

June 19, 2020

To: The Vestry, Clergy & Staff of St. Alban's Parish

From: Wardens and Rector, Chris, Maryann, and Tim
cc: The Rt. Rev Thomas Brown

Re: Our final days together

Dear all,

Following the wonderful parish celebration for Tim and James on Wednesday evening, and another surprise party with the staff on the rectory lawn last evening (Thank you, James and Team!), we want to set out clearly the details of the next days in our parish relationship.

Bishop Brown is copied here because these descriptions have his warmest blessings. He has been an incredible support and guide to us, as together we all navigate these steps, steps which none of us have taken before.

We are aware of the natural anxiety in the air, and we hope this note will set the tone of clarity and openness in the days ahead.

In all things we will be guided by the generous spirit of St. Alban's and our deep trust of each other and God's work within us. This can be a great season of gentleness, kindness, and lots of forbearance, as we make our transition and feel the natural stresses of change.

Just to be sure we're all on the same page, here is how we will proceed:

- Sunday, June 21st will be Tim's last day as Rector of St. Alban's Parish. This means that our pastoral relationship comes to an end for Tim and for all of us. It also means that Tim's responsibilities as rector conclude. He will continue as a retired priest in the Diocese of Maine, and we'll all go forward in prayer with a changed relationship, as described below.
- Happily, Tim will preach and teach at both services on the 21st. Holly will celebrate, and Joel and our Celtic Musicians will bring us their gifts, as well. Both services will provide time for sharing and reflection, and Holly and Matt and Joel have made incredible preparation for these gatherings. Bishop Brown will worship with us at Eventide!
- Tim will speak to the new pastoral boundaries at both services on Sunday.
- Tim will continue in these last few days his ongoing "handing-off" of ministries, projects, and pastoral concerns.
- Tim's office email and telephone will operate for a short grace period of 10 days with redirection to others for parish concerns and forwarding information for personal matters. Tim will have reviewed with staff, wardens, treasurer and relevant committee chairs, locations of key files, documents, passwords, etc. Rectory mail will be forwarded to Tim and James in Brooklin, Maine.

- As shared with the Vestry in May, Tim's compensation continues until July 31st so that he may enjoy paid vacation and leave owed to him. This compensation includes the use of the rectory, if desired. Tim and James do not anticipate using the rectory during this time, but it is available to them, and they will coordinate any use with the Wardens and B&G.
- The necessary Diocesan and Church Pension Fund documentation has been filed to conclude Tim's salary and begin his pension participation July 31st. Linda has calculated the payroll down to the nickel, and the Church Pension Group will do the rest! (We should all take some joy that CPG plans are quite generous to retirees, the parishes having paid into the fund for years!)
- The packers and movers will arrive at the rectory on June 22nd and expect to finish in a few days with a large van arriving/departing later in the week.
- Simultaneously, Tim's church office will be packed up, and a parish desk and chair currently in the rectory study will be placed in the church office for use by staff or clergy in the days ahead, as desired.
- Tim has donated a few volumes of books from the rector's library that will likely be of use to current or future clergy. Tim has also donated three new desktop computers he purchased recently to replace 3 poor specimens that the Rector, Associate Rector and Family Minister had been using.
- Two pieces of art and the furnishings in the Samuelsen entryway are also donated by Tim and James.
- At the rectory, Tim and James are donating a few pieces of furniture, and two significant appliances, to be used as the next occupant and the parish desire.
- The piano and carpet belonging to the parish will be left in place.
- Tim and James' housekeepers will give everything a good scrub after the move.
- A walk thru of the office and rectory with the wardens before and after the move has been scheduled. Buildings and Grounds Committee will be engaged with Christopher Pezzullo on this, as well.

(One exception to this schedule will be a long-planned wedding of two parishioners on July 18th Tim will officiate at a small, safe, and brief family gathering.)

New relationship ...We will all need to grapple a bit with what it means to end a pastoral relationship. It's a big change! But it is really pretty simple. Many of us are familiar with the norms. Tim will obviously let go of his responsibilities, duties, and authority as rector. That's the easy part! The Wardens, Associate Rector and then an Interim Rector, followed by a new Rector, all assisted by the Treasurer, lay leaders, and staff, will pick up those ministries. More complicated is the need for members of the Parish and Tim to have new personal boundaries. Tim will not be participating in any conversations or communications or gatherings about parish life or plans, including online. It is traditional at St. Alban's, and generally in the church, for Interim Rectors and then new Rectors to reach out for collegial, prayerful conversation with their predecessors, when they wish. But Tim will not be present at St. Alban's for at least a year, and then only at the request of the priest-in-charge, with the one post-Covid exception noted below. Parishioners should not contact Tim about pastoral matters, and if they do Tim will be obliged to inform the priest-in-charge.

Bishop Brown has a special exception to this outline! That is, since the pandemic has frustrated our in-person celebration of Tim's ministry, he endorses our creating such a

celebration when it safe to do so. He will help us make such plans, working with the priest-in-charge, as needed.

During this season of separation, we will all give each other time and space to start new beginnings. This clear separation is a holy space for that growth. As a retired priest in the Diocese of Maine, Tim will participate in the councils of the church and may be a visiting preacher and pastor at other parishes. The Bishop has asked Tim to continue as a Trustee of the Diocese until a clergy replacement is elected, most likely at the October 2020 Convention. Tim will worship at another parish in Maine. And then at the American Cathedral in Paris if plans all proceed! Over time, this change will come to feel natural to us and, eventually, our shared life of faith will have a new cadence with rich memories and common prayer.

Being together...let's do a great job in these complex days! We all know well that big changes raise anxieties. Tim's retirement is no exception! In these next days and especially in the weeks that follow, we will be leaders in a potentially anxious community. Everyone, including each of us, know that this is true. Tim and Chris met with Bishop Brown this morning, and he highlighted the power of trust and gentleness in such times. Which, of course, reminds us that we are called to live in the Fruits of the Spirit in these days.

In parish practice in anxious times, we know these fruits appear:

- When we listen and are open to change in our points of view.
- When we forgive and ask for forgiveness.
- When we are not wary or suspicious, but trust in the goodness of the other.
- When we raise openly any fair question, trusting in the goodness of the other,

Friends, we are about to embark on an exciting adventure together. These next days have many moving parts. Some may be confusing or raise questions for you. We hope we have communicated clearly and look forward to hearing any questions or concerns you may have.

With thanks for all you are,

In Christ,

Chris, Maryann, and Tim