



Trinity Church

March 29, 2019

Dear Friends,

When I was called to Trinity Church in the spring of 2010 I knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this was the community I was called to serve. I came because I believed passionately in the potential of this great old parish, and I happily pledged my whole self to caring for, shepherding, and renewing Trinity Church. We have been through good and bad days, through triumphs and tragedies. We've mourned together, celebrated together, and walked day by day in the path the Lord set before us. Together we have worshiped, sung, prayed, and shared the most Blessed Sacrament. And together we have doubled the size of our parish, stabilized our finances, and embarked on new mission and ministry on our campus. I am honored to have served with you for almost exactly nine years, and now the time has come for me to move on. The Vestry having received my resignation this week, I write to you today to say that I have accepted a call to be Rector of Emmanuel Church in Baltimore, Maryland, and that my last day at Trinity will be Sunday, April 28.

I have loved being Rector of Trinity Church. Yes, there have been challenges, but at least no one could ever call this place dull. I have loved our worship (especially Gather Together and the holy chaos that is the family service on Christmas Eve), our Maundy Thursday vigils, our days on the Pumpkin Patch and at the Strawberry Festival. I have treasured, and been humbled by, your allowing me to baptize your children, bury your loved ones, and unite you in the bonds of holy matrimony. I have been blessed to serve with such faithful lay leaders; and with staff members who do so much with so little, and with such generosity of spirit. My heart is full to overflowing with gratitude.

In the coming weeks your Wardens and Vestry will work closely with the Bishop's office to plan for this transition. There is no need to be afraid, or anxious. Trinity is in the capable and loving hands of our Sr. Warden, Tatiana Schweibenz, and will receive wisdom and guidance from our Bishop and his staff. The departure of one Rector, and the calling of the next, is a normal event in the life of hundreds of Episcopal parishes each year, and Trinity will benefit from a well-planned, and proven, parting, interim, and calling process.

The first step is to celebrate our time together as Priest and Parish, to take time to share memories and tell stories. I am particularly grateful for one final walk through the most sacred days of the year with all of you, and I look forward to the beauty, tragedy, and triumph of Holy Week and Easter among people I know and love. We are, all of us, wrapped up in and given our identity by, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and we will take our leave of each other in the bright glow of the Easter season.

Finally, let this be a season of prayer that is grounded in our deep faith and trust in the goodness, grace, mercy, justice, and love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let this be a season of thanksgiving and of parting well; a time for embracing so that we may let go with grace.

In Christ,

The Rev. Canon Anne Marie Richards, *Rector*