

Anglican priest's bail hearing delayed

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The bail hearing for a Newfoundland and Labrador Anglican priest charged with possession and distribution of child pornography was postponed in St. John's on Wednesday.

Robin Barrett of Conception Bay South, about 30 kilometres southwest of St. John's, will remain in custody overnight.

He is scheduled to appear in court for a bail hearing Thursday.

Undercover investigators from the Toronto Police Service allege they obtained pornographic images of children from the priest after making contact with him in various online chat rooms.

Barrett was arrested by police from St. John's on Tuesday after they were contacted by Ontario police in November.

Has been church rector

Barrett has been relieved of his duties as rector of the St. Paul's Church, in the Goulds area of St. John's, by the Anglican bishop of eastern Newfoundland, Cyrus Pitman.

Barrett's former parishioners are struggling with the news.

"In fact, Robin married myself and my wife," said Christopher Fowler, administrator at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Mount Pearl, where Barrett spent almost a decade as deacon before moving to St. Paul's.

"All of the ministry team of the diocese are right now just trying to find ways to help the people of the parish come to terms with this," said Fowler.

Barrett became a public figure during Newfoundland and Labrador's same-sex marriage debate.

Back then, the married father of three children spoke publicly about his own struggle to accept that he is gay.

Pitman, who praised Barrett's public work as an outspoken member of an anti-poverty coalition, hopes people won't jump to conclusions about the charges against Barrett.

"People will connect this up with people who are gay and lesbian, which is unfortunate," he said.