- Senior warden may meet with transition minister
- Senior warden makes interim or supply clergy arrangements
- Transition minister meets with vestry to outline process
- Search consultant appointed by transition minister
- The rector departs

Congregational Assessment

- Transition minister visits, preaches, meets with parish
- Search consultant conducts meetings with parish
- Vestry approves search budget
- Vestry chooses and instructs search committee
- Vestry establishes tentative salary and allowances
- Vestry selects search option

The Search

- Search request and position profile filed with the Church Deployment Office
- Cut-off date for applications set
- Receipt of applications acknowledged
- Initial screening completed by search committee
- List of approved candidates received from transition minister after preliminary reference checks
- Candidates notified and screening continues
- Three to five finalists chosen, personal interviews arranged, background checks conducted
- Search committee reports recommendations to vestry
- Vestry elects the rector and notifies bishop

Start Up

- Formal call issued, letter of agreement negotiated, approved and signed
- Announcement made
- Parish says good-bye and thank you to the interim rector and the search consultant
- Search committee is thanked
- New rector introduced to parish and community
- All assist in welcome, beginning of new ministry
- Celebration of a New Ministry scheduled through the office of the bishop

Appendix II

Who's Who in the Interim Period

THE BISHOP

The bishop is chief pastor and presiding officer in the diocese and has ultimate responsibility for ministry of all congregations in the diocese. In the interim process the bishop advises wardens at the outset of the interim in person or through his deputy, the transition minister; assigns diocesan resources to assist in the process; approves all candidates; and approves the election of a rector in a parish.

THE WARDENS

The senior and junior wardens are the chief lay officers of the parish, responsible for many of the affairs of the parish in the absence of the rector. When an opening occurs or is imminent, the senior warden notifies the bishop and maintains communication with the transition minister throughout the process. The senior warden (in his or her absence, the junior warden) is responsible for obtaining interim or supply clergy, presides at the election of the rector and communicates that election to the bishop, negotiates on behalf of the parish with the newly called rector, and assists the new rector as his or her new ministry begins.

THE VESTRY

The vestry chooses the search committee, prepares the budget for the search process, and formulates the charge to the search committee. The vestry assists the parish in participating in the vacancy process and, when the process is complete, elects the new rector.

THE TRANSITION MINISTER

The transition minister is the bishop's deputy in dealing with parishes in the interim process. He or she assists the vestry in appropriate closure of the out-going priest's ministry; assists the wardens and vestry in planning the interim process; appoints the search consultant; assists in the search for an interim rector or interim supply clergy; coordinates with the national Church Deployment Office; investigates and consults with the bishop about prospective candidates; provides resources for search consultants and interim rectors; provides resources for the search committee, vestry and wardens; keeps the bishop informed of the progress of all searches; assists in the final call and in the negotiation of a letter of agreement with the new rector; and finally, assists in the start up of the new ministry.

THE SEARCH CONSULTANT

The search consultant works with the wardens, vestry and search committee throughout the interim process. He or she assists the parish in evaluating their strengths and resources, in identifying goals, in dealing with conflict, and in negotiating the procedural aspects of the search. The search consultant consults with interim clergy and

with the deployment officer and, with their assistance, identifies and responds to the needs and problems that may emerge as the process unfolds. He or she is the principal resource and point of intercommunication for both the vestry and search committee and for the deployment officer and bishop.

INTERIM RECTOR

In the Diocese of Easton the term “interim rector” is reserved for those trained and experienced in the ministry of transition. The terms and conditions under which an interim rector is employed may vary with local circumstances but generally the responsibilities include the conduct of public worship, the continuation of pastoral ministries, support of programs, and whatever else contributes to normal parish program. The interim rector is specially trained to assist a parish evaluate 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, and other parish leaders. In the Diocese of Easton, the interim rector functions like a rector with the exception of tenure, including the supervision of the parish staff. The interim rector presides at meetings of the vestry. The appointment of an interim rector must be approved by the bishop since he or she is an extension of the bishop's ministry just as a rector is an extension of the bishop's ministry.

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

A priest-in-charge is appointed by the bishop after consultation with the vestry and exercises the duties of Canon III.9.5 subject to the authority of the bishop.

SUPPLY CLERGY

Clergy serving a parish during the interim period who do not have training and credentials as interim rectors and/or have less comprehensive responsibility are termed “supply clergy.” When a supply priest agrees to serve for a prolonged period he or she may be identified as “extended supply,” and is not eligible to be considered for rector.

CHURCH DEPLOYMENT OFFICE (CDO)

The Church Deployment Office is maintained by the National Church as a registry for all clergy whether or not they are actively seeking positions at this time. Computer files are maintained which show, among other things, the clergy person's work experience, areas of special interest and training, and developed skills. This data is presented in the form of a Clergy Profile. Profiles for all clergy registered in the system are available through the transition minister. When a parish has identified its particular needs and preferences it may file, through the transition minister, a search request that will initiate a computer search for clergy matching most or many of the stated criteria. Information about the parish, in the form of a parish profile, is also filed with the Church Deployment Office where it is available to interested clergy. The Church Deployment Office publishes a monthly listing of all parishes seeking clergy.