

September, 2019

Clergy Leadership Resource Reallocation Strategy Effective: October 1, 2019

Dear friends,

We are a small diocese in terms of both the number of worshipping communities and the average size of our congregations. More than 75% of our congregations are Family Size churches with Average Sunday Attendance of less than 75.

While we may be a small diocese by these measures, we are blessed with some incredibly talented clergy, and collectively we now have greater clarity about what it takes to grow and develop congregations spiritually, numerically and in missional leadership.

Our faithfulness to Jesus is proportional to our regular evaluation of how we organize ourselves as bearers of the gospel.

I believe we are called to focus on the four key areas of *Small Church & Pastoral Development, Discernment, Transitions, Liturgy and Formation of Children, and Youth & Young Adults* to enhance our mission and ministry in building beloved-community. And, we are wise to do so by engaging, developing and retaining our existing clergy leaders who have demonstrated gifts and skills in these areas.

I think we can do both, by moving to a *distributed leadership model* that engages a broader array of our existing clergy leaders, empowering them to focus on their areas of strength and passion – while continuing to serve our parishes, with renewed energy and expanding capability. Our learnings from our own District Deans termed-model approach has been instructive.

Therefore, I am planning a strategic reallocation of our clergy leadership resources to address these key growth areas, going forward. After a series of conversations with Rev. Canon Johnnie Ross, the Standing Committee, key diocesan, parish and clergy leaders, our Chancellor, the Human Resources Committee, and Diocesan Staff, I intend to make these changes starting October 1, 2019

THE PLAN:

- Appoint four new, part-time Diocesan Deans, with three-year terms, to provide a diverse array of resources, in a flatter and more flexible and less centralized structure.
- Canon Johnnie Ross will have a diocesan focus on *Small Church & Pastoral Development*, while serving as the new Rector called by Grace in Scottsville & St. Andrew's in Caledonia.
- Discontinue the current role of *Canon to the Ordinary*, as we shift to a more collegial, empowering Dean model.

- Set aside resources for a Diocesan Consultant to train, research, and optimize critical functions of diocesan-wide ministry and leadership development.
- Clarify the current Deacon Coordinator position.
- Continue with the current District Dean roles.

FOUR NEW PT DIOCESAN DEAN APPOINTMENTS:

1. Diocesan Dean for Small-Church and Pastoral Development: *Reverend Canon Johnnie Ross*
2. Diocesan Dean for Discernment: *Reverend Debs Duguid-May*
3. Diocesan Dean for Transitions: *Reverend Virginia Tyler Smith*
4. Diocesan Dean for Liturgy and Formation (children, youth and young adults): *Reverend Billy Daniel*

I am most grateful for the thoughtful engagement, enthusiasm and sincere support of the Wardens, Vestries and Clergy leaders who've endorsed these changes. This is an exciting experiment, that uses a distributed leadership model to empower, engage and energize our leaders. I invite you to pray for all involved as we help grow as a Diocese that nurtures and develops Christian leadership. There are many details not contained in this brief introduction, and I am sure you have questions. I ask for your trust, to give you more clarity as we discern and live into this new structure in the days and months ahead. I will share more on this when we meet for our Diocesan Convention at Hobart and William Smith Colleges on October 26, 2019.

With affection,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. L. S.', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.