

Letter from the Senior Warden

Dear St. Patrick's,

Last fall, with direction and guidance from the office of the Bishop of the Diocese of Northern California, St. Patrick's embarked on the process of calling a rector to our church. This is a long process that involves assessing where we are as a church, and where we want to go. We appointed an Applicant Review Committee (ARC), wrote our 2017 Parish Profile, and posted the position on the Diocesan website in May. Canon Andrea McMillan from the Bishop's office screened candidates to make sure they are all in good standing. Throughout the summer, the ARC has been reviewing these candidates, interviewing them via Skype, and visiting them in their home churches. The ARC is also responsible for checking candidate references.

At the outset, it was agreed that our Priest in Charge, the Rev. Jennifer, should be allowed to apply for the position of rector, if she chose to do so. In July she made the decision not to go forward as a candidate and notified the vestry. On September 1, the ARC will present the vestry with the finalists, and vestry will then begin the last part of the process. We will invite the finalists for a visit here over a period of two days for each one, to interview them and get to know them. Our goal is to have all the visits take place in September and make our discernment on a new rector by the end of the month.

The past year has been a difficult one for all of us in terms of being able to openly discuss this call process. We have been preparing to find the person whom God is calling to lead us forward, while at the same time our Priest in Charge was graciously leading us, while also possibly applying for the position (a completely confidential process) with no guarantees as to what would ultimately happen. It was an awkward and uncomfortable place to be. Rev. Jen's decision to withdraw her name from consideration clarified things. With her permission I can tell you that she did request to have her contract extended through November, but the vestry determined that the best thing for St. Patrick's would be for us to have a period of interim.

There are times in the life of a parish when a break occurs between one rector and another, or in our case, between the Priest in Charge and a new rector. This is an opportunity for the parish to transition from Rev. Jen's leadership to that of the new rector. During this transition time, there is a prayerful process of letting go, and of preparing for the new rector. This allows important time for grieving as we say goodbye, embrace the healing process, and create an opening for a new beginning with a new spiritual leader. During this interim period, there will be opportunities for us to pray together, grieve together, heal together and open our hearts together for the new rector.

My fellow vestry members and I will make ourselves available to you on Sundays, and at other times if you wish to have further discussions about our decision.

Rev. Jen's contract is up as of September 4, and we wish her the very best and thank her for all the love and care she has given to this congregation for close to four years now. We have planned a special coffee hour / celebratory goodbye for the parish on Sunday, September 3, after the 10:00 service. The parish will also be gifting Rev. Jen with a purse, which is a traditional monetary gift for an outgoing priest. If you would like to contribute to the purse, please make checks payable to St. Patrick's, and note that it is for the Rev. Jen. You can mail them, or put them in special envelopes in the Narthex and place them in the collection plate during Sunday services.

For the rest of September and until the new rector comes on board, the Rev. Karen King and Deacon Marcia Tyrriver will provide for our worship and pastoral care needs. Rev. Karen will work $\frac{3}{4}$ time, on a month-to-month basis as needed. While we hope that the new rector will be able to start here in the fall, we have planned out the service schedule through the end of the year, in case the incoming rector needs to stay at his or her current church through Christmas.

Rev. Karen will have office hours Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30 to 2:30. The rest of her time will be for visitations, sermon writing, and, of course, Sunday services. Our administrator Bobbiejo Maggard will continue working her regular hours, Monday-Wednesday from 10:00 to 3:00, and Thursday from 10 to 2:30. You can call the office at 833-4228, and for pastoral care and emergencies outside of office hours you may reach the priest at 494-0671.

Starting on September 24 we will go back to our fall schedule of services at 8:00, 9:00 and 10:30.

If you have any questions, please call me at 833-5524. I'm always happy to meet with you or talk on the phone.

On behalf of the vestry I ask for your prayers and thank you for your support and patience.

Peace and love,

Ann Peters, Senior Warden