

Transition Update from the Vestry - July 2, 2023

The announcement below was given by Jim Fairburn, a member of the Vestry on Sunday, July 2, at the 10:30am service.

Good morning. I am Jim Fairburn, in my 4th year as a member of the vestry and a parishioner for the past 6 and a half years.

The following excerpt from an early transition prayer written by parishioner Pam Prell, expresses the essence of the transition process.

“As we consider the spaces that shelter and shape our lives together,

We meet at the threshold between who we are and who we will be.

We offer thanks for those whose vision provided this place where we have shared our gifts of teaching and listening, music and hospitality.

Where we have celebrated and mourned together.

As stewards of this, our church home, we come together to consider what is possible.”

While this past year has challenged us in many ways, the job continues. We need to continually remind ourselves that this search is a marathon, and not a sprint. That St. Martins is moving forward with care in order to discover what this parish is and what it will be in the future. This discernment requires a great deal of thought and effort on the part of all those who are part of the St Martin’s community.

The next step in this transition process is the creation of the Parish Profile, a document created by the parish and required by the diocese. The Parish Profile will fully describe the past the present and the future of St. Martins. It will describe every aspect of the parish: its assets and opportunities as well as it’s challenges. The parish profile will articulate not only who we are now, but how we see the work of this community evolving under the leadership of a new rector. Importantly, it will be the document that prospective candidates see and consider as part of their process.

The parish profile is also important as its creation opens the door for this community to come together and discuss our aspirations through a variety of methods: listening sessions, discussion groups, surveys. Hopefully these opportunities will yield ideas that will make this transition a truly fruitful experience that will bring us all into closer community. This is the time for all to “weigh in”.

Under the guidance of The Rev. Bud Holland, our transition consultant, the Parish Profile Committee is now being formed. This will be an opportunity for all to have input into what makes St. Martin’s an important part of your lives. If you are interested in taking part in the development of the Parish Profile in any of a number of ways, or in serving on the committee, please let Father Jim, Barb Thomson, or any Vestry member know. The Committee will consist of 10 to 12 people, and we will do our best to ensure that those who serve reflect the diverse populations and perspectives among the St. Martin’s community. Once the Parish Profile Committee is finalized, it will create ways for everyone in the parish to provide input into who we have been, who we are, and who we want to be.

As we do every Sunday, I ask those who serve on the Vestry to stand. The Vestry seeks your opinions, and your suggestions with the hope that these conversations will enlighten each of us. If you have a concern, make it known. I hope you will consider sharing your thoughts as we move forward.

A marathon, not a sprint.

In closing I offer this excerpt from another transition prayer written by The Rev. Bill Jacobsen:

“And now God, we look for your leading in our congregation as we go through times that seem chaotic and confusing. Help us to continue to trust in and to celebrate your creative work here and now. Thank you God for the promise of your guiding and creating presence as we witness all those in our congregation who carry the mantle of your work in our midst.”

Amen.