

Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan



TRANSITION MINISTRY: INTRODUCTION

Who participates in Transition Ministry?

The primary shepherd of Transition Ministry activities is **the Bishop**. When there is no Rector/PIC, the Bishop is responsible for the administration of the congregation. Bishop Ousley exercises that oversight in collaboration with the Vestry. Additionally, the Bishop oversees, in a general way, all of the activities of Transition Ministry, and gives or withholds consent to the calling/election of new Rectors/Priests-in-Charge.

Day-to-day support and guidance for congregations in transition is provided by **the Canon to the Ordinary (CTO)**, with occasional support from search consultants. The CTO is the primary contact for questions, support, and training regarding search processes, letters of agreement, interviews and visits with candidates, election/selection processes, and any other transition activities. During transition, the CTO will primarily communicate via Wardens and/or Search Committee chairpersons, but may attend Vestry meetings or congregational meetings as needed or upon invitation.

When there is no Rector or PIC in place, or upon imminent departure, **the Vestry** becomes responsible for daily oversight of the congregation, and assumes chief responsibility for communication with the Bishop and CTO. The Vestry will engage in discernment with Bishop and CTO about future options for clergy leadership, and will make provisions for interim or supply services. If a Rector search is initiated, the Vestry will appoint the Search Committee, and will provide for financial support of the search. Finally, the Vestry will actually elect (by vote) the next Rector, negotiate the letter of agreement, and oversee leave-taking of the

previous Rector/PIC as well as welcoming the next Rector/PIC. Other than the election, the Vestry may appoint committees to assist in this work.

The Search Committee is responsible for numerous tasks during a search process, including such things as developing and administering a congregational self-study, preparing a congregational profile, interviewing candidates, and selecting a finalist.

The congregation is responsible for praying for the Vestry, Search Committee, and candidates throughout the process, participating in opportunities to provide input to the Vestry and Search Committee about options for clergy leadership, and respecting the confidentiality of the search process.