

Parish Transition Update October 10, 2018
Joann Sweasy, Senior Warden

In April we reported that the congregation believed, and the Vestry agreed, that St. Thomas's was ready to call a Rector, and that the next step was for the Vestry to consider whether to call our current Priest-in-Charge to that position. The Vestry interviewed the Rev. Keri Aubert on May 23. After the interview and a brief discussion, the Vestry decided to adjourn and reconvene on June 11. During the June 11 meeting, some members of the Vestry voiced concerns about moving forward. The Vestry sought further conversation with Keri about our ministry together and guidance from the Diocese about how to proceed with this conversation.

In response, on June 22 Bishop Laura Ahrens (our church's assigned bishop) and Canon Lee Ann Tolzmann (Canon for Mission Leadership) met with Joann Sweasy (Senior Warden), Don Edwards (Junior Warden), and Keri. Bishop Laura affirmed how much great work has already been accomplished at St. Thomas's while observing that St. Thomas's is not ready to call a rector. Bishop Laura and Canon Lee Ann shared their plan to assign us a new consultant for the Priest-in-Charge period, who would work with us to develop next steps. Due to General Convention and summer vacations, there was a slight delay in recruiting and mobilizing the new consultant. In late August the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Folts (Rector of St. John's, Essex) came on board. After a quick ramp-up, he attended the September 17 vestry meeting.

At Bishop Laura's direction, and with the assent of the Vestry, Jonathan is working with the Vestry primarily on structure, capacity-building, and communications. We hope to complete that process around Easter, and then we will check in with Bishop Laura about next steps.

Some of you may be tapped to assist with the tasks ahead. We hope that you will prayerfully consider how you may continue to offer your gifts to the glory of God here at St. Thomas's.

Know that your parish leaders, listed below, are invested in discerning God's call to us and to St. Thomas's at this time. We ask that you continue to hold us and this community of faith in your prayers.

Joann Sweasy, Senior Warden
Don Edwards, Junior Warden

Diana Empsall, Treasurer
Martha Deeds Hogan, Clerk

Dan Harrison (2019)
Chris Martinez (2019)
Jen Regan (2019)

Alexandria Robison (2020)
Kate Schilling (2020)

Constance Cahill (2021)
Dawn Lorentson (2021)