

Saint David's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Andrew D'Angio White, Rector

August, 2022

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you are all hopefully aware, I am beginning a sabbatical this fall, from the beginning of September through the end of December. My last Sunday before leaving for sabbatical will be August 21, and I will return on the Feast of the Holy Name, Sunday, January 1. In the Diocese of Maine, clergy are entitled to four months' sabbatical leave every five years. Hard as it may be to believe, last December 1 marked our fifth anniversary as priest and people! There are many practical matters to address in preparation for a sabbatical, which I'll first do before taking a moment to reflect with you on what it is we are doing in this time.

First, know that in my absence, your Wardens, Karen Perka and Michael Donaghy, our Deacons, the Rev. Kris Conley and the Rev. Gail Chandler, and our Parish Administrator, Cathy Zub, will constitute a Sabbatical Committee that will meet regularly to ensure that things are running smoothly. The Vestry has been hard at work thinking and preparing for this time for much of the last year, and I have complete confidence in their ability to lead St. David's. The Rev. Stephen Fales, a retired Episcopal priest with decades of experience in parish ministry, will lead worship on Sundays and Wednesdays, as well as being "on call" for pastoral emergencies that require a priest. A brief introduction from Fr. Steve is enclosed. I will be unavailable via phone and email, though Cathy will keep me apprised of any significant issues that may arise.

While this will be a time for me to rest and reflect, it is also a time for you, the congregation of St. David's, to do the same. It is healthy to spend time reflecting on the spiritual life of the parish, looking back and looking forward. It is a great opportunity to celebrate our successes and, at the same time, identify opportunities to enhance our spiritual growth and development. The sabbatical committee will be sharing ways in which this discernment will take place.

The word sabbatical comes from the same root as Sabbath, the day of rest established by God in creation. This rest was never meant to be separate from creation, but rather a part of it. Indeed, we see the divine pause at the end of each day, as God beholds that which God has made and pronounces it good. Part of sabbath/sabbatical time is being able to do some beholding of what we and God have done together!

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In this light, Sara and I will be spending some time traveling with our children. We had initially planned an extensive cross-country road trip, but the realities of our family's mental health needs have made us realize it is best to stay close to home, and do a few smaller excursions. And so, while the kids are in school, we will take some time for reading, writing, and the creative work of homemaking. For the most part, we will be around in Kennebunk, so don't feel the need to hide or avoid us should we run into you out and about!

I am excited about this time to come, and just as excited to return and share with each other the fruits of this sabbatical time. I ask for your prayers for me, our family, and your leaders as we navigate this season of rest and renewal as a part of our journey together. Please, know me to be

Yours in Christ,

Andrew

Introducing The Rev. Steve Fales



Fr. Steve Fales is a native Rhode Islander. His family were members of Grace Episcopal Church in Providence for several generations. He was ordained priest on December 17, 1978 by Bishop Fred Belden at St. Michael's in Bristol, RI. During his 40 years of ordained ministry, Fr. Steve served 5 parishes in 4 dioceses. He retired in 2017 and moved to Maine last year.

Fr. Steve's love affair with Maine began over 60 years ago. He spent a portion of every summer in the Boothbay Harbor region, most often on Southport Island. As a teenager he acolyted at the summer chapel of All Saints by the sea. Later as a priest, he presided at worship twice at All Saints.