



July 26, 2023

My dear parish family,

Twenty years ago, in July 2003, I came to St. Peter's as your Rector. A couple of years later, the Diocese of Ct. allowed David to join our parish staff as Associate Priest. These years in our parish have been so exciting, filled with laughter, amazing gifts and flourishing growth, and with occasional worries and tears as well — all of the ups and downs of life. My son Matt who arrived as young boy, a bit shy at first, grew up here from an angelic faced choir boy with a "ruff" around his neck (something I love and he's not so sure about!) into a gifted young man and social worker, who has just married his school sweetheart. You walked beside me through the death of my father, as we walked with you through the deaths of many of your loved ones. We have been privileged to baptize your babies, watch your children grow, marry your grownup children, bless your homes, celebrate your wedding anniversaries, and share in happy parish festivities — too many to count. Our life is filled with gratitude for the twenty, wonderful life-filled years we have shared.

This past January I turned 70 years old on the same day that 20 years earlier we celebrated the Institution of my ministry as your Rector at St. Peters. I will always be grateful for the opportunity and responsibility that this Parish community and our Bishop entrusted me with at that time. David and I love each one of you and we continue to appreciate all the ways you invite us to share life with you, to learn from and grow with you as we together experience God's Spirit at work in our lives and in this beautiful fragile world we are privileged to call home. At the same time, David and I recognize that we are growing a bit older and slower — though our excitement and hope for the future here at St. Peters has never diminished. We recognize that It is time for us to step back from full time parish ministry, not just for own journey, but also to make room for this community to discover and engage a new priest, with new energy and ideas, who will want to join with you to serve this wonderful St. Peter's community. So, yes! We are going to retire!

Our last Sunday at St. Peter's will be October 29th; and we will leave the parish on October 31st (just after another memorable Pumpkin Patch season!). When we leave, your experienced and exceptionally capable Parish Wardens, Kim Clarke and Sam Dunlop, will be in charge of the parish. They, along with the Vestry, will lead St. Peters (with advice from the Diocese) until you call a new Rector. Over the next few weeks we will share more detailed information about this process and the steps you will all engage with as you search for and call the person who can best share this Parish's gifts, ministries and aspirations.



It is not easy for our family to say goodbye to people we have loved over so many years. I have shed many tears just thinking about leaving you all, as has David. We both hope that over the next few months, we can find time for conversations over tea or coffee, to share stories and laughter and memories. You are a remarkably gifted, strong and resilient group of people, a rare and wonderful parish community. We look forward to watching from the sideline as new dreams take root, new gifts emerge and your compassionate ministry with each other and the world continues to flourish and.

In Christ,

Sandy Stayner

David Stayner

Sandy and David Stayner