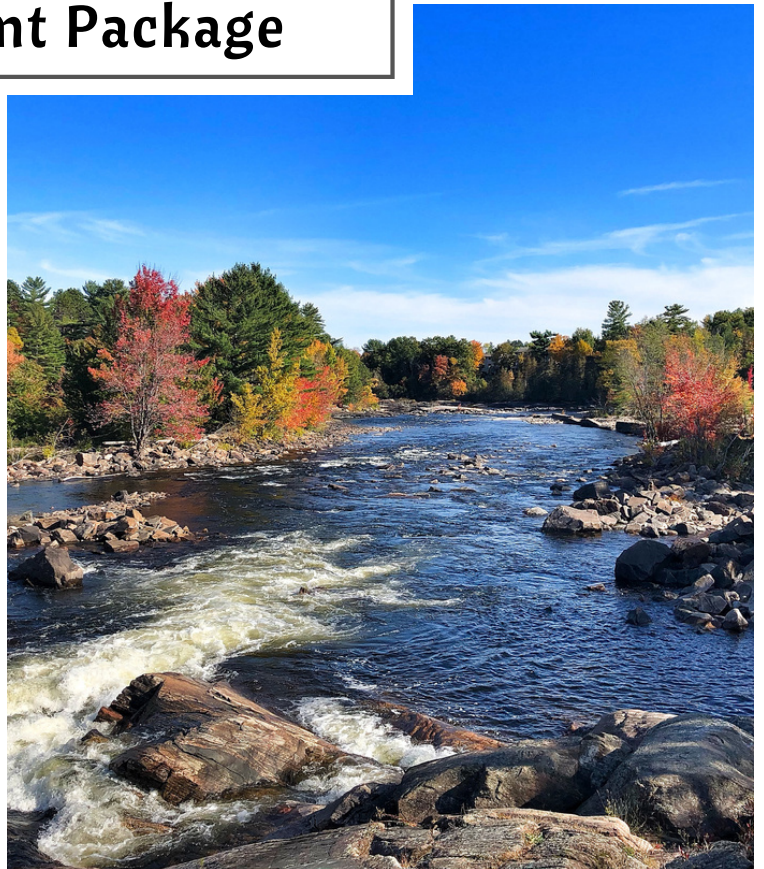


**Associate Priest
Discernment Package**



Parish of the Valley



Diocese of Ottawa
Anglican Church of Canada



Who are we seeking?

The Parish of the Valley is seeking a full-time Associate Priest to join our parish's dynamic clergy team by mid 2024. Expressions of interest can be made to the Executive Archdeacon, The Venerable Linda Hill (linda-hill@ottawa.anglican.ca). Candidates must have the written permission of their bishop to express interest. The successful candidate will be appointed to the parish as an Associate Incumbent or Assistant Curate, commensurate with their prior experiences in ministry.

Who are we?

The Parish of the Valley is situated at the heart of the Ottawa Valley in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa, on traditional Anishinabe Algonquin territory. The parish's easternmost edge is located just over an hour's drive west of the City of Ottawa. The parish's boundaries include a sizeable portion of Renfrew County and a small portion of Nipissing District. Communities within the parish are both large and small, including rural townships, small towns and villages, as well as larger towns and cities and the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation, all spread throughout the valleys of the Ottawa, Bonnechere, and Madawaska Rivers.

The upper Ottawa Valley was primarily settled by individuals working in the timber industry, and forestry and agriculture continue to be central to the local economy to this day. Like many rural areas across Ontario, the communities of the Parish of the Valley have experienced numerous economic ups and downs. However, in recent years there has been a significant increase in small businesses, entrepreneurs, and retirees making the upper Ottawa Valley their home. In addition to traditional farmers' markets and independent artisans selling in small shops and at local fairs, the region has recently seen an influx of small, local independent businesses like coffee roasters and shops, donut shops and bakeries, clothing boutiques, microbreweries and distilleries, and more. In addition to agriculture, the forestry sector, and outdoor adventure tourism, major employers in our region include Garrison Petawawa, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, Algonquin College in Pembroke, and hospitals, longterm care homes, and the healthcare sector.

The Parish of the Valley is an area parish, a relatively new and innovative parochial structure within the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. The parish came into being on June 1st, 2018. It consists of fifteen congregations and chapels served by a team of four full-time stipendiary clergy. The current clergy team is comprised of an Incumbent, two Associate Incumbents, and an Assistant Curate. Within the team, the Incumbent offers overarching pastoral leadership for the parish, with a focus on matters of governance and administration. One Associate Incumbent offers leadership to communications and advancement ministries, with the second Associate Incumbent offering leadership to discipleship and formation ministries. Our current Assistant Curate is a newly ordained priest who will soon be departing the parish to continue her formation as a military chaplain. Together, all members of the clergy team share collaboratively and collegially in providing liturgical leadership and pastoral care for the parish as a whole. A half-time administrator, based in Pembroke, provides clerical support.

The fifteen congregations and chapels that make up the Parish of the Valley are: Holy Trinity Pembroke, St. John's Eganville, All Saints Petawawa, St. Paul's Cobden, St. George's South Alice, Ascension Killaloe/St. John's Tramore, Epiphany Barry's Bay, St. Anthony's Whitney, St. Stephen's Micksburg, St. Patrick's Lower Stafford, St. Thomas' Rankin, St. Augustine's Chapel Beachburg, Holy Trinity Chapel Madawaska, and St. Clement's Chapel Clontarf. (Photographs and locations of each can be found at <https://www.valleyanglicans.ca/find-a-church>)

In addition to our fifteen churches and chapels, the parish operates eleven cemeteries, and has three rectories located in Petawawa, Eganville, and Micksburg. A fourth rectory in Pembroke is used as a central office. The Eganville rectory is available as a residence for the priest appointed to this position. It is a four-bedroom brick home located beside St. John's Church in the heart of the village of Eganville, which is situated on the shores of the beautiful Bonnechere River. The home features a new heating system, a new central cooling system, a single car garage, and an adjacent private yard ideal for gardening or family recreation. The rectory is also conveniently located near walking trails. Alternative arrangements for clergy housing can be discussed upon request.





Our parish's congregations range in their average Sunday attendance from in the single digits to seventy-five people or more. We have multiple services in multiple locations every Sunday, with liturgical leadership offered by our clergy team, retired clergy, and a capable group of five licensed lay readers. Most of our worship services are a sung eucharist or morning prayer using the Book of Alternative Services. There is also one Book of Common Prayer eucharist each Sunday in Pembroke, as well as a weekday said BAS eucharist, also in Pembroke. We have choirs assisting in the leadership of music ministry each week in Pembroke and Eganville, with ad-hoc choirs and musical groups in other parts of the parish on select Sundays. Sunday School programs happen weekly in Pembroke and on-demand in other churches across the parish.

While COVID-19 saw many of our opportunities for gathering reduced, in the past two years we have begun to gather again for fellowship and fundraisers – especially if they involve food! Some typical annual events in our parish include our renowned Ottawa Valley church suppers, Christmas bazaars and teas, Christmas concerts, hymn sings, rummage sales, pancake lunches and suppers, soup and sandwich gatherings, prayer shawl knitting, Anglican Church Women and men's groups, and more. We're also engaged in our communities through providing food for local foodbanks and meals at drop-in centres, participating in Santa Claus parades and Pride events, a clothing bank, and providing space for groups like AA and seniors groups to gather.



Annual Vestry packages and financial statements for each of our parish's congregations are available upon request. While individual regions of our parish are assessed separately, our area parish's combined diocesan assessment for the 2024 fiscal year is \$410,000 and our combined annual budget for 2024 is approximately \$650,000.



Responses to our Bishop's Three Discernment Questions for the Appointment of a new Associate Priest for the Area Parish of the Valley



Where are we now?

- We remain a new rural area parish, first formed in June of 2018. We consist of 15 congregations and chapels, including groups that are both large and small, serving the many varied communities of the Ottawa, Bonnechere, and Madawaska river valleys.
- We are proud of what we have accomplished together in our journey thus far as an area parish, having now worked in this new parochial configuration for nearly six years. We have been blessed with a wonderful clergy-team made up of four full-time priests. We are also ably supported by a group of retired priests and a team of five licensed lay readers. We have worked to get to know each other and strengthen our relationships through shared communications and many parish events, both in person and virtual. We plan to hold more parish wide events going forward.
- We are in a time of transition as a parish. In the aftermath of COVID, we are working hard to physically regather our communities, and to continue building strong relationships between our congregations. We are also adjusting to two clergy retirements, and two clergy parental leaves within the last three years. Like many Anglican parishes, we are faced with declining membership, and increasingly aging congregations in many of our churches. Together with our diocese, we are actively working to reshape the governance and financial structures that support our parish's ministries, so that they might best serve the needs of our parish's ministries today.
- We are working intentionally to live into our new identity as a unified area parish comprised of many diverse, historic, and beloved local congregations. Although we have been a new parish for almost six years, on some levels we are still getting to know each other. We feel we are generally pulling in the same direction, but we are still prayerfully working to discern and articulate our shared sense of mission and vision for the parish. We feel that more time spent together, gathered physically, will help us in this important and prayerful work. At our core, we know that we, being many, are one body. Our new parish is a work in progress, but we know we are God's work in progress.





What is important to us as we look to the future?

- We want to continue our strong Anglican tradition, but we know that our church is changing, and that we need to walk gently with each other as we encounter these changes. Some of our congregations may, in time, become chapels. Others may choose to disestablish. The structures of our parish's ministries may change, but our support for each other as Anglican Christians remains unwavering.
- We care deeply about our existing members. Many are aging and struggle to stay connected with our parish. We wish to increase pastoral visitation, and continue our historic support for our region's longterm care homes, retirement homes, and hospices.
- We want to continue to get to know each other, and to grow in our mutual support and care for one another as members of a unified parish community.
- We hope to reduce unnecessary administrative work wherever possible, so that the members of our clergy team might devote as much of their time as possible to building up ministry across our parish through creative worship, fellowship, and pastoral care.
- We look forward to welcoming more newcomers to our parish: people of all ages, but especially younger people, children, and families. We see our parish's fellowship, worship, and music ministries as strengths that we can build upon. We are looking for ways to creatively work together, so that we can support each other in doing God's work.
- We continue to learn and pray about how we might participate in reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and become even more inclusive of those who are members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community.
- We value clergy who are collaborative by nature, and who are prepared to work as part of a fully integrated team of clergy and lay leaders. We especially value the ministry of preaching, as we seek to be regularly inspired and motivated by the word of God.
- We wish to stay open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. We pray that our new Associate Priest will complement our parish's existing clergy team and help us to grow in new ways as we love and serve God as the people of the Parish of the Valley.



What are the qualities we seek in a new Associate Priest, within the context of our parish's clergy team?

- A priest who is inclusive and generous in their Anglican theology. A servant leader who is prepared to make room for all of God's people within the life of our parish community.
- A priest with a passion, energy, and love for rural ministry who seeks a rural lifestyle.
- A priest who is committed to creating deep and meaningful relationships with smaller groups of faithful people: equipping our parish's people for service to God's world and supporting us as we adapt our ministries to meet the needs of our communities today.
- A priest who is committed to being a team player. Someone who is prepared to work collaboratively with our Incumbent and clergy team to build up ministries across our whole parish.
- A priest who specifically has passions in the areas of preaching and pastoral care. Someone capable of using both their words and actions to faithfully build up the body of Christ.
- A priest who enjoys ministry with older adults and is comfortable working with seniors, both working alongside seniors who play active roles in the ministries of our congregations and in providing pastoral care to those who are homebound or in retirement and longterm care residences.
- A priest who is prepared to regularly travel and worship in multiple locations on a Sunday. Travel during the work week will also be frequent. A reliable vehicle and a valid Ontario drivers' license are requirements for this ministry.
- A priest who has a strong sense of self-awareness. A person capable of establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries, especially with regards to self-care and sabbath.
- A priest whose personal demeanour is calm, collected, kind, compassionate, creative, and tactful. A faithful disciple who is prepared to make our parish their home.
- Prior experience working in a team and/or rural ministry setting would be an asset.
- Prior experience developing and/or supporting pastoral care teams, music ministries, fellowship ministries, and/or children and youth ministries would be assets.



You can find the Parish of the Valley website at www.valleyanglicans.ca

The Parish is on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyAnglicans>

A number of our churches also maintain sub-pages on Facebook:

- Holy Trinity Pembroke: <https://www.facebook.com/HolyTrinityPembroke>
- All Saints Petawawa & St George's Alice: <https://www.facebook.com/AllSaintsStGeorges>
- Epiphany Barry's Bay: <https://www.facebook.com/anglicanchurchbarrysbay>

The Parish is on X at: <https://twitter.com/valleyanglicans>

The Parish is on Instagram at: <https://www.instagram.com/valleyanglicans/>

