

Saint Anthony on the Desert

AN OASIS ON THE WAY

August 1, 2022

Dear Siblings in Christ and Friends of Saint Anthony,

Grace and peace to you from our new rector and senior pastor, Canon Holly, and the lay leadership of Saint Anthony on the Desert.

Professing the Christian faith and responding with action is the lifework of this Episcopal community. It is a year-round privilege, and our gratitude for your support of this work likewise knows no season. We give thanks, at all times, for the hours you spend in service to God's people. We delight in the gifts, skills, and knowledge you offer. We praise you for the financial contributions you make to support our mission.

As this letter is being written, we are preparing our fall offerings of formation, education, worship, and fellowship—for all ages. We also are deepening our understanding of what it means to be a good steward of God's abundance, to practice in all seasons and in all places gratitude and generosity. And as part of these efforts, we also will be asking ourselves what it is that Christ is calling us, the people and the friends of Saint Anthony, to be.

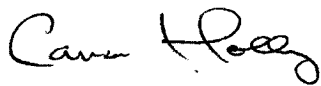
Today, we find ourselves a healthy and vibrant faith community, albeit one at a crossroads of how we defined "church" prior to the pandemic, and how we define "church" in this new age. You will be receiving a series of letters and postcards in the mail between now and the end of October. This "ingathering" time, culminating in the offering of financial pledges of support for Saint Anthony in 2023, will serve as an introduction to our focus for the next three years—what it means to belong, to believe, to become.

Our focus this year will be on what it means to belong. "Follow me and I will make you fishers of people." These are the words that Jesus offers as he walks the sea of Galilee and calls his new siblings to a different way of life. He gives them a new mission, creates a new community, and summons them to exhibit God's light shining in the darkness of a broken world.

He invites them first to belong, to find themselves welcome to be a part of, rather than apart from, the Kingdom. He continues to teach, form, and strengthen them to believe—to understand why they are who they are, and what the work is that they have been given to do. Finally, he provides them a new vision—to become a future that will take them places they have never been, to live fully into the intensions God has for them.

God has intentions for all of us: good, joy-filled, generous, loving intentions. We look forward to the opportunities to share a deeper understanding of how the Holy Spirit is living and moving at Saint Anthony. We begin where Jesus began—by inviting people to belong.

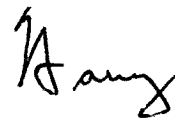
In Christ,



Canon Holly A. Herring
Rector



Danforth Austin
Senior Warden



Harry Boysen
Junior Warden