

Simeon's Trustees



Parishes in Vacancy

The trustees have the responsibility and privilege, under God, whenever there is a vacancy in a parish for which they are patron, to seek to find God's choice to be the new vicar there. We work collaboratively with PCCs (especially the Parish Representatives elected by the PCC), bishops and archdeacons. Once we are aware of a forthcoming vacancy, we contact the outgoing Incumbent, the PCC and the Diocese. We work collaboratively with the Diocese and PCC.

Of course, if patronage is shared or we are members of a Patronage Board then we meet with the other parties involved and may well have less direct contact with the Parish Representatives. Some other aspects of the appointment process may vary from those mentioned in these notes.

The appointment process does not usually begin until Form 31 has been received by the PCC Secretary and the Patron, from the Diocese. This form gives the date of vacancy and the 'start date' (not necessarily the same). PCCs need to have produced a profile and held a meeting (a Section 11 Meeting) to elect Parish Representatives by six months. There are other meetings, usually arranged by the Patron and Diocese that also need to have taken place by that time. We like to hold, at a very early stage, sometimes prior to the issuing of Form 31, a Vacancy Meeting when the Trustee will meet with the PCC and Diocesan Representative (Bishop or Archdeacon). The appointment process is explained to those present and guidance given about preparing a profile.

The Trustee

Simeon's Trustees will appoint a Trustee to liaise with the parish representatives throughout the vacancy; to visit the parish to discuss the parish profile and to get a fuller picture of the parish and the sort of person who would be most appropriate as the next Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge. The Trustee will be involved in the short listing process, the interview day and will hope to be at the institution/licensing service.

Parish / Benefice Profile

The 'Parish Profile' is one of the key documents to be produced as part of the process towards appointing a new Vicar, Priest-in-Charge, Team Rector or Team Vicar. It will be used to prepare supporting documents, adverts and questions asked at interview. We have a separate document with information about producing profiles.

Advertising

The PCC can request that the Trustees advertise the vacancy in the Church press / websites. The PCC does have to bear the cost of the advert.

Simeon's, along with many Dioceses and other patronage organisations, are using the Church of England recruitment system, Pathways. We ask that PCCs make a contribution of £200 to Simeon's who have to pay to use Pathways.

The PCC will need to decide whether the advert should appear just on Pathways website or also in **The Church Times**. Once the advert is agreed by the Trustees, Parish Reps and Diocese we are responsible for placing them.

In any event the vacancy will appear on our website and usually on the diocesan website for which there is no charge. Adverts can also be placed on other sites such as New Wine.

Applications

All applications received are reviewed and usually the members of the interview panel including the Parish Representatives are involved in the short-listing process.

Visit and Interview

These normally take place in the parish and we recommend that they are spread over two days. On the first afternoon the candidates would be shown around the church building(s), the vicarage and the parish by (or on behalf of) the Parish Reps. That evening an informal gathering in a style appropriate to each church (usually a buffet meal) is helpful. This gives the candidates (and spouses) the opportunity of meeting a wider group of people (eg PCC, other staff and leaders). It also gives the candidates the opportunity to ask questions about the church and parish so they are more fully informed in preparation for the formal interview. It is important the names of those to be interviewed remain confidential to those invited to be involved with the interview process, this is primarily for the sake of those who will not be appointed and for their congregations.

The interview panel (usually the Bishop/Archdeacon, two Parish Reps and one or two Trustees) formally interview each candidate on day two. Sometimes candidates are asked to give a short presentation or talk at the beginning of their interview.

The PCC will, when it is required by a candidate, need to arrange and pay for overnight accommodation (in a hotel / Premier Inn, B&B) as well as pay the travel expenses of the candidates. Appropriate venues for the interviews and for those waiting to be interviewed will need to be provided.

Hopefully by the end of the interviews it is clear who should be asked to be the next Incumbent/Priest-in-Charge. The Trustee will contact candidates and will ensure the appropriate legal forms are completed by the various parties including the Parish Representatives. Confidentiality must continue to be observed until the announcement is made. The Diocese will inform the PCC when this is to be and will also arrange the date of the institution/licensing service. The link Trustee would hope to attend this service and present the candidate to the Bishop.

Suspension of Presentation

Sometimes presentation to a living is suspended. This means that the patron's legal right to present a candidate to the Bishop has been removed (suspended) for a period of up to five years. This is so that pastoral re-organisation such as linking a parish with another can take place or because there is to be a change of vicarage. The Bishop and Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee will take account of deanery plans and other constraints including the need to reduce the numbers of stipendiary clergy and consult with us about the need to suspend presentation.

Often a priest is still appointed to the benefice, but as priest-in-charge rather than incumbent. There is little difference in practice once the person is appointed. The legal right to appoint a priest-in-charge rests with the Bishop though patrons should be consulted. We seek to be fully involved in the appointment process.

Contact

The Trustee and Administrative Secretary are available at any point during the vacancy to discuss procedures.

Contact Mrs Ann Brown, Simeon's Trustees, 17 Bents Lane, Dronfield, Derbyshire, S18 2EX

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