



The Episcopal Diocese of Nevada  
The Rt. Rev'd Elizabeth Bonforte Gardner  
Bishop

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## Transitions in the Diocese

The LORD will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. (Deuteronomy 28:12a)

### Phase 1 - Discernment

- Priest speaks first with Bishop Elizabeth.
- Priest announces retirement or departure to senior warden - date and time of announcement to the congregation or vestry is coordinated with the diocesan offices.
- Bishop speaks to the senior warden and meets with the vestry as soon as possible to discuss the transition process.
- Vestry plans a celebration to say goodbye including a Sunday service with "Ending of a Pastoral Relationship" from the Book of Occasional Services.
- Diocese connects the senior warden with Holy Cow! Consulting to conduct a Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT).
- CAT is scheduled and completed.
- Vestry prepares a five year budget projection including the immediate past year, current year, and three future years.
- Treasurer, along with the vestry, completes an external process audit by a firm or individual approved by the bishop.
- CAT results are interpreted and presented to the vestry and Bishop Elizabeth or diocesan representative.
- External audit results are presented to the vestry and Bishop Elizabeth or diocesan representative.

- Results of CAT and/or audit help determine next leadership steps for the church.
- If needed, an interim is hired and goals are determined by vestry and interim with collaboration from the bishop.

## **Phase 2 - Search**

- Search Team is selected and approved by vestry in conversation with Bishop Elizabeth. The Search Team must be representative of the entire congregation. They are commissioned during a Sunday worship service.
- Bishop or diocesan representative meets with Search Team for orientation and spiritual direction.
- Search Team prepares next steps for the search:
  - Congregational meetings
  - Parish Profile - no more than 4 pages, please
  - Website Updates including information about the region and the state
  - OTM Profile Questions answered
- Vestry prepares a compensation package for Bishop Elizabeth's approval.
- Drafts of Parish Profile and OTM submitted to vestry and to the Bishop for approval.
- Bishop meets with the Search Team to approve the final package.

## **Phase 3 - Applications Accepted and Interviews Begin**

- At this point the parish should have:
  - Profile
  - CAT
  - Audit
  - Budget
  - OTM
  - Compensation Package
  - Website Updated

- Opportunity is posted and advertised by diocesan office on ENS, OTM, Dio Website, Parish Website
- Bishop to receive:
  - OTM
  - Cover Letter
  - Resume
- Bishop Elizabeth receives applications and sends thank you email.
- Bishop Elizabeth conducts Red Flag Checks.
  - Those names not to be presented to the Search Team are notified by the diocesan office.
- Bishop or diocesan representative meets with Search Team to present candidates and their supporting materials.
- Search Team conducts initial online interviews and begins reference checks to narrow the list of applicants.
  - Watch sermons and Sunday service celebrations.
  - Review of social media content for church and applicant.

#### **Phase 4 - Finalists**

- Two or three finalists selected.
- Diocese conducts background checks and psychological evaluations are scheduled.
- Visits to current calls begin.
- Bishop Elizabeth and vestry meet with candidates when they visit Nevada and, therefore, schedules must be coordinated.
- Vestry begins to draft a Letter of Agreement in consultation with the diocese.
- Search Team meets to recommend one or two finalists to the vestry.
- Bishop meets with the vestry and Search Team for the presentation of the finalist(s).
  - Vestry approves a finalist and Bishop Elizabeth calls the candidate to offer the position, OR

- Vestry does not approve and the meeting is adjourned. There is an immediate follow up from Bishop Elizabeth to the Search Team and vestry to discern next steps, AND
- Search Team contacts finalists.
- Letter of Agreement is negotiated and signed by all parties.
  - Announcement materials are created
  - Announcement is coordinated between all parties with careful consideration to the new priest's existing call.
- Announcement is made and a Transition Team begins their work.
- Plans begin to celebrate the interim rector and lay leadership who helped during the transition.
  - Last Sunday service (should be at least 3 to 4 weeks before a new priest arrives).
  - Supply clergy fill in until the new priest is installed.
  - Search Team is decommissioned and Transition Team is commissioned.

### **Phase 5 - Transition**

- New priest is welcomed with support from the community including but not limited to:
  - School information
  - Job opportunities for spouse
  - Housing options
  - Moving company suggestions
  - Lists of providers
    - Vet
    - Doctors
    - Auto
    - Landscape
    - Cleaning Services
- New priest is instituted at a "Celebration of New Ministry" open to the congregation and the diocese.
  - NOTE: The new priest may not serve in any

capacity until this time.

- Follow up celebrations are scheduled for the spouse and/or family if appropriate.
- Transition Team is decommissioned after six months of the new priest's installation.

Notes and Questions for Bishop Elizabeth