



Why are we conducting a Rector Search?

We need to find a new full-time rector because Rev. Terri is retiring and Rev. Gretchen will be returning to St. Paul's in Hamilton next summer.

What is the timeline for the search?

We plan to have a new rector in place by August 2026.

What is the process for finding a new rector?

The Episcopal Bishop for Montana, Marty Stebbins, established the process for hiring new clergy.

Who makes the final decision about who we hire?

The Search Committee offers their final candidate to the Vestry, which will then extend a call to the candidate and extend a Letter of Agreement in coordination with the Bishop. The Vestry makes the final decision in consultation with the Bishop.

How do parishioners stay informed?

The Search Committee will provide regular updates to the parish, including in Spirited Times, Paraclete, and during Sunday services. We will create a poster for the Parish Hall describing the process and marking our progress. The Rector Search page on the HSP website will also be updated regularly.

What input will parishioners have in the hiring process?

The Search Committee welcomes input and questions from the congregation, and will provide multiple opportunities to listen to parishioners. The Parish Survey will help create the job description. We are also planning several listening sessions for parishioners. One of the most important ways to identify potential candidates is through contacts our parishioners have with other parishes. The Search Committee welcomes comments, questions and suggestions for potential candidates either directly or through rectorsearch@holyspiritmissoula.org.

Why are parts of the search confidential?

The Search Committee needs to maintain strict confidentiality, particularly once we start receiving candidate applications. We will not be able to share the names of potential candidates during the vetting process until we bring a final group to Holy Spirit for interviews and to preach. We need to protect every candidate's relationship with their current church, and it could be devastating to that relationship if news of their candidacy leaked out.

How do we find candidates?

The national Episcopal Church maintains a listing of open positions through the Office for Transition Ministries (OTM). Our Search Committee will fill out a detailed form called a Parish Portfolio. The purpose is to provide a guide for rectors searching for new positions to determine if Holy Spirit might be right for them. In addition to posting our OTM Portfolio on the Rector Search page, we can advertise through Episcopal News Service and directly to Episcopal seminaries.

What are we looking for in a rector?

The characteristics we are looking for in a Rector will be determined by the Parish Survey and listening sessions with the Parish. The listening sessions will be widely advertised. Parishioners are welcome to provide comments through the Rector Search email address: rectorsearch@holyspiritparish.org. These characteristics will also be part of our Parish Profile.

Is there competition in the U.S. from other churches looking for a new rector?

The current market for full-time Rector positions is extremely competitive. Recent nationwide statistics from Bishop Marty indicated there were 111 rectors looking for new positions and 177 churches looking for new rectors. It is reasonable to assume that good candidates will have multiple offers. We will be prepared to act quickly when we find a suitable candidate.

What happens if the search is unsuccessful?

If we are not successful in our first search, the Vestry is discussing a Plan B, which could include naming an interim rector while continuing our search.

Will we need an interim rectors?

We will use supply clergy as interim and laity for Morning Prayer for the months when Rev. Terri and Rev. Gretchen finish their time with Holy Spirit, June-August 2026.

