



# St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

May 7, 2021

## **Vestry calls the Rev. Patrick J. Wingo to serve as interim rector**

The Rev. Patrick J. Wingo has been called by the vestry of St. Stephen's Church to serve as interim rector during the transition that began with the retirement of the Rev. Gary Jones.

Mr. Wingo currently serves as interim rector at Church of the Ascension in Knoxville, Tennessee, and before that was Canon to the Ordinary (chief clergy assistant to Bishop Shannon Johnston) in the Diocese of Virginia for six years. He has also served as rector and as deacon-in-charge for parishes in the Diocese of Alabama, and as a member of the diocesan staff there. His combination of parish ministry and diocesan staff work in transition ministry made him an especially attractive candidate. He also has expertise and experience in such areas as congregational development, campus ministry, finance, and conflict resolution.

A committee consisting of the executive committee of the vestry—Allison Koschak, senior warden; Lynn Ivey, junior warden; Bobby Fauntleroy, treasurer; and Jim Price, register—as well as former senior warden John Bates and former junior warden Laurie Rogers enthusiastically recommended Mr. Wingo to the full vestry, and at a meeting held May 5, the vestry affirmed their choice.

“The interim rector search committee believes that Pat Wingo is just the right person at this time to lead and support St. Stephen's during this interim period,” said Ms. Koschak. “He will prepare us for what's next and we will move through this transition with grace and God's love.”

She continued, “Pat's strong pastoral presence, his desire for collaboration and his attentive listening stood out to all on the committee. He already knows us from his work for the Diocese of Virginia and we believe his gifts are just what we need during an interim period such as ours.”

Mr. Wingo said, “I am so pleased to be joining the St. Stephen's parish family as your interim rector. I have watched your ministry thrive while I was in Virginia, and I continue to be impressed with the vibrant work you are doing in the Richmond community as you serve God and follow Christ. The clergy and lay staff clearly have done a wonderful job through the pandemic, and I look forward to working with them and meeting parishioners beginning in mid-July.”

*(continued)*

During the interim period, Mr. Wingo will work closely with the Rev. Will Stanley, vicar, and the parish staff to continue our vital ministries while reflecting together on the future. This will include a self-study, and the compilation of a parish profile that will be used to recruit and inform suitable candidates for the rector's position.

"I am so excited to welcome Pat Wingo to St. Stephen's," said Mr. Stanley. "I look forward to working closely with him in this important, interim time. His experience in large systems—both within and outside the Diocese of Virginia—will be a wonderful addition to our already strong team of clergy, staff, and lay leadership. I have every confidence that he will come among us to help strengthen the already sure foundation that is in place here."

The vestry will appoint a search committee (also known as a nominating committee) later this year to recruit, interview and evaluate clergy to lead this large, vibrant parish. That committee will eventually make recommendations to the vestry, which will issue a call. While there is no fixed length for the interim and search period, it is typically between 12 and 15 months.

As the wardens said in their letter when Gary announced his decision to retire from St. Stephen's, we will honor his extraordinary legacy by working together with great enthusiasm and hope as we begin our next chapter. We are delighted to have Pat Wingo to lead us on that journey.