

August 2021

Dear Church,

“Every new beginning is some other new beginning’s end. “ (Seneca, Roman Philosopher)

In July of 2017, St. Andrew’s had a new beginning as we welcomed the Rev. Deacon Gregory D. Stark to become our shared Curate with responsibilities focusing upon children, youth and young adults. In the ensuing months Greg would be ordained a priest at St. Andrew’s and serve our parish as well as Christ Church, Oberlin for the next four years. The generosity of God’s ministry through and with Greg has been a blessing and a gift. That new beginning which became Greg’s ministry at St. Andrew’s has now come to an end and we bid him farewell as he goes to his next new beginning in Belgium. St. Andrew’s also has a new beginning as we enter the time when we transition to another minister who will have responsibilities for children and youth. (The Young Adult ministries will be led by the young adults who are currently involved in those ministries.)

In preparation for this transition, the Youth Minister Search Task Group met with the Rev. Anna Sutterisch and me to discern what St. Andrew’s needs at this time and to design the job description. It was determined that the new position will likely be a position for a lay minister. The job title was edited to be the “director” of ministries, emphasizing the role that the new staff person has in recruiting and empowering parish members to use their gifts in these ministries.

Understanding that transitions take time, I have asked the Rev. Greg Stark to plan youth ministry activities through the end of September and to recruit parish members to lead those activities. Children’s ministry activities will resume at the beginning of the program year in September. Information will be shared in the Enews and Carillon as well as with children, youth and their families.

The Director of Children and Youth Ministries position has been posted on “Indeed” and is being advertised in Episcopal youth leader communications. As viable candidates are identified, the Youth Minister Search Task Group and Youth Ministry Commission will help me to interview and select St. Andrew’s new Director of Children and Youth Ministries. The Vestry and parish will be informed of progress along the way.

You have heard me say that St. Andrew’s truly welcomes and values children and youth and demonstrates that in practice and resourcing. The number of children, youth and their families who are integrally involved at St. Andrew’s gives testimony to that truth. The vibrant and life-giving ministries like Vacation Bible School are integrated into the life of our parish and have lasting impact far beyond their schedule. The children and youth at St. Andrew’s are not “the future of the church” but **already are** the church with their presence, involvement, sharing of gifts and participation. God’s work in the world in and through St. Andrew’s is already happening in and with the children and youth of our parish. It is the responsibility of the whole parish to continue to support and nurture God’s good work.

I ask for your prayers for the person who is coming to us. I ask for your prayers for the Youth Minister Search Task Group, the Youth Ministry Commission, the grant writing group (who is working to find grants to sustain this ministry) and for me as we engage in the process of this “new beginning.” And... I ask for your prayers for our children and youth and their families. May we all be led by God’s Spirit as we walk in faith and trust of God’s provision, grace and love.

Blessings,

Mother June