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Dear Christ Church Parishioners,

It is with both joy and sadness that I tell you I will be retiring as your Deacon this spring. Easter Sunday will be my last service of worship amongst you wonderful parishioners. Retiring is a joy, as serving as Deacon at Christ Church truly has been a joy; it is a sadness, as I will miss all of you, and being in your loving midst.

Last spring, as I was driving to the memorial service, for the wife of a Deacon friend of mine, just before I arrived at the church, I 'heard', "*Next spring you are moving to Boston.*"

The guidance was clear as a bell, and I accepted it as direction. First I thought of Christ Church, as I realized Nadia would have been here a year, and Christopher would have the resources to add a lay person or a curate. Christ Church would be fine; the timing felt right to go. Then I thought of my daughter and her family in Boston, and how eager they have been for me to move and to become an integrated part of their busy lives. This is a joyful thought! Lastly, as a native New Englander, I feel a pull back to my roots.

This inner thought took about two, perhaps at the outside, five minutes. By the time I arrived at the church, my decision had been made. Knowing I have been, in effect, 'told' to retire and to move to Boston is a great gift, as I know, without any doubt, both the timing and the choice are right. While I have children also in Chicago, Seattle, and Portland, Oregon, my young grandchildren, ages 4 and 9, live in Boston. I need to be part of their ongoing lives in this world of change and challenge.

Yes, I will miss so many Christ Church ongoing groups and ministries: Friends in Faith, the Book Group, Centering Prayer, the lay chaplaincy program, mentoring at Grace House, leading the Women's Retreat and Teddy Bear Sunday come quickly to mind. Yet the deepest honor, for me, in serving as your Deacon has been the spiritual power of proclaiming the Gospel, setting the table, and, finally, dismissing all of you, joyfully to go out into the world, to bring and to multiply the love and the sense of inner rightness you experience at Christ Church.

Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit!

Deacon Heath