Last Updated: June 5, 2026

St. David's Priest in Charge Search Process

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Who is on the St. David's Search Team?

- Hector Alonso, Michelle Eavey, Travis Kennedy, David Love, Esther Nand, Jay Phillippi and Marti Stephens-Hartka (chair)

What is the mission of the Search Team

- To find our next ordained leader, a Priest in Charge, through prayer, discernment and feedback gathered from the congregation.

What exactly is a "Priest in Charge"?

- A priest is called for a pre-negotiated period, typically 3 years.
- After 12-18 months the role may be converted to Rector with Vestry approval after a Mutual Ministry Review.
- The Priest in Charge holds **all the responsibilities and authority of a rector** including preaching, pastoral care, administration, worship leadership, and vestry partnership.
- The benefit for us is a faster process and churches have an option to end the relationship if the call is not a good fit; it is also easier for part-time calls.

Why are we calling a <u>part-time</u> Priest in Charge?

- Given the recommended Diocesan clergy compensation guidance and current St. David's budget constraints, we will be searching for a Priest in Charge who can work ~24-28 hours per week.

What is a Community Ministry Portfolio?

- The Community Ministry Profile (CMP) is an online form that replaces the Parish Profile that used to be used in Search processes.
- The Community Ministry Profile (CMP) communicates the basics on who we are and what we are looking for in a priest.
- We will be updating the St. David's website to provide additional color and background for prospective candidates.

How long will it take to find our new Priest?

- Below is a timeline that is an **<u>ESTIMATE only</u>** based on Diocesan feedback – our process could take more or less time. We will keep the congregation updated if our expected timeline changes.

Activity	Timeframe
Search Team commissioned	January 11, 2026
Gather Data from the Parish	February - March 2026
Town Hall (facilitated by the Diocese)	March 1, 2026 (St. David's Day)
Analyze demographic trends, etc.	March - April 2026
Parish wide CAT Survey	Late March - April 2026
Create Draft Community Profile	April - May 2026
Vestry & Diocese Review Community Profile	June 2026
Community Profile finalize and published online	June 2026
St. David's Website Update Completed	June 2026
Receive candidates and conduct interviews	Summer 2026
Present final candidate to Vestry	Fall 2026
Complete selection process (Vestry led)	Late Fall 2026
New Priest in Charge starts	January 2027

❖ *Note - Items in green are complete and those in blue are in progress*

How is the Diocese helping St. Davids with the Search Process?

- The Diocese has a Director of Transition Ministry, and it is the purpose of the person in that role to assist congregations in transition.
- Some of the ways the Diocese will help include providing guidance on creating the Community Parish Profile (CMP), assisting with gathering input from the congregation, screening candidates and answering any questions that arise.

How will the congregation be kept informed?

- Frequent updates will be done at services and in the E Goodnews – at least monthly.
- This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) will be linked in E-GoodNews and available in paper and updated as necessary.
- Note that anything related to the identity of specific candidates must be held in strictest confidence within the Search Team and may NOT be shared with the congregation.

What if I know of a perfect candidate?

- Please give the name to Marti Stephens-Hartka to share with the Diocese
- We are NOT able to directly contact candidates who have not been pre-screened by the Diocese.

What can I do to help?

- HUGE THANKS to everyone who attended the March 1 Parish Town Hall and/or responded to the Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT) Survey!
- Continue to share your questions/feedback with members of the Search Team.
- Pray! Use the Search Prayer in your daily prayers.

What was the feedback from the congregation in the March 1 Parish Town Hall?

- After the March 1 Town Hall that had ~50 participants, the Search Team collated and summarized the feedback provided. The summary of the feedback is below.
- When we most felt St. David's was doing God's work
    - Serving and feeding those in need
    - Nurturing children and youth
    - Caring for one another in times of illness or grief
- Our Hopes
    - Grow – especially younger and newer members
    - Establish stable clergy leadership
    - Achieve financial strength and debt freedom
    - Deepen community engagement and outreach
- What we are seeking in a Priest in Charge
    - Inspiring, relatable preaching that connects faith to real life
    - Compassionate, visible pastoral presence
    - Collaborative leadership that strengthens lay ministry and welcomes all generations
- Big Picture
    - We value **community, belonging, children & youth, and care**
    - We hope for **growth, stability, and strong leadership**
    - We seek a priest who can **preach compellingly, care deeply, and build collaboratively**

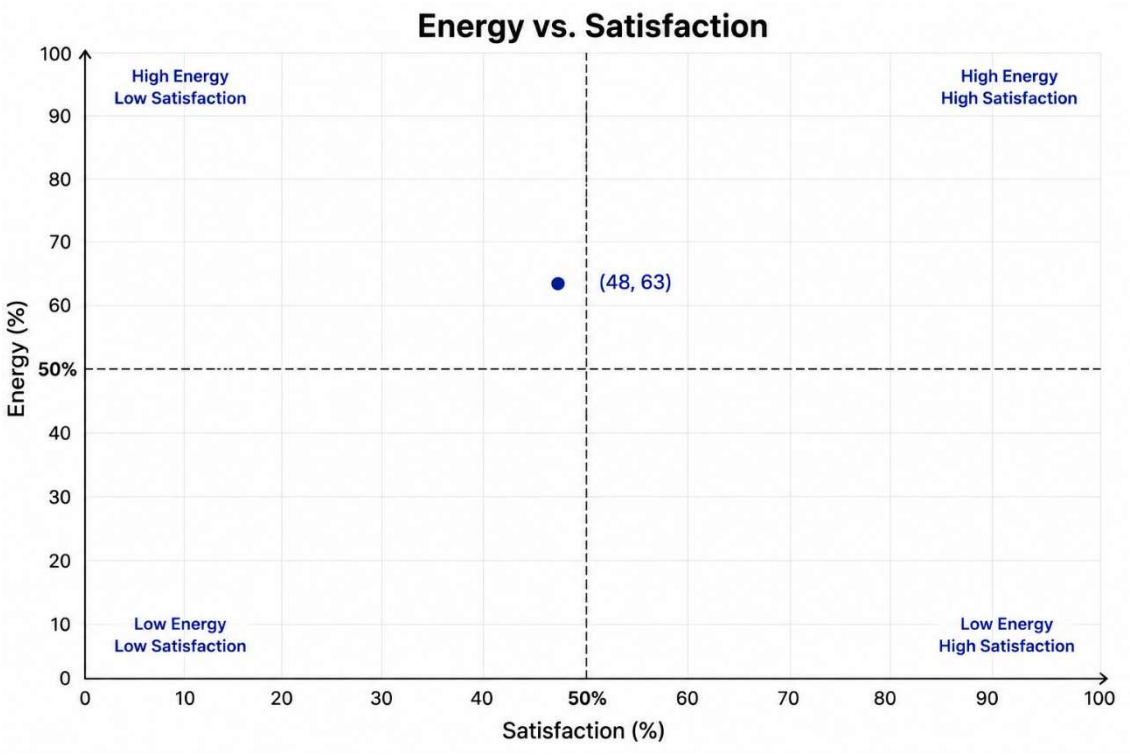
What was learned from the Holy Cow Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) Survey?

- This survey measured health, vitality and captured our hopes for the future and what we are looking for in our next ordained leader. It also benchmarked St. David's against other congregations around the country who have used this survey
- We had 77 respondents – an off the charts incredible response for a congregation of our size!!
- Critical abilities we are looking for our new priest
    - Preaching
    - Strategic leadership/change management
    - Teaching/Formation
    - Pastoral Care
    - Administration
    - Community Catalyst

- The Top Priorities for St. David's shared on the survey were:
    - Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people (GROW)
    - **Make necessary changes** to attract families with children and youth (GROW)
    - Create more opportunities to form meaningful relationships i.e. small groups, fellowship opportunities, shared meals (FELLOWSHIP)
    - Develop the spiritual generosity to financially support the ministry of the church (STEWARDSHIP)
    - Strengthen the process by which people are called and equipped for ministry and leadership (LEADERSHIP, FORMATION)
    - Provide more opportunities for Christian/spiritual formation for all ages (FORMATION)
    - Enhance ministries that work toward helping those broken by life circumstances (OUTREACH, PASTORAL CARE)
- What else did we learn?
    - We appreciate the job that Paul is doing as interim!
    - We are very adaptable congregation compared to other congregations taking the survey – we are OK trying new things and dealing with change.
    - While we would love to have financial stability, our stewardship is above average in terms of % of giving for our faithful givers.
    - One area of concern is that a number of respondents called out the desire for a full-time rector, something our budget unfortunately does not permit at this time. This will involve making some tradeoffs.

How did we compare when benchmarked against other congregations in terms of energy and satisfaction?

- See the chart below. We were above average in energy but slightly below 50% in satisfaction. To us that seems accurate as the congregation is ready to step out of this in between time and into the future with a new ordained leader.



What other input have you looked at as part of the Search process?

- We reviewed demographic trends along with the Vestry using data from the FaithX Project looking at areas within a 5- and 15-minute drive of St. David's
    - Experiencing continued population & income growth > national average
    - A significant cohort of single and two person households
- 25% of survey respondents fall outside the 15-minute drive range and are some of our most faithful members
- Episcopal Church growth has lagged Chesterfield's growth to the western part of the county