

St. Francis Episcopal Church Vestry Message - December 21, 2014

As most of you know our current Rector Mother Sarah and family are moving to North Carolina at the end of January and the Vestry has the responsibility to work with the Bishop to identify a pastoral leader for the near-term as well as lead a process to identify our next Rector.

One of the first tasks was to decide between the establishment of an interim priest and the nomination of a priest in charge for the Diocesan Bishop's appointment. An interim priest maintains the sacramental and pastoral life of the church and may or may not have the authority of a Rector. A priest In Charge (or PIC) has the authority of a Rector, but without tenure. The PIC can be considered as a potential candidate for the Rector search, while an interim priest cannot. The vestry has met twice, has received input from the parish and the Bishop, and I am very pleased to announce that we have accepted the Bishop's appointment of Mother Paula as Priest in Charge.



The Vestry, in the near future, will begin the process of forming a parish profile. The parish profile includes the past and recent history of the parish, surveys the mission and ministries of the parish, vision for the future, etc. The purpose of the parish profile is to acquire parish self-knowledge and identity.

Through the parish profile, the Vestry receives the input needed for the next step, which is deciding the type of search process to continue to employ. One choice is to form a search committee and initiate a traditional search for a Rector to be found outside the parish; alternatively, we may discern that the Priest in Charge move to a more permanent relationship and we would nominate Mother Paula to be Priest in Charge under Special Circumstances (PICUSC). In that case, we'll go through a yearlong discernment period which can result in Mother Paula becoming the new Rector.

As a reminder, we will hold a Farewell Celebration for Mother Sarah and her family on January 25th and the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on February 8th.

Thank you for your support and your thoughtful input as we work together to discern the best path for our parish and our community.