

REIMAGINING CURACIES for the 2024-2027 COHORT Sandhills Curate

Curacies traditionally have taken place in the context of an individual parish, often with the curate seen as an associate clergy designated to either a broad set of responsibilities or defined to a narrow aspect of ministry, say youth ministry or outreach work. It is our understanding that the Reimagining Curacies Program seeks to expose clergy in their earliest days of ordained ministry to a wide variety of ministry environments. In the Sandhills Curate Proposal, we wish to expose the newly ordained minister to a program size parish in a rural but growing community (Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Southern Pines); an active family size parish engaged in part time clergy oversight (St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, Seven Lakes); chaplaincy in an Episcopal Elementary School (Episcopal Day School, Southern Pines); and chaplaincy in geriatric care (Penick Village, Southern Pines). Individually, each of these communities offer the curate incredible exposure to potential paths of ordained ministry. Collectively, these entities show the curate the breadth of the Episcopal tradition living faithfully in community with one another. It is our hope that while this curacy is designed to form the next generation of Episcopal clergy it will also place intentionality supporting the relationships of the Episcopal communities residing within the Sandhills.

Curacy Sites:

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Southern Pines The Rev. Morris Thompson, Rector Emmanuel Episcopal Church is a program-sized parish in the rapidly growing rural communities of Southern Pines, Pinehurst, Aberdeen, and Whispering Pines. Emmanuel is a parish steeped in ministerial history. They pride themselves with strong programming in outreach, pastoral care, liturgy, music, and fellowship. Lay leadership is important in this parish. Due to the area's retirement draw, any curate would find themselves surrounded by a geographic and occupationally diverse congregation. The nearby military base, Fort Liberty, also provides a steady flow of families in unique situations. The strengths of this congregation are a strong and active membership and experienced staff comprised of four fulltime staff members (Rector, Choirmaster, Parish Administrator, Facilities Manager) and two three-quarter time staff members (finance and Christian formation). There is also hope for adding a communications/parish life coordinator.

St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, Seven Lakes Mrs. Julia Poisson, Senior Warden St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church is a family-size parish in the small town of Seven Lakes. Dedicated to one another and their community, the laity of this parish are involved and mighty! This parish is led by one two-thirds time Rector who commutes to Seven Lakes. The parish is also graced with a retired Bishop who assists with liturgy and education. A curate would be fortunate to find themselves learning how strong lay leadership and part time clergy can make such a profound impact.

Episcopal Day School, Southern Pines Dr. Jill Connett, Head of School | Episcopal Day School is an established elementary school comprised of around 225 children from age three through grade 5. The school prides itself on successfully living out its mission "to provide a strong foundation for lifelong learning by engaging the mind, body, and spirit in a nurturing community grounded in Episcopal history, tradition, and identity." The school shares a

campus with Emmanuel Episcopal Church and holds chapel services twice a week in the nave under the direction of a volunteer lay chaplain from the parish. Along with attending chapel twice a week, the children are engaged in Religious Study courses. A curate would find themselves learning children engagement and ministry alongside shepherding faculty, staff, and students in an educational environment.

Penick Village, Southern Pines The Rev. Colette Bachand, Chaplain |

Penick Village is a faith based Senior Living Community in Southern Pines founded by the Episcopal Diocese of NC in 1964. Resident care ranges from fully independent living to assisted living, memory support, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation. The pastoral care department is headed by The Rev. Colette Bachand who serves as chaplain to the campus and is a published author specializing in pastoral care with those suffering from Alzheimer's and dementia. A curate would gain immense experience of geriatric pastoral care, including topics related to spiritual care of those with dementia, grief and loss, aging well, and the creation of programs to nourish purpose, joy and fulfillment in the later years of life. Skills from CPE training would be nourished for the curate with regular visits to those in hospital, hospice and nursing home settings.

Further Information

We believe the Sandhills could provide an incredible opportunity for a newly ordained individual. The experience to be within two different size parishes, one programmatic, one family, gives the curate the opportunity to experience in depth the ways in which churches of different sizes live out their mission faithfully. We believe both St. Mary Magdalene and Emmanuel to be thriving parishes in their own right. They are connected within their parish community as well as ministerially into the wider community. We further believe the opportunity to serve extensively in school and senior living communities will provide the curate transformational experiences that will serve them throughout their vocation. If the goal of the Reimagining Curacies program is to show the diverse ways to faithfully serve as a priest, we cannot imagine a better opportunity! The opportunity beyond those present in the individual communities (Emmanuel, St. Mary Magdalene, Episcopal Day School, and Penick Village) is the potential to bring all these communities together in a much more intentional relationship. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the Sandhills Curate Proposal, outside of the curate's formation itself, is the relationship building between the Episcopal entities charged with molding the curate. I imagine this curate and the mentors will learn new ways for our communities to collaborate and create shared ministries yet undreamed. Each of our communities are serving in vastly different ways, yet we are connected through our Episcopal traditions and identity. It is our hope that we could leverage our unique gifts and resources to support one another in imaginative ways. While we believe this is an exciting proposal for any curate, we also understand this ministry could easily become overwhelming. Any applicant would need the gifts of time management, flexibility, direct communication, and teachability. Of course, we also expect an individual steeped in prayer, a lover of all ages, and a deep listener. We understand our role to help the curate discover her/his passion in ministry by exposing him/her to the wide breadth of opportunities in priestly vocation. We anticipate creating a lay support committee comprised of engaged individuals from each of the communities. We want

someone who is willing to learn about each of our communities and share herself/himself with us.

Practically, the curate's primary office would reside at Emmanuel. This allows the curate quick access to both the parish and adjoining school. Morris Thompson would also serve as their primary supervisor, while meeting regularly with the other supervisors to build relationship and ensure the curate is being effectively formed and the various community needs are being met. At this point we have no anticipated changes in clergy or supervision over the three-year period. At this point, we imagine time will be split equally between three given communities at a time. We imagine a 40% (parishes) + 40% (chaplaincy) + 20% (personal prayer/study and curacy program) time split for the curate. During the school year, the curate would spend 40% of their time with the school and the remaining split between the two parishes and personal/spiritual development. During the summertime, the curate would spend 40% of their time with Penick Village and the remainder split between the two parishes and personal/spiritual development. Due to the differences in the parishes, the needs from the curate are anticipated to be different. The curate would spend two Sundays a month with Emmanuel, preaching only one of those Sundays, and the curate would also spend two Sundays a month with St. Mary Magdalene, preaching only one of those Sundays. The majority of the weekday parish work is assumed to be at Emmanuel, though it is also crucial for the curate to experience family size parish weekday work. We understand that as the curacy progresses, and gifts are discovered, the curate and supervisors will remain in conversation regarding time dedicated to each community. We believe North Carolina's Sandhills to be fertile ground for any curate's formation. The combination of program and family size parishes as well as school and senior living chaplaincies provide a wide array of experiences for any newly ordained priest. There is an eagerness within our communities to collaborate our ministries and we believe this curacy experience to be the perfect collaboration.