

St. Aidan's Congregational Survey and Listening Session FAQs

How long will the survey be available?

The survey will be available from February 15 through midnight on March 8, 2021.

How long does the survey take?

The online survey takes an average of 30 minutes to complete.

When will the Listening Sessions occur and how long will they take?

We will conduct two Listening Sessions by Zoom, one on February 28 from 1:00 to 3:30 pm and one on March 3 from 7:45 to 9:15 pm. All who are active in the parish are encouraged to participate. Please watch The Epistle and Sunday announcements for instructions on how to sign up for one of the sessions.

What does "Discernment" have to do with the search for a new rector?

The process of seeking a new rector is framed not only by the steps involved but by the way in which we approach those steps. Discernment asks us to commit to a way of deep listening—to our own hearts, to the voices of the parish community, and to our sense of the Spirit at work among us. The discernment committee grounds its work in prayer and maintains a focus on hearing the voices of the community.

Our discernment process is a time in which we consider who we are as a community, where we're going, and what issues may need attention as we prepare to call a new rector. The self-study includes the survey and the listening sessions and allows us to prayerfully identify and consider our calling as a community, how we're meeting the needs of our parishioners, and what may need attention as we move into the future together.

What's the difference between the survey and the Listening Sessions? Should I do both?

The survey and the listening sessions allow us to collect information from the community in two different ways. We encourage all who are active at St. Aidan's to do both. The survey helps us assess the demographics of our community and identify our church's strengths and weaknesses. It explores what is important to us and what we hope for in a new rector. The Listening Sessions let us hear first-hand how we are living the St. Aidan's experience. Together, information from the survey and listening sessions will be used to craft a portfolio that the Office of Transition Ministry will make available to priests applying for the position of rector. The same information will guide us in enhancing our website to paint a vivid picture of life in the St. Aidan's community. Both the portfolio and the website will be windows into St. Aidan's for rector candidates whose sense of call aligns with our needs and hopes as a community in Christ.

Who is leading the Discernment process?

The Discernment Committee is a group of eight St. Aidan's parishioners who have accepted the Vestry's invitation to manage the discernment process over the next year. Committee members represent a range of ages, longevity and experience at St. Aidan's. They are:

Lisa Richard, Chair
Darlene Ash
Pris Bornmann

Barbara Cotter
Viju Dilley
Mary Jane Guffey

Kevin Saunders
Kathy Seikel

Can I take the survey if I haven't been to church lately?

Absolutely. We recognize Covid has forced changes in everyone's routine. While Sunday worship is an essential component of our faith, there are other facets to the St. Aidan's experience: fellowship via social groups, Evening Prayer, community outreach, spiritual development through Adult education and the Center for Spiritual Deepening, and Youth Group activities. Your perspective will help us understand how different members interact with our community. If you continue to be engaged in the life of St. Aidan's, we want to hear from you.

I don't have a computer or use email. Can I get a paper survey?

We will be happy to send you a paper copy of the survey in a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Just give the parish office a call at 703-360-4220. But don't wait too long – we need to receive your survey by March 8 for your responses to be included in our findings.

I might need a little help taking the survey.

A Discernment Committee member will be happy to help you fill out the survey or answer any questions you may have about taking the survey online. Please call the parish office at 703-360-4220 or send an email to staidansalexandriadiscernment@gmail.com.

How can I keep track of where we are in the Discernment process?

The Discernment Committee will post regular updates in our weekly newsletter, The Epistle, in Sunday parish announcements, and on the St. Aidan's website at <https://www.staidansepiscopal.com/transition-information>.

Where can I find out more about St. Aidan's?

You can find basic information about St. Aidan's history and mission, events and more on our website at staidansepiscopal.com. Please also call the parish office to find out how you can receive regular updates.