

March 19, 2016

Future Blessings Update:

Just as this season of winter is soon coming to an end, and the warmer days of Spring approach, so too, St. John's will experience a season of change. In reality, one could say that we are actually coming to the end of two seasons. The first is our season of refuge at Abington Baptist Church. We will be ever grateful for the welcome and shelter offered to us in Abington during a time of need. The second season is one that has lasted much longer. St. John's season in the wilderness, which began when the St. John's as a whole left the Episcopal Church USA, is also coming to a close. It is hard to believe, that 16 years ago, St. John's would spend time in 3 buildings, continuing to move where the Lord has called us. This is an exciting time in the history of our church. I am asking you to continue to pray for this process. We must continue to glorify God in all that we do.

Now, as the time approaches for us to move into our permanent home, I'd like to update you on progress. The first phase of remodeling of the sanctuary space is well underway. Pews are stacked in the narthex and fellowship area, the carpet has been removed, and sanding and staining of the floor is in process. We look forward to seeing its completion in the next few weeks! In addition, a smaller chapel space is being prepared from former storage space. We expect this to be complete for use at our early Sunday service, as well as other weekday activities.

Many other tasks of getting the new space ready for worship are under way. Plans for moving are being set. Teams are working on sound equipment, procuring an altar and other elements for worship, determining the best way to use the spaces for classrooms, storage, etc., planning for a new sign on the street, and most importantly, seeking ways to engage our communities and bring them to St. John's. Some aspects will be complete by move date, while others may take weeks or months to complete. We are only part way along in this journey and some of our personal preferences will require sacrifice. Our time in the wilderness has prepared us well for this.

Now, and most importantly, with all the planning and activity surrounding this move, let us not lose sight of the need to grow in faith, and seek to draw others to the Kingdom. Growing our discipleship groups is quite possibly, the most important aspect of our new work as a congregation. Make the time to engage here.

As you might expect, there are many moving parts to this transition, and we all must play a part. I am encouraging you to participate in the process using the unique gifts that each you have been given. These gifts have been given to us by the Lord and all have equal value in His eyes. I urge you to prayerfully consider how the Lord might be calling you to incrementally support His work at St. John's, perhaps through the Future Blessing fund, or perhaps in other ways of service. Above all we must seek to worship and honor Him in all that we do for it is about Him and not us.

I give thanks for all of the hard work that has been and is being done by all of you, some seen, but much unseen. Please continue to pray for the following as our move date nears:

- That the hearts of people in the community and those we interact with every day will be open for the Gospel of Jesus Christ

- In thanksgiving for the witness of St. John's Church through past generations, and for its future generations, those in the fold and those yet to come, that they would see Christ in the work of the church
- For continued focus on creating a simple and appropriate worship space to honor and glorify our Lord, and the resources to achieve this
- In thanksgiving for the almost \$108,000 already provided to support the physical work at the church

Our Lord has walked with us in the wilderness, and I am confident he will continue to walk with us. May we continue to seek Him in all we do as a congregation.

For his Glory!

Chris Freisheim
Rector's Warden