

To St. Martin's Parish Community:

I'm writing to you today to update you on our search process, and to share some exciting news about our next Priest.

Before I share that news, let's recap where we've been in this journey. As you may recall, Father Jon Hall's last day with St. Martin's was just after Christmas of 2017. In January 2018, we had a series of supply Priests filling in, until Father Al joined us as our interim in February. I think we can all agree Father Al has done a fabulous job helping St. Martin's heal and preparing us for our next Priest.

After Father Jon left, Bishop Smith authorized an expedited search process, where the Vestry would serve as the Search Committee, and we would hire a Priest-in-Charge for a three-year term. After two years, the Vestry and Priest-in-Charge would decide whether to convert the Priest to our full-time Rector at the end of three years, or part ways and begin the interim process anew.

The Vestry started its search process in February by completing our Church Profile. In March we started working with the Rev. Canon Joe Chambers, to begin accepting applicants. In April, May and June we interviewed various candidates multiple times, met with them and their spouses, visited their churches, checked references, and ultimately voted on whom we wanted to call as our next Priest.

From the nine candidates we started with, there was one candidate who continually stood out and impressed us throughout the process. We were impressed with her enthusiasm, confidence, how well prepared she was at each step, her spirituality, her ability to work with people, her keen sense of who we are as a parish community, her organizational skills, and her boundless energy. Her reference checks were glowing, with one reference crying tears to explain what a difference our new Priest had made in her life, and another reference offering to personally meet with the Vestry to share her virtues.

On Monday, June 25, the Vestry voted, and that evening, I called our new Priest to St. Martin's. She accepted on the spot, and we are excited to announce that our new Priest-in-charge will be the Rev. Leslie Barnes Scoopmire.

Many of you know Pastor Leslie, as she has been a supply Priest at St. Martin's on several occasions, but let me share some of her background:

- In 2017, Pastor Leslie earned her Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary
- She served as a seminarian and deacon at Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Town and Country from 2015-2016.
- She was ordained in June, 2017, and since then has been a sought-after Supply Priest throughout the Diocese.
- She is currently serving at the Cathedral, and was the interim youth minister for the Diocese, while the Diocesan youth minister was on leave.
- She currently serves on the Diocesan Standing Committee, alongside Vestry member Loretta Go, who is also on that committee.
- She is a retired middle and high school teacher in the Pattonville School District, where she taught for 24 years.
- She's married to Bill, a senior engineer at Boeing, and she has three children: Lauren, 23, who lives in Chicago; Katie, 21, who is in college at UMSL; and Scott, 18, who just graduated from

high school and will be a freshman at the University of Kansas come August. She also has two dogs: Tyco and Kobe.

We are pleased and excited that Leslie will start with us on Aug. 1. Her first service will be the 5o5 on Saturday, August 4, and her first Sunday will be the following day. Her Letter of Agreement will run from Aug. 1, 2018, to July 31, 2021. Father Al's last Sunday with us will be July 29. We will host a reception following the 10:15 a.m. service that day to celebrate Father Al's ministry with St. Martin's.

I want to give credit to and special thanks to our dedicated and hard-working Vestry, who accomplished in six months what has in the past taken more than 2 years. In addition to our normal monthly Vestry meetings, there were several extra evening meetings, plus interviews, dinners, reference checks, church visits, and spirited and prayerful conversations.

Pastor Leslie's calling represents many firsts for St. Martins – our first full-time female lead Priest, our first priest utilizing the Priest-in-Charge approach, and our first Priest called who has not previously been a Rector – with of course the exception of Rev. Howard Park. Our Priest-in-charge approach allowed us to consider a wider candidate pool, set aside experience as the most critical criteria, and focus on taking a leap of faith with someone who is fresh, energized, and enthusiastic, someone who can learn, grow and mature with us, as we at St. Martin's do the same with her. Pastor Leslie will also be the beneficiary of a robust portfolio of support resources from the Diocese, including a dedicated mentor, access to Care and Counseling, plus participation in the two-year Fresh Start program for new Priests, to ensure she is getting the support she needs in her new role.

We are extremely excited to call the Rev. Leslie Scoopmire to be our new Priest. At the same time we will be celebrating the cherished ministry of Father Al Jewson. Thank you all for your prayers and support as we begin this new and exciting chapter in the life of St. Martin's.

Thanks be to God.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom".

Tom Allen
Senior Warden