

June 2, 2010

Dear Christ Church,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 1.7).

I am writing to you today regarding the transitions being experienced at Christ Church at the present time, and as a result of numerous conversations that I have had with both your lay and clergy leadership over the past several weeks. As we all know, Christ Church is in transition - not simply from one rector to the next, but in other areas as well. I want to begin by saying that I have every confidence that the Spirit will be our guide in the days ahead as we seek to honor and serve God as we honor and serve one another; following Christ's own example - who came not to be served, but to serve.

I know that these last several years, and especially these last several months, have been times of great uncertainty as leaders and members of Christ Church have tried to forge a path forward. I am aware that there are those in the congregation who are fully committed to remaining part of the Christ Church family, as well as those who are less certain about their continuing participation as members of this congregational family. There is a vestry meeting on June 8 regarding these very issues. I am hopeful that clarity will come soon in these matters so that the spiritual health and vitality that has been a hallmark of Christ Church might once again be at the forefront of your life together. I pledge myself to working with the vestry and the membership of Christ Church to make this a reality.

On Tuesday morning, June 1, Bishop Reed and I met with the Executive Committee of the Vestry to begin discussion of the future; and I am scheduled to meet with the vestry as a whole on Monday, June 14. When a rector departs a congregation, the Bishop appoints an interim rector and works with the vestry in establishing the steps for the search process for the next rector. Over the next several months, healing and hope for the future will need to be actively and prayerfully engaged. During this period, we will establish a timetable for the congregation to prepare to move forward in a search process for your next rector.

In the meantime, it gives me great pleasure to inform you that The Rt. Rev. Bill Frey has accepted appointment as your Interim Rector. Bill and Barbara are well known to Christ Church through his previous service as your Interim Rector about ten years ago, as well as their ongoing participation in the life in our diocese. Bishop Frey's first Sunday at Christ Church will be June 20. He will also be with me at the vestry meeting on June 14 as we work out details of this appointment.

At the present time, Bishop Frey is concluding his service as the Interim Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande. That diocese has elected a new bishop and Bishop Frey's time in Rio Grande is coming to a close over the next several months. His schedule will allow him to serve Christ Church and honor his final commitments in Rio Grande.

Two weeks ago I met with John Barrett and Scott Kitayama, who indicated their desire to continue to serve on the clergy staff during this time of transition. They both care deeply about the life and health of Christ Church, as does your entire staff. I encourage you to support your staff and keep them in your prayers as they continue to serve the Lord by serving you.

There will be much more to say and do in the weeks ahead. I will stay in close communication with you and want to make sure that the congregation as a whole is kept informed as we move forward. I want to assure you of my prayers and my hopes for your life together; as well as for a renewed sense of mission and ministry as very important members of the diocesan family.

These past several years have not been easy ones for any of us, but I hope that you know that God's power, working in and through us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine (Ephesians 3.20). It is this confidence that I carry in my daily life and ministry, and I commend this conviction to you so that you might find joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15.13).

Finally, please know that this comes to you with the prayers of the entire diocesan family. May God guide and bless each of us in the days ahead.

Faithfully,

Bishop Lillibridge