

June 19, 2024

On the last day of my curacy interview, I was eating a Cuban sandwich with Fr. Ryan and Jackson thinking, "Well, this has been great. I love the people and the church, but there are probably other candidates, and I won't get an offer from my first interview." I had forgotten that the Holy Spirit had opened door after door since I started the discernment process. Two-and-a-half years later, I am standing at the threshold of another opened door. It has been a privilege to hear your stories, to worship and pray with you, to give you spiritual food at communion and in sermons, to wrestle with Scripture, and most importantly, to share the good news of God's steadfast and abundant love. Thank you for trusting me to serve and love you.

My new call is to be priest-in-charge of two parishes near Burlington, Vermont. St. Paul's in downtown Vergennes is smaller (average Sunday attendance equivalent to our 8am service) with more young families. St. Paul's was built in 1834. Its interior is lovely with large restored stained-glass windows, white walls, a rood screen, and St. John the Evangelist's symbol, an eagle, on the lectern. The church sits next to the town green, across from coffee shops and thrift stores and next to an opera house. I'm envisioning a Palm Sunday procession around the green, and hosting concerts and fairs to invite neighbors to "come and see."



All Saints was built in 1964 in a less populated area, which is now surrounded by forest, bike paths, farmland, and a community garden. The congregation is twice the size of St. Paul's. Instead of stained-glass windows set in white walls, All Saints' walls are all glass in different shades of blue. There is a labyrinth in the back. Here, I'm envisioning restorative retreats. Also, there is a synagogue and a mosque half a mile from All Saints, offering more opportunities to bring neighbors together (Psa 133).

Bishop Shannon and Diocesan headquarters are also in Burlington. I'm eager to visit the Episcopal private school, check out a new public school-diocesan collaboration, the University of Vermont, and smaller colleges. I am drawn to the natural beauty of the area, especially the forests, mountains and Lake Champlain. Madeleine will join me in September, after her ceramics residency ends (some of her work is on madeleinehartley.com).

We have sown so many seeds these past years at St. Thomas' in youth ministry, pastoral care, and outreach. Please keep watering the garden. Keep it growing. I pray that the Holy Spirit will move you to become what you were created to be: a community of loving servant leaders. God is so good. As a door closes between us, a new one opens, and an exciting new leader arrives. Jordan's ministry will be a source of joy. I learned through the St. Thomas' Art Project that the Holy Spirit works through the arts in amazing ways. If you aren't already active, I encourage you to discern your own call. Don't wait! (1 Thess 5:11)

You will always be part of my faith family. If you're in the area, please come say hello. My email is ahartley98@gmail.com. Please pray for me and I will keep you in my prayers.

God bless you all,
Mother Anne

Here are some links to the Vermont churches:

All Saints' story:

<https://www.episcopalassetmap.org/dioceses/episcopal-church-vermont/list/all-saints-episcopal-church>

<https://allsaintsvt05403.org/>

St. Paul's website:

<http://www.saintpaulsvergennes.org/>

If you missed the farewell brunch, here is the link to the video Kayla made with messages from the kids (<https://vimeo.com/962185862>). I'm so grateful for the chance to have been a part of their lives for a bit. When I was in first grade at St. Anne's Convent in Denver, my teacher was Sister Patience. She communicated God's love to me. I hope to do the same.