



# The Church of St. Mary Magdalene

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

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## PARISH SELECTION COMMITTEE UPDATE 15 MARCH 2009

### INTRODUCTION

At our Vestry meeting on 22 February, parishioners established a Parish Selection Committee (PSC) comprised of the following seven individuals:

Rob Castle	Heather McGregor
Brian Clarke	Eileen Morrison
Elizabeth Cowling	Lorna Scott
Vicki Hathaway	

Under Section 3(d) of Canon 10, the sole function of the PSC is “to provide advice to the Bishop on the appointment of a cleric to fill the vacancy.” Since the PSC’s formation, we have learned there is, indeed, a very thorough process on how that advice is sought and given, which will involve not only the PSC, but, at times, all parishioners.

### PROCESS

The Diocese, recognizing the importance and sensitivities around the appointment of incumbents, has established a thorough and detailed process. This process is supported by the Dioceses with resources including a very helpful guide book and volunteer personnel.

The initial step is for the PSC to meet with the Area Bishop. This meeting took place last week, with the Bishop outlining the PSC’s role and responsibilities. Bishop Poole is now in the process of appointing a **PSC facilitator**, who is selected from a roster of volunteer facilitators. The role of the facilitator is to aid both the PSC and Bishop Poole “with the selection and discernment process”. The facilitator attends all PSC meetings. As well as the facilitator, the Area Dean, Rev. Jeffry Kennedy, of St Mathias, acts as an **advisor** to the PSC.

At its first meeting, the PSC appointed its **Chairperson**, Rob Castle, whose role is to maintain contact with Bishop Poole, to ensure timelines are kept, to ensure equitable participation of all PSC members, and to act as key spokesperson for the PSC.

With the PSC and facilitator in place, the first major undertaking of the PSC will be the development of a **parish profile**. The parish profile is a comprehensive review of all aspects of the parish including current ministry, vision for future ministry, and expectations of the next Incumbent’s gifts and focus. This is a key element, as it is the way in which we let interested clergy know more fully about SMM. It is also a key participation point for all parishioners. The profile will be developed through a variety of measures including the following possibilities: questionnaire(s), parish meetings, focus groups, and one on one discussions with PSC members. This will be the tool which will allow different constituent groups of the parish a chance to be heard and to express their opinion about SMM’s needs today and into the future.

Only once the **parish profile** is completed, will names of prospective candidates begin to be received. This is quite possibly the most sensitive part of the entire process. Names come from three different sources: the parish through the PSC, clergy themselves as candidates, or the Bishop. All of these prospective candidates’ names are given to Bishop Poole. It is his sole responsibility to vet the candidates, determine interest and availability, and, most importantly, to determine their suitability for the parish. Bishop Poole will provide the PSC a **short list** of candidates. That list will be no fewer than 2, but no more than 4. The PSC may only interview from this list of candidates. It is not required to interview all candidates on the list, but if we do not, we are to provide the Area Bishop with our rationale. No member of the PSC may approach any member of the clergy to see if they would be interested in applying for the appointment. This would be seen as interference on the PSC’s part and would in all likelihood cause the process to stop completely.

Once the PSC determines who it plans to **interview**, it may conduct more than one series of interviews. As part of this step, members of the PSC will likely go to the home parish of the various candidates to observe and listen. This must be handled deftly so as to respect those local communities. Of course, complications may arise if candidates are not local. It will be SMM’s responsibility to provide transportation and accommodation for any candidate who must travel to Toronto for the interview. Given the international renown of the parish, this may be a real possibility.



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## RECOMMENDATION

Upon completion of the interviews, the PSC will develop a consensus recommendation to Bishop Poole who it believes would be the best candidate for SMM. We are to provide a rationale for the recommendation, as well as commentary as to why the other candidates are not being recommended. This is to aid the Bishop in his discernment.

## APPOINTMENT

It is the responsibility of the Area Bishop to appoint parish priests. The PSC only provides advice to aid in the Area Bishop's discernment.

## ROLE OF PARISHIONERS

The most important role for parishioners will be during the development of the **parish profile**. Your participation and candor at that time will be paramount. Parishioners are also welcome to provide suggestions for candidates to the PSC chair for the review of the PSC. We ask that you wait a while before providing such recommendations until the PSC is fully grounded in its new tasks. Please be mindful that PSC members cannot talk about the merits of any candidate you might want to put forward. Of course, your advice and input is both welcomed and encouraged at any time.

## COMMUNICATION

The PSC is committed to keeping the parish informed about its progress throughout the process. We will be providing regular updates as issues and developments warrant and will share with you as much information as we can within the confines of appropriate rules of confidentiality.

This is a challenging time for the parish and members of the PSC ask for your prayers and understanding as we embark on our important work to find a new incumbent.

Sincerely,

Rob Castle, PSC Chairperson

## PRAYERS FOR THE PARISH SELECTION COMMITTEE

*Almighty God who knowest the needs of thy church in every place: Look graciously at this time upon the people of this parish, and give them a faithful pastor who shall feed thy flock according to thy will and make ready a people acceptable unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

BCP, p. 45

*Almighty God, giver of all good gifts. Look on your church with grace, and guide the minds of those who shall choose a Priest for this parish, that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and support us in our ministries, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

BAS, p. 676