



NOURISHMENT FOR THE JOURNEY

Annual Meeting January 20, 2018
George Belshaw: Rector transition remarks

Good morning

As Randy mentioned in his remarks, the transition is well underway. Since joining us in September, John Branson has done a terrific job of leading us through this newest chapter of our history. A special thanks to the team that identified John and to the Vestry and Bishop Douglas for their support of John.

There has been a flurry of activity since the Reverend Lee Ann Tolzman, the Canon for Mission Leadership of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, worshiped with us and presented at the 10:10 back in October. Since then, the Vestry has formed the four Transition Teams to manage the search process: The Discernment Team led by Karen Royce and Lynne Jordal Martin; the Recruitment Team led by Abby Bates and Emily Ragsdale; the Hospitality Team, lead by Frankie Hollister and Susan Ness; and the Prayer Team led by Mary Cattan and Tim Carpenter. And thanks to the nearly 50 other parishioners who have agreed to serve on these teams. It is a tremendous outpouring of devotion to Christ Church.

John formally commissioned the teams on January 7 at the 9:15 service. Since then the Discernment Team met with our Transition Consultant, The Reverend Marissa Rohrbach. The initial goal is to create the Parish Profile. This profile will tell our story, present our vision and how we imagine participating in God's work. Together with the Long Range Plan of 2016 the Profile will be the road map for our future.

The Discernment team hear from as many parishioners as possible. Please plan to attend one of the upcoming parish conversations [scheduled for this Wednesday morning January 24 at 9:30, and next weekend Saturday January 27 at 9:30 and Sunday January 28 at 2:30]. There will likely be additional dates or opportunities to contribute. You can sign up on our transition webpage, or see Karen or Lynn this morning.

The Discernment process is expected to last approximately 4 months and will culminate in a job description and the Parish Profile which will be published on our website.

The Recruitment Team will then begin its work. The job description will be posted on numerous Episcopal Church Job web sites. Lee Ann Tolzman will also meet with her fellow transitions officers of the Episcopal Church to encourage candidates to

submit their names. We also encourage those of you who have reach and relationships within the Church to spread the word that we are seeking a rector.

Applications will be sent to and accepted by the diocese for about two months. Lee Ann and her team will vet the applications and then forward them to the Recruitment Team who will research the candidates and conduct video conference interviews. The Recruitment Team will then create a short list for submission to the Vestry. The Recruitment team will then create a short list for submission to the Vestry. The Vestry in turn will conduct further interviews and research of the top candidates followed by a vote and call for the new rector.

The Vestry will make the final decision of who to call based on qualifications, experience and match with our Discernment outcome.

While the Discernment process is one that is very open and transparent, the Recruitment Phase is not. Candidates trust their applications will be held in the strictest confidence. Any disclosure to their current parish could, of course, have an extremely negative effect on the priest's career, their relationship to the parish, and the parish itself.

The Hospitality Team's role is to provide welcome and hospitality for the various events and occasions throughout the transition such as refreshments during the Discernment conversations and hosting welcome events for the new rector and his or her family.

Finally we have the Prayer Team charged with spiritual support of the process, a process which may be challenging at times. They will provide prayer for the many transition meetings and praying for us everyday.

A transition customarily takes a year to 18 months from the prior rector's departure. That would mean new rector by this fall or early 2019, a year from now.

Christ Church is at the conclusion of a period of healing and self-reflection. We are now a thriving parish looking outward again, becoming a resource for many. Our future is full of possibility buoyed by a congregation that believes in a life of love with courage, openness, and generosity.

I look forward to seeing many of you this week at the discernment conversations.

Thank you.