

Dear parishioners of Christ Episcopal Church,

I am very happy to accept the call to become your next Rector. I look forward to arriving in Cedar Park and beginning a new ministry with you right after Easter. Coming to CEC is a wonderful and exciting opportunity. Some of you may know, that I was a seminarian among you many years ago. Coming back to serve, worship, and rekindle relationships in a new way is such a blessing. I look forward to us sharing a long and fruitful ministry.

We will spend a lot of time, particularly early on, getting to know one another. There will be time to share a fuller story with you. But I want to take this introductory time to introduce my family and share my vocational journey. Helen and I have been married for 21 years. We are both natives of Southern California. We have three children, Robert (17), Lucas (14), and Olivia (11). They bring us great joy and challenge us at the same time. Helen is a professional Children's and Youth Minister, who also enjoys finding used toys, fixing them up, and reselling them. We affectionately call this her "side hustle." Robert is currently a junior in high school, enjoys volleyball and lacrosse, and works at Chick-fil-a. Lucas is a freshman, who also plays volleyball. He also enjoys basketball and playing his Xbox with his friends. Lucas was baptized at CEC by Bishop Harrison. Olivia is a fifth grader who loves her friends and gymnastics. Helen and the kids will stay in Virginia to finish out the school year and sell the house. Please keep them in your prayers.

Coming to CEC is a "full circle" kind of journey. Helen and I moved to Cedar Park from Northern California in 2005, so that I could attend seminary. We wanted to remain as home owners during seminary, and that brought us to Cedar Park. CEC was around the corner from our new home and that brought us to you then. After graduating from seminary, I served for two years as the Associate Rector at Trinity Episcopal Church, Marble Falls. In 2011, I was called as the Rector at St. Joseph's Episcopal Church in Newberry, Florida (which is right outside of Gainesville, home to the University of Florida). I served there for seven years before moving to Richmond, Virginia to become the Associate Rector for Faith Formation and Volunteer Engagement (the longest title ever!) at Christ Church Episcopal in Glen Allen. My tenure at CCE, Glen Allen has solidified my sense of call to serve in the role of Rector. And it is by the grace of God for the journey to circle back around to CEC.

We will be starting a new ministry together in a time of pandemic. It undoubtedly will look very different from any other beginning. However, we will still spend considerable time getting to know one another, recognizing our gifts, finding ways to share in ministry, and worshipping our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Coming through this pandemic will force us to rebuild towards something that looks and feels normal. And, it is an opportunity to rebuild in whatever new direction God may be calling us to. It is an exciting time in my life, in that of my family's, and in that of our congregation. Please keep me and my family in your prayers. You are in my prayers. I will see in you April.

In Christ and with all of God's blessings,

Richard+

