

Announcement to the Parish

October 12, 2023

Dear St. Martin's Community:

Your Wardens and Vestry at St. Martin-in-the-Fields are writing to inform you that the Reverend James H. Littrell is on administrative leave as of today, October 12, 2023. This decision was taken after many hours of thoughtful discussion, and in consultation with the Bishop's office.

We are engaged, with Rev. Jim, in an assessment of our mutual ministries to discern our ministry together. Over the past several months and during the mutual ministry review process, issues of leadership direction and management style have arisen that merit more thorough review. The mutual ministry review is a yearly process. The Personnel Committee, appointed by Rev. Jim, is coordinating the mutual ministry review and will be conducting any additional assessments that may result from the review. The review will be completed in the next two to three weeks. As that process unfolds, we will keep you informed.

Please know that St. Martin's has the full support of the Bishop, Canons, and the Diocese of Pennsylvania. In the meantime, we are moving forward with our process for calling a new rector:

- The Parish Profile Committee is at work.
- "Listening Circles" will begin shortly; these will be small-group discussions about our hopes and aspirations, as well as our challenges and concerns.
- The Discernment Committee will soon be formed. It will be engaged in the critical process of screening, vetting, and meeting potential candidates as we seek a new rector.

Our community will continue to have pastoral support, liturgical leadership, and sacramental services. We have the Reverend Laura Palmer, the Reverend Carol Duncan, Stephen Ministers, our able staff and volunteers, as well as any needed support from the diocese.

We have been through more than three years of tumult, with the pandemic and the departure of our previous Rector, Associate Rector, and Parish Administrator. Through it all we have continued to offer a generous, compassionate, and just witness to the love of Jesus Christ in this neighborhood and beyond. We will get through this, holding fast to each other and trusting in God's plan for us.

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. - For Guidance, BCP page 831

All the members of the Vestry are available to you. Your questions, concerns, and cares are important to us. You may have pastoral or administrative matters on which you have been consulting with Rev. Jim. If so, please direct them to the Vestry, the Rev. Laura Palmer or Lorie Hershey as appropriate.

Please reach out to any of us at any time.

Faithfully,

Barbara Thomson, Rector's Warden

Carolyn Green, Personnel Committee Chair and Vestry Member