

July 16, 2020

Dear Christ Church Family,

As you know now, D'aun and I will be ending our sojourn with you at the end of this month of July. We have received many emails and calls telling us of your appreciation for our time and work here. We have also received many expressions of sadness that our time together with you is coming to a close.

We want you to know that those feelings are mutual on our part. We are very grateful to all of you for every moment we have journeyed with you in this time of transition. And we are also sad to have to say goodbye for now. But we take comfort in knowing that the opportunity will come, after a time, for us to return to you occasionally as friends and family.

There is one piece of unfinished business that we will have to leave with you to finish. Due to the continuing pandemic, we have not succeeded in reopening the Sanctuary or other facilities for face-to-face worship and social gatherings. Given the short time left to us, it has simply not been possible to implement all the procedures and protocols needed to do this safely before our departure. This means that reopening will have to wait until your new Rector arrives and conditions "on the ground" make it possible to do so safely.

The good news is that you now have a very skilled and hard-working Reopening team, along with an excellent Phased plan approved by the Diocese to guide you toward that wonderful goal. You also have an amazing staff, Vestry and Wardens and Executive Committee who are working for you every day to keep "all things" together. On top of it all, you are blessed with two incredible clergy still here: your Quarter-time Interim Assistant Rector, Mary Miller Flowers, and Rob Banse, who has joined you now that he is retired. Both will be with you to guide for the journey ahead.

So, hang in there! As my Mother used to say, "This too shall pass." Or, as St. Julien of Norwich so famously spoke often, "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well." These trying times will eventually pass. Though we do not know with certainty all that the future will hold for us, we are still a people of faith led by an awesome God, and a Savior who knows and loves each of us and calls us each by name. By that faith, the Faith, we trust that we journey toward a promised land; a land, a place, and a place of being, where the God who travels beside us and before us will also reside with us.

So, for now, continue to do the things that build up and restore. Pray for each other, encourage each other, and hold each other in your hearts. D'aun and I shall always do the same with you.

With warmest love and affection,

Rick and D'aun Miles