



CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY AND CHRIST CHURCH

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April 24, 2019

Dear Epiphany and Christ Church Family,

I write to tell you news I shared with the Vestry this past Tuesday night and with the staff the following morning. I will retire as rector of Church of the Epiphany and Christ Church effective August 31, 2019. The Vestry has granted my request to take my usual vacation during the month of August. Accordingly, Sunday, July 28 will be my last Sunday with you as your rector. By that time I will have celebrated my 66th birthday and will have served our parish for four years at Epiphany and almost eight years at Christ Church.

We have served together through very challenging times for our congregation, separately and together. One of my greatest joys has been to lend my leadership and administrative skills to oversee our consolidation as one parish in 2016. Together, Epiphany and Christ Church has a rich heritage of community service and outreach to those in need. You are known throughout the Diocese as a place of generous hospitality and genuine love

Epiphany and Christ Church faces many challenges as you work to make our three-year old consolidation more and more a reality. One of your greatest challenges will be to embrace a new future instead of gazing longingly to a past that is behind us. While most of our dedicated members are senior citizens, bright spots of hope, new life and energy can be seen in the children and youth growing up beneath our wings. Our church, our community and world are changing rapidly at the deepest levels, calling forth the need to engage the future with renewed commitment, new eyes, new vision and new leadership.

I have spent the past several years in conversation with family and with friends outside the network of our parish as I weighed the decision to retire. After much discussion and prayer, I believe the time for me to move into the next phase of my life has arrived and I believe it is an opportune time for Epiphany and Christ Church to welcome new, hopefully younger, clergy leadership. Our Bishop, your Wardens and Vestry and our Diocese will be working together with you to plan the next steps as our congregation prepares to enter this time of transition and discernment after my departure.

As I prepare to take my leave of you, please know that I do so with the deepest gratitude for the opportunity to have served as your priest and pastor. You have taught me many things and made me a better priest and person in the process. You will never be far from my thoughts and prayers.

Faithfully yours,


The Rev'd Father Joseph A. Harmon
Rector