The Rev. Ed Bacon - Interim Rector

Dear Beloved Friends,
A common taproot feeds the reason I dearly love the people at St. Paul's and the reason I have such abundant joy in my ministry at St. Paul's. It's really quite clear to me: I'm certain I was called here.

That confidence comes from 5 months of my wife, Hope, and me discerning that God's Spirit had been the animating and guiding energy behind Bp. Duckworth's initial email last January inviting us to New Orleans. That animating and guiding energy held true during the zoom calls with Pat Pritchett and Eston Fain, the March in-person interviews with Vestry and Staff. And on and on until clarity came last May that this was an assignment from God's Love.

Had we "leaned upon our own understanding," to quote Proverbs 3:5-6*, Hope and I would never have seriously considered it. One more interim rectorate didn't "make sense," unless you factored in God's active Love. But as you will read in Pat Pritchett's invitation in our Stewardship Brochure, decisions are not discernments. Decisions lean solely on your own understanding. Discernments trust God's surprising and faithful ways. God's faithfulness wants to enrich and inspire our understandings with new mercies every morning.

Once that "assignment discernment" was made, Hope and I discerned that we would pledge 10% of my salary to St. Paul's budget, trusting that the Vestry had discerned how best to use the resources of pledgers' life and work.

The Vestry and I will be discerning what God's budget for us will be in 2027. There are many aspirations before us. Our discernments will be eased if you have discerned, not decided, about how much of your income you will be pledging. As your interim rector I sincerely invite you to make sure your pledge this year is based on a proportion of your resources. Please don't just drop in a figure based on your own understanding. Please pray. Please discern. Please chose a figure that you "feel," that only makes sense when you factor in God's faithful guidance speaking to your heart AND your mind.

Your discernment is in my prayers.

Blessings always,
Ed Bacon

** Proverbs 3:5-6 is a "memory verse" from my childhood: "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to God, and He shall direct thy paths."*