

May 5, 2020

To the Congregation, Vestry, and Staff of St. Philip's Church,

It is with a mixture of many emotions that the time has come for me to announce my resignation from St. Philip's Church, effective on June 7, 2020. After thirteen years of service to God, this church, and the children's choirs of St. Philip's, this is a decision that has been very difficult for me. I am moving in a different direction in my career, in order to pursue a career in music education and to complete the final project for my Doctorate in Sacred Music that I will be finishing this fall. It is unfortunate that my resignation must take place during this time of social distancing amid the COVID-19 pandemic, because I do very much want to see everyone again.

The last thirteen years have been the very best in my career as a church musician, which started when I began playing the organ at a local Episcopal church in Florida in 1983. There have been many blessings and highlights, such as the Canterbury Choir's performance in February 2018 at the convention of the American Choral Directors Association Conference. Of course, each European tour was special and meaningful in a different way. There were five altogether, but the most recent tour of England, France, Belgium, and Holland in 2019 is the one that is the freshest in my mind and in the memories of the current choristers and their families. But the best part of being part of the worship at St. Philip's has been in working with all of the children, from the two-year-olds at St. Philip's Preschool all the way to the young adults in the St. David Choir. It has been my great joy to watch them blossom as young musicians and young servants of the Lord.

I have been here long enough to see many graduate from college and marry, and a few have started their own families, still continuing to grow and build upon their experiences here at St. Philip's as the foundation of their lives as Christians. When I run into these adult choristers, they mention what amazing experiences they had in the Canterbury and St. David Choirs and how these experiences have impacted their lives, and I am very grateful that each of these kids, now adults, have been impacted by the congregation and clergy's support of the children's choirs at St. Philip's Church.

I will continue to pray for all of these families and will continue to be a part of their lives when it is possible, attending their school concerts when I am able, and supporting them when they serve in church.

Soli Deo gloria,

Jolene Connor-Hethcox