

Dear Holy Spirit Church,

At our last vestry meeting on June 28th, I signed a letter of agreement to be the acting rector of The Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, Dripping Springs.

It was both with great joy and great trepidation that I signed the letter—Great joy, of course, because I love you and desire to serve you and anticipate that the Spirit will do wonderful things in our midst—Great trepidation because I know that the responsibility of the rector is not to be taken lightly, especially in a community that has undergone so much, so recently.

While there is no shortage of distress, heartbreak, uncertainty, and loss that we have experienced as a church, as a nation, as the Body of Christ—and while I know that there will always be significant challenges to face around the corner—I know also that, beyond a despairing resignation about the state of the world, there is a future of hope to which God is inviting us.

We may only catch glimpses, here and there, of this Kingdom that Jesus so frequently described and proclaimed. But it is drawing near—it is approaching—it is growing—and it does involve Holy Spirit, Dripping Springs.

In partnership with all of you, and as your acting rector, I look forward to discerning, engaging, and embodying this future toward which the Spirit of Christ is beckoning us.

When I came to Holy Spirit in October of 2020 as a curate, many of you may have wondered, “What is a curate?” In the same way, at this time, many of you may be wondering “What is an acting rector?” Well, the short answer is that as acting rector, I will be your rector. There is not a substantial difference between “acting rector” and “rector” in terms of the scope of my work, responsibilities, or role in the life of Holy Spirit.

As acting rector, I have agreed to serve in this parish for at least two years. As was the case with my “2 year” curacy arrangement, this current agreement does not mean that I will disappear in June of 2024. The agreement is merely designed to make space for me and Erika, the bishop, and, of course, you—the vestry and people of Holy Spirit—to intentionally engage the work of discernment—to catch glimpses in the coming years of how the Spirit intends to work through each of us in union with one another and with Christ.

I hope this brings you reassurance and peace. I hope that you will continue to uphold and sustain me in ministry, as you already have. I also hope that this church community will continue to walk the path of Christian discipleship, following our Great Shepherd, Jesus.

I have no illusions that this shared path of Christian discipleship will be a walk in the park. When you decide to follow Jesus, pursuing the sincerity of his love and his commitment to truth, life is never easy or convenient. I trust that you, the Body of Christ, will allow me space to



fail, grow, and learn as a fellow human being in need of grace. I trust that, at times, you will be upset with me or disagree with me or be frustrated by me. But I also trust that relationship in the Body of Christ is maintained by something deep—namely, our radical dependence on the mercy and grace of Jesus, who empowers us to love one another and build one another up.

Finally, over the past several months Erika and I have both experienced your love and concern for our well-being. You want us to thrive—and we are both grateful that you so value our wellness and wholeness. I am happy to be able to say that I will shortly be supported in my priestly ministry by an associate clergy person, who will partner with me in providing spiritual direction and care to Holy Spirit. This partner in ministry will be a relief to me, as well as a boon to each of you and to this church.

Thank you all for your courage, your love, and your commitment to Christ and to one another in this most important of all adventures.

Yours in Christ,
Evan+