

INTERIM RECTOR

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Gaede

December was a busy month for me, getting to know the staff, vestry, choir, Daughters of the King, and parishioners. Your hospitality has warmed my heart. I'm slowly learning your names, but keep reminding me who you are! And keep celebrating who *you* are—an open, welcoming parish with a faithful past to celebrate and a hopeful future to anticipate.

The mediation work is coming to a close and seems to have made a positive impact on the way various individuals and groups in the parish communicate with and understand each other. There are many exciting possibilities for ministry and parish care that have been identified. One of the challenges emerging from this work is the setting of priorities. It's tempting to focus on new ideas that are easy to implement, but it's important to focus first on the larger picture of what All Saints' and Christ the King have accomplished, and what must be done to make this parish a fertile ground for growth. The potential and intention are there, and you have done an amazing job of maintaining yourselves in this long period without a rector, but it's time to step up the prayers and actions to find the person God is calling to be your new, long-term (let us hope!) rector. I will do everything I can to help you in this process of discernment. I am your biggest fan. I've also been involved in countless search processes, so I know what questions to ask of a candidate. And I believe I have an understanding of the clergy personality and gifts that will be a good match for you all.

These are the priorities that have been identified as most urgent in 2019:

1. The successful completion of the Honduras Medical Mission.
2. Rector search—many of the creative ideas for new ministries will require the support of the new rector. It is only fair to allow that person the opportunity to participate in prioritizing and realizing these plans.
3. Organizing the 2020 Annual Council of the Diocese of Mississippi, which we will be hosting as we celebrate All Saints' 150th anniversary. This is an all-hands-on-deck project, and a great opportunity to get involved in the mission of the wider Church.
4. Capital Campaign—to free up funds for new growth and ministry.

Keep on doing what you are doing, with gladness and singleness of heart. And prepare to be surprised at what God will do—in good ways. As Bishop Howe of Central Florida often said, "God is seldom on time, but God is never late." Keep the faith!