

What Comes Next?

If you have felt like me, I would guess that you may have had a bit of anxiety or concern about what happens next in Emmanuel's "transition". Perhaps some of us may have even been in a little denial; realizing that the wonderful 33 year pastoral guidance of Fr. Rob is coming to an end on October 1.

Here's the good news! At Fr. Rob's request and Mo. Lyn's agreement and the Bishop's blessing, Mo. Lyn will be the interim priest while we, together, undertake this journey into the future. And rest assured, the Holy Spirit, our Advocate, will be with us throughout.

On May 27th your Vestry met with the Reverend Canon Joanna Satorius, who is the Canon for Formation and Transition Ministry. She is a wonderful, knowledgeable person representing the Bishop and has guided many parishes through this process over the last 14 years. She offers the resources and best practices of the Diocese. She will be at our side in all the steps along the way whenever needed.

There are diocesan guidelines to follow in the process of discernment needed to help us to choose our new priest and our future. I will outline the general procedure later so you will know what to expect and how we're coming along. Often in this article I will be using Reverend Joanna's own words. One thing is clear. We will be asking for and needing everyone's input!

The main point that the Reverend Joanna emphasized for all of us to understand is that "this is not a goal oriented process in terms of meeting time deadlines, rushing to conclusions in order to get a priest by a certain date." What? No, "the secret is in relationship in the journey with Christ....engaging together to show who we are now and what we would like to be.....it's not about getting a priest".

The Process:

- The Vestry will be the coordinating committee responsible for the process, for guidance and for consensus decision making.
- The major part of the process, prior to the search for a priest, is developing together....all of us...a "Portfolio" or a "Parish Profile". This shows all the things that a new clergy person would want to know about us, Emmanuel. It describes the congregation's history, mission and goals, hopes and dreams of the qualities they seek in their new priest. It used to be published in booklet form but nowadays it is recommended to be posted on a link on our website. It's also recommended to post as we develop it, rather than wait for the finished product.
- **The Portfolio** is usually made up of three parts:
 1. **History** this is developed as a "Story Day" when as many folks as possible get together for morning, lunch and part of the afternoon to "tell their stories" of Emmanuel. They can be added to our "Timeline" which has already been developed. The Diocese provides a Facilitator and it can be a fun day as we tell our wonderful Emmanuel stories to the entire group. The participation of as many people as possible is desired!

2. Surveythis survey is provided by the Diocese and is a questionnaire about the ministry of our Church, worship, education, music, stewardship, administration, quality of congregational life and so on. We hope for 100% participation. We will possibly get together as a group, or groups, during or after a service and each fill in the questionnaire. In that way, any questions that arise can be addressed so there will be a uniformity of understanding.

3. Demographics...information about our congregation and the area we serve. This is aided by an online company, Mission Insight, paid for by the Diocese and will delve into statistics of demographics and trends.

A Portfolio Committee will be appointed by the vestry to plan and guide us through the portfolio preparation process.

We will be getting the “Story Day” on the calendar as soon as possible. Of necessity it will need to be a Saturday and might have to be after the summer months so we will have maximum participation.

It’s only after all this is done that we get into the actual search process. Since Father Rob has officially announced his retirement, you’ll be glad to know that Reverend Joanna is already keeping a list of priests who have expressed interest.

So. let’s enjoy the journey together! Please participate. Your input is important!

With guidance from knowledgeable people, with Mother Lyn as interim priest, and with prayer and guidance from the Holy Spirit, we can have a fine time together in the last month’s of Fr. Rob’s leadership. Building on our past strengths, celebrating who we are, we can look to a joyous journey into the future

Blessings to all,

Your Senior Warden,

Ted Jones