

Visioning Update: July 16, 2021

As you all know, the Bishop's Committee is preparing for a visioning ministry/process to help the congregation determine our calling as a community and how that will relate to any future location. While the Bishop's Committee and Bishop Susan have the final say on any such matters in terms of decision making, we emphatically want this to be a congregationally informed discussion. The result of this process will be the visioning ministers' recommendations to the Bishop and the Bishop's Committee.

Our first step will be to clearly identify our values, who we are, who we want to serve, who we want to *become* as we *grow* into our next milestone. This is an important initial step in determining where we should land, because our location will allow that vision to thrive and/or present us with challenges. While any new location will have unique pros and cons, as we re-establish ourselves, we want to take this step with open eyes (as well as with Open Arms and Open Minds).

For that reason, the subsequent step for our calling will need to be backed up with basic facts that lead us to these specific goals. Who, demographically, do we want to become? Can we afford to rent our own space anywhere or is continuing to share space a good solution? The visioning ministry will consider seriously what it will *actually* take to be a sustained and successful mission wherever we are called next. Be that in Oceanside, Carlsbad, or someplace else here in North County, the visioning ministers will investigate, with guidance, what it takes for a functioning congregation to successfully exist and truly thrive by looking at real data such as census material, median income of a specific area, and rental/property prices, etc. This is hard work, but it is the work of the Spirit, and it behooves us to sniff out where it may lead us!

One of the exciting opportunities that the visioning ministry will get to contemplate: Is Holy Cross called to be the Episcopal mission and church plant in Oceanside? Bishop Susan has asked me, and us, to contemplate that as a *possibility*. But to be clear, regardless of where our process leads us, Oceanside, Carlsbad, or elsewhere, we will have her enthusiastic support as a mission of the diocese. The diocese certainly desires to have an Episcopal presence in Oceanside, but it is not the only option for us and we will have to see where our dreams, the data, and the Holy Spirit lead us.

Due to unforeseen circumstances external to Holy Cross, we have had to push back our start date for this ministry (more on this in an update to come in August). What we can say for sure is that the Bishop's Committee is actively settling on a retreat date in mid-to-late November to discern who is called to this ministry and specifics as to how the process will start. Please let any of us know if you feel called to this beautiful opportunity, a ministry of vision!

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