

The Rainbow

February 2022



What Is Transition Ministry and Why Do We Need It - Frequently Asked Questions

by the Rev. Lou Hays

On my first Sunday with you I ended the service with a time of sharing. I told the condensed version of my spiritual journey and opened the floor to questions about me or this time of transition in the life of Christ Episcopal Church. If you were not present, you can see it toward the end of the January 23 service on our Facebook page. Perhaps not surprisingly, virtually all of the questions centered on the transition and search process. Please know that, at this beginning stage of the transition, there are some questions that really can't be answered or answered to your satisfaction. Feel free to be in touch with me or the Wardens if you have further questions.

What is Transition Ministry

Transition Ministry is what goes on in the parish between the time a Rector leaves and a new Rector is called. The clergy and lay leadership focus on the special needs and hopes of the parish during this in-between time. This is not just marking time between Rectors. It can be a rich time of self-discovery and growth. It can be a time of preparation for change that is inevitable when a new Rector is called. It's an opportunity to move toward new life that will be a blessing to the parish.

What is an Interim Rector?

An Interim Rector is a lot like a Rector. He or she serves for a fixed period of time, usually until a new Rector is called, rather than indefinitely as a "settled" Rector would. The Interim Rector cannot be considered as a candidate for the Rector position. Usually the Interim Rector has training and experience in serving as an Interim in other parishes. The Interim gets to know the congregation, bringing fresh eyes to the parish. The Interim helps the congregation to honor and learn from its past, live fully into the present time by carrying out its vital ministries, perhaps suggesting that some ministries have reached a logical ending point, and possibly exploring a few new ministries and activities. And the Interim works with the congregation to envision and discern the future that God has in mind for the parish, and the characteristics needed in a new Rector to help carry out that vision.

Why can't we just skip all of that and go out and recruit a new Rector?

We are a church, not a secular business or non-profit. We need to carefully and prayerfully go about discerning God's blessings and work in the parish and how God may be calling you to build on these blessings in the future. There needs to be an appropriate time to grieve the loss of the departed Rector. There needs to be time to understand the strengths and core values of the congregation. There needs to be time to reflect on who the parish is and where it wants to go. Skipping these steps might result in searching for the wrong person to be the next Rector.

Can't the Bishop just send us the right person, as he sent us Chad 8 ½ years ago?

Miracles do happen. Chad was the right person at the right time, thanks be to God. At the moment, there aren't any Chads out there. To the best of my knowledge, the Diocese doesn't have anyone about to graduate from seminary or a comparable formation program, or about to be ordained.

How long is this all going to take? I've heard that in the past it took two years.

I pray that it will take a lot less than two years. At this point there is no honest answer to this question. It will take as long as it needs but no longer. It will unfold in the fullness of time, in God's time. I pray that it will take less than a year.

What are some of the steps and when are we getting started?

We have already started! I'm here as your Interim and have chaired my first Vestry meeting. The Vestry has appointed the Rector Search Committee, and our first session should have been held by the time you are reading this. The Wardens and I, along with the Search Committee, will decide on some of the steps that we will go through to discover the core values, strengths and aspirations of the parish, all steeped in prayer and discernment. The Bishop's office will be involved.

A parish profile will be developed. A profile contains basically three types of information and serves at least two purposes. Much of the profile will contain information about Christ Episcopal Church, such as its history, demographics, ministries and finances. It will also contain information about the local community and its demographics, history, and cultural, educational and recreational resources. And importantly it contains aspirational material – hopes and dreams of the parish for the future and the characteristics of the person we pray will be the person that God is calling to help make that vision a reality. The profile presents the story of the parish in an appealing, convincing yet realistic way, essentially “selling” the position to prospective applicants and candidates. And the profile also reminds or informs the congregation of the strengths and aspirations of the church.

What's the “job market” for priests or graduating seminarians like? Are people available, and are positions available for them?

There's good news and there's bad news. Many people, male and female, young and old will graduate this spring from Episcopal seminaries, from Anglican-tracks at non-Episcopal seminaries like Duke, and from various Diocesan in-house formation programs. Some of those people already have jobs for post-graduation and some will be placed by their Bishops and not allowed to leave their Diocese upon graduation. At the moment, it seems as though most graduates of mainline seminaries are able to find priestly calls. There are also clergy already serving in a parish or other priestly position who are contemplating a search or already engaged in a search who might be interested in coming to Bluefield. The bad news is that there is probably a shortage of priests, with more clergy retiring than are being ordained. And this is exacerbated by the unwillingness or inability of many clergy to move because of a spouse's employment or children's school situation. As in all things, we will trust in God's love and expect the right person to be found and called at the end of the process.

How will we know what's happening?

The Vestry, Search Committee and I are committed to keeping the congregation informed as much as possible. There will be certain activities that are vitally important for as many parishioners as possible to participate in to get the fullest and most accurate results. Those events and/or activities

will be publicized as widely as possible. As schedules are developed and approved, they will be shared. Certain activities of the Search Committee will have to remain confidential, even from their spouses or partners, particularly when it comes time for receiving and evaluating applicants and then candidates.

I know the perfect person to be our next Rector. Can I submit his or her name?

Not yet. Once the parish profile is completed, parishioners may submit names for consideration if they believe the person is consistent with the characteristics spelled out in the profile.

Last question. How will our position be advertised?

There are several avenues for publicizing the position. A primary way will be the Office of Transition Ministry of the Episcopal Church. This office posts position openings in its data base, which can be accessed by clergy or seminarians around the country. There is also a group of Diocesan Transition Officers (Bishops' staff who specialize in working with clergy and parishes in transition) who share position openings on their website and who meet periodically to try to match clergy and parishes who are in the search process. There is also a daily email from the Episcopal News service that includes new position openings from around the country.

News about the Consecration of our Bishop Coadjutor

The Rev. Matthew Cowden will be ordained and consecrated Bishop on Saturday, March 12, at 11 a.m. at the chapel of West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon. Matthew will serve as Bishop Coadjutor until the scheduled retirement of Bishop Klusmeyer, at which time Matthew will become our Diocesan Bishop. This will be a wonderful celebration for our Diocese, and an opportunity for Christ Episcopal Church to participate along with all parishes of the Diocese.

The Transition Committee wants every parish to participate in the liturgy in some way. As of now, no one for our parish has volunteered to serve. The Committee is looking for someone from each parish to carry in procession their parish's banner, and also to serve as ushers, acolytes, choir members and other functions. Please consider participating. You may see the various opportunities and register for one of them at <https://forms.gle/FvEbQUbETMqRpyqx8>

There will also be an opportunity to be in the congregation for the service. The chapel was chosen because it could, in pre-Covid days, accommodate everyone who might want to attend from throughout the state. Because of Covid, attendance may be limited. To register, please see the consecration invitation elsewhere in this issue. If you are unable to attend in person, the service will be livestreamed on the Diocesan Facebook page.



Minutes-Vestry Meeting-January 19, 2022

Present: Susanne Pulse, Mary Catherine Williams,
Peter Richardson, Peter Taylor, Linda Ammar,
Elizabeth Clement, David Kersey

Absent: Betty Nash Vic Bowman

Also present: Frank Dragatto, treasurer and Rev. Lou Hays, Interim Rector

The meeting was opened by Rev. Hays and the presence of a quorum declared.

Linda Ammar read Genesis 12:1-9 and Rev. Hays reflected on the similarities faced by Abram and our church-both being put on a journey, not necessarily expected, but both in response to God's plan. Like Abram, we should trust in the Lord.

Then, the Vestry and Rev. Hays read the Collect for Wulfstan of Worcester.

The Vestry then held an election of officers. David Kersey was nominated as Senior Warden; Peter Richardson was nominated as Junior Warden; and, Susanne Pulse was nominated as Registrar. Upon motion of Linda Ammar and second of Mary Catherine Williams, the candidates were unanimously elected. Rev. Hays then commissioned the Vestry and Wardens and all recited the Oath of Fidelity.

Susanne Pulse was appointed Chair of the Communications Commission. The other Commission that needs a chair is Worship, which will be in charge of scheduling readers, acolytes and videographer for all church services. No one volunteered for that role and it was decided to locate the existing schedule first, before someone agrees to take on that responsibility.

The next order of business was to elect a search committee. Church members who had agreed to serve are: Teresa Paine, Bill Denny, Becky Beckett, David Hardin, Susanne Pulse, Mary Catherine Williams, and Stan Kiser. Upon motion of Peter Taylor and second of Elizabeth Clement, those members were unanimously elected to serve as the Search Committee.

The minutes of the Vestry meetings held on December 8 and 15 were reviewed and upon motion of Peter Taylor and second of Linda Ammar, were unanimously approved.

Frank Dragatto presented the treasurer's report. The balance sheet and income/expense statements were presented and noted to be the same as presented at the annual meeting. Upon motion of Mary Catherine Williams and second of Susanne Pulse, the report was unanimously approved. It was then discussed about an "accounts payable" list being included in the monthly reports, which would be a list of any due but unpaid bills of the church.

Frank then tendered his resignation as treasurer, noting that he had held that position for 7 years. Upon motion of Linda Ammar and second of Elizabeth Clement, the Vestry unanimously accepted the resignation with regret and a sincere expression of gratitude for all of Frank's hard work over the past 7 years.

Don Kersey had previously volunteered to take on the treasurer's role and upon Motion of Susanne Pulse and second of Mary Catherine Williams, Don Kersey was unanimously appointed as the new treasurer.

David Kersey presented the Senior Warden's report. On Tuesday, January 18, 2022, the church held a service to commemorate the end of Father Chad Slater's ministry as Rector of Christ Episcopal Church-Bluefield. After weeks of discussion and meetings with Rev. Hays and with the prior authority extended by the Vestry, David Kersey and Rev. Hays executed a written agreement, approved by the Bishop, appointing Rev. Hays as Interim Rector of Christ Episcopal Church-Bluefield. Questions had been raised about the Columbarium funds of approximately \$25,000 not being held in an interest bearing account. That Commission has not met in over 2 years, and there are other outstanding issues. The Senior Warden reported that he was gathering information from the office and will be scheduling a Columbarium Commission meeting to address outstanding issues.

Peter Richardson gave the Junior Warden's report. The church has received a quote of \$1,137 for Wallace Electric to install 5 electrical outlets in the church, to power the air purifiers located along the walls. After discussion, upon motion of Peter Taylor and second of Elizabeth Clement, the Vestry unanimously agreed to accept the quote and authorized Peter to engage Wallace to do the work. Peter then advised that once he is in possession of the necessary information from the church office, he will submit the reimbursement request to the Building Endowment Fund, for 2021 maintenance expenses.

Commission Reports: Education Commission-Elizabeth Clement described some of the past work of the commission and then requested guidance from Rev. Hays for moving forward with new programs. It was agreed that we need to completely understand the diocesan Covid guidelines in order to make plans.

Outreach Commission-Peter Taylor reported that the church picked up additional donated food from Grants Supermarkets, the remainder of the 20 days of giving program. Food Pantry will be held tomorrow, January 20 and 50 to 60 bags of food and kerosene vouchers are expected to be distributed. Art Meade has offered to write a grant for the Food Pantry. Obtaining quotes for industrial shelving for the boiler closet off Rowley Hall was discussed as part of the grant.

Communications Commission-Susanne Pulse expressed her appreciation for the work done by Mimi Merritt in writing articles for the Rainbow, which is distributed monthly. Susanne will take over responsibility for the weekly emails, with Rev. Hays' help.

Rev. Hays gave the Interim Rector's Report. He has been studying and preparing to assume the role of Interim Rector, since soon after his first contact from the church, on November 18, 2021. He has met several times with the Senior Warden and Father Slater, to be as prepared as possible. On Saturday March 12, 2022, there will be an Ordination of Matthew Cowden, as Bishop Coadjutor, at Wesleyan Chapel in Buckhannon, West Virginia. Christ Church-Bluefield should be represented by one or more members of the laity, one of whom should carry the parish banner in the procession. He will attend as our Interim Rector.

In response to a request for questions or comments, Peter Richardson, on behalf of the Vestry, expressed appreciation for Rev. Hays accepting the call to serve as our Interim Rector, especially considering the travel and distance involved. Peter stated that Rev. Hays' service will add so much to our worship experience during this time and his guidance through the search process will be invaluable.

Rev. Hays then stated he wanted to have a Vestry Retreat on Saturday January 29 or February 5. Susanne will send out an email to the members, to assess the date preference.

Other Business-It was suggested and agreed that for the months of February and March, the regular meeting time will be moved up to 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed with Compline, lead by Rev. Hays.

Please Keep the Following in Your Prayers: Dorene Dimes, Bonnie Taylor, Joe Sanders, Bea Paine, Bob and Peggy Walk, John Kersey, Martha Linkous, Jay Kephart, Buck and Louisa Sowers, Donna Fortune, Ed and Gladys Fortune, Ivy and the Gaines Family, Taylor Frazier, III, and Brian



Lent and Holy Week 2022

Ash Wednesday - March 2

12 noon Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist - spoken service, no music
7:00 pm Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist - with music

Wednesdays in Lent from March 9 through April 6

7 pm to 8:15 pm A Lenten program led by the Rev. Lou Hays, details to follow

Holy Week April 10 - April 17

<u>Palm Sunday</u>	10:00 am	Liturgy of the Palms, the Passion Gospel & Holy Eucharist
<u>Maundy Thursday</u>	7:00 pm	Holy Eucharist with music
<u>Good Friday</u>	12 noon	Stations of the Cross
	7:00 pm	Good Friday Service
<u>Easter Day</u>	10:00 am	The Feast of the Resurrection

Monthly Ministry Report For January

Food Pantry

January 20, 2022

60 bags distributed

53 kerosene vouchers handed out

Volunteers: Betty Nash, Charlie Nash, Peter Taylor, the Rev. Lou Hays



**HIS LOVE
EXTENDED**

Union Mission

January 12, 2022

Meals prepared - 123 (74 served on Wednesday; 49 served on Thursday)

Menu – BBQ on a bun, cole slaw, baked beans, brownie and drink

Volunteers - Sheila Brooks, Elizabeth Clement and Art Mead of Christ Episcopal Church

Charlie Helmandollar of Christ Episcopal Church, Pocahontas, VA.

Fredia Helmandollar, Cumberland Heights Baptist Church

Betty Watson of Bluefield, VA.

January 26, 2022

Meals Prepared - Total of 97 (80 by volunteers, 17 by staff that evening)

Menu - Hamburger, chips, dessert and drink.

Volunteers: Sheila Brooks, Art Mead, and Shirley Ofsa of Christ Episcopal Church.

One Conscript: Craig Hammond of Union Mission. *Three volunteers were not enough.*

Welcome Basket

A Welcome Basket was given to Lou Hays to show our appreciation as he begins his interim period with us our supply priest at Christ Church. Items included were brochures promoting the Bluefield area, a Bluefield coffee mug, and assorted snacks.



February 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 St. Brigid of Kildare	2 The Presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple	3	4 St. Cornelius, the Centurion	5 10:00 Vestry Retreat
6 Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist	7	8	9 4:00 Union Mission	10	11	12
13 Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist	14 Valentine's Day	15	16 6:00 Vestry	17 9:00 Food Pantry	18	19
20 Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist	21	22	23 3:00 Union Mission	24 St. Matthias, The Apostle	25	26
27 Last Sunday after the Epiphany 10:00 Holy Eucharist	28					

Altar Guild for February:

Linda Ammar and Elizabeth Clement



Lector and Acolyte Schedule for February

February 6 Ted Lewis, Lector Rob Merritt, Acolyte
 February 13 Mike Lilly, Lector Becky Kersey, Acolyte
 February 20 Rob Merritt, Lector and Acolyte
 February 20 Linda Ammar, Lector Becky Beckett, Acolyte

The following people have graciously donated flowers for the month of February:

February 6 Jim and Chris Justice
 February 13 Betty Nash and Charlie Blevins
 February 20 the Altar Guild
 February 27 Tripper and Stacy Thomas

Birthdays

February 3 Missy Thomas February 13 Jim Justice February 19 Jim Pulse
 February 4 James Patrick Paine February 16 Tyler Harris February 22 Margaret Anne Marra
 February 10 Nathaniel Taylor February 17 John Wimmer February 22 Rick Wilkinson
 February 13 Lucy McCue Dancer February 19 Denise Melvin February 25 Kay Sudduth



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To our friends and family:



FEBRUARY 2022

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