



November 20, 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

It has been almost one month since we learned that the Reverend Peter Lane would be leaving St. Paul and the Redeemer. The wardens and vestry have been working to ensure that the transition goes smoothly, and want to make the process of calling our next rector as transparent as possible. We have composed this letter to update the parish on what has been happening, and outline what steps the vestry will take next.

The vestry is focused on celebrating our remaining time with Peter Lane, and recognizing the unique gifts that he and his family have brought to SPR. The parish is organizing two events to wish them a fond farewell:

- On Sunday, December 17, the vestry invites the entire parish to a celebration of Peter Lane's ministry with us. On that Sunday, there will be eucharistic liturgies at 8:00 and 10:00 am, with the celebration to follow immediately after the second service. Good food will be provided.
- On Saturday, December 9, all women of the parish are invited to a luncheon in honor of Erin Lane. The lunch will take place at SPR from 12:30 to 2:30. If you would like to attend this luncheon, please RSVP Shirley Knight by email: shirleyk4@yahoo.com.

Peter's last Sunday with the parish will be on Sunday, December 24. His last service will be on Christmas Day. In the weeks immediately after Peter's departure, worship will be led by our Assistant Priest KJ Oh, Priest Associate Roger Ferlo, and Deacon Jack Seymour. Additionally, we have a rich base of talented preachers amongst our congregation, and we will call upon their gifts during this time.

The vestry is currently reviewing interested candidates for the position of interim rector, and anticipates calling an interim early in 2018. Priests who serve as interim rectors receive specialized training to develop the skills needed for ministering to congregations experiencing a transition in clergy leadership. The interim rector will lead our Sunday worship, ensure that our strong programming and vital ministries continue, and work with our talented church staff until the vestry calls a permanent rector.

The process of calling a new rector will commence early in the new year. The first task of the vestry will be to assemble a search committee. This committee will be charged with creating our parish profile, advertising the position, reviewing applicants, and presenting a slate of candidates to the vestry. The vestry will then decide whether to call one of these candidates as our next rector. We anticipate that the process of calling a new rector will take approximately one year. Some questions about the process are answered below. If you have any additional questions or concerns, you are invited to reach out to any member of the vestry or the wardens.

When does the search process begin?

The diocese recommends that the search process should not begin until after the current rector departs. The vestry is choosing to follow this advice. However, we have started to discuss our aspirations for the search committee, and are committed to selecting members as soon after the first of the year as possible.

What are the steps in the search process?

The search committee will begin their work with a church assessment. Parishioners and staff will provide information for the assessment by completing a parish survey and through face-to-face discussions with members of the search committee. Survey questions will focus on how we see ourselves, and our goals for the parish. The search committee will use the church assessment to put together a parish profile. This document will communicate to candidates what kind of parish SPR is. It will include certain pertinent facts about the parish (mission statement, financial position, descriptions of ministries) and a description of our hopes for the coming years.

The next step is to publicize the rector position through the resources of the Episcopal Church. As applicants submit their materials, the search committee will narrow the list of applicants and present a slate of candidates to the vestry for consideration.

Who decides who our next rector will be?

The vestry and wardens are empowered to call the next rector. In most cases, the vestry takes the recommendations of the search committee and interviews the top candidates in person. The vestry then prayerfully discerns whether to call one of the candidates or start a new search process.

Is it common for a parish to call the interim rector to be their permanent rector?

The standard in the Episcopal Church is that interim rectors do not become rector. Many priests feel called specifically to interim ministry, and value serving parishes in this unique role. Therefore, interim rectors rarely submit their names for consideration to the search committee.

I would like to serve on the search committee. Whom should I speak to?

After the first of the year, anyone interested in serving on the search committee should contact Twila Jones, Clerk of the Vestry, at search@sprchicago.org. The vestry wants to make sure that the search committee membership represents the rich diversity of our parish. We anticipate that more parishioners will want to serve than there are positions available.

SPR is a church that is led by the Spirit, and whose foundation is sound. In the next few months, we will celebrate the end of time with the Lanes and begin the search for our new rector. And, in both important transitions, our faithful God will be present with us. We ask for your prayers and support during this important time.

Sincerely,

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