



# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NEVADA

9480 S. Eastern Ave., Suite 236 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89123-8037

Phone (702) 737-9190 Fax (702) 737-6488

www.episcopalnevada.org

September 27, 2011

Dear People of Grace in the Desert,

Fr. Dale will be retiring as priest in charge at the end of the coming liturgical year; that is, on the Feast of Christ the King, 2012. It is natural that you should want to know what happens next. We want to keep you as well informed as possible about our plans. The vestry had the choice of a conventional option or an alternative option. They have chosen the alternative option. This letter will explain why.

In the conventional option, the Bishop would appoint an interim priest in charge while a search process is done by a parish search committee. That process would cost about \$20,000 and take about 18 months before a slate of 3 to 5 candidates would be presented to the vestry. During such an interim period, congregations almost invariably experience a loss of momentum, declining attendance, and depressed income. A call is then extended to a new rector. If the match works, all are happy. If it does not work, a protracted ecclesiastical process follows, while the congregation is divided, culminating in the rector leaving with a severance package.

The best case scenario for the conventional method is a long and expensive search during which Grace's momentum of spiritual, numerical, and fiscal growth would be lost. The worst case scenario is that the search would lead to an expensive separation process. Grace has been down that road before.

The alternative process is a version of a model begun in the Diocese of Los Angeles and now used in many dioceses. Some use it routinely. We use it where the circumstances call for it. Keep in mind the "conventional model" was only invented in very modern times and has not proven any more reliable in making good matches than the old fashioned word of mouth networking model. The new alternative model has worked very well in making good matches.

With the alternative model, the Profile Committee of Grace prepares a profile describing the congregation and its vision for the future, then sends that profile to the Bishop. The Bishop and the Transitions Officer then do the search, thereby saving Grace most of the \$20,000. By the end of next summer, the Bishop

## **Bishop**

Dan T. Edwards

dan@episcopalnevada.org

## **Office Administrator**

Ellie Wetherill

ellie@episcopalnevada.org

## **Canon to the Ordinary**

Bob Nelson

bob@episcopalnevada.org

## **Canon for Adult Formation**

Chuck McCray

chuck@episcopalnevada.org

## **Canon for Latino/Hispanic Ministry**

Bernardo Iniesta-Avila

bernardo@episcopalnevada.org

## **Executive Assistant**

Jim McGrew

## **Communications Officer**

Hallie Murphy

hallie@episcopalnevada.org

## **Transition Officer**

Mike Link

mike@episcopalnevada.org

## **Treasurer**

James R. Koehn

jim@episcopalnevada.org

## **Finance Officer**

Irv Cousins

irv@episcopalnevada.org

## **Chancellor**

Ann Morgan

mam@jonesvargas.com

## **Executive Director, Camp Galilee**

Stuart Campbell

stuart@episcopalnevada.org

presents 3 candidates to the vestry. The vestry may tell the bishop which one they prefer and the Bishop appoints that person as Priest In Charge Under Special Circumstances" (PICUC). Alternatively, the vestry may turn thumbs down on all three (as they might do if they did not like the nominees of the search committee in the other model – this does happen). In that case, the Bishop and Transitions Officer go looking for three more candidates to present.

A PICUC has the same authority as a rector but not the same canonical status. If the PICUC proves unfit, the Bishop can remove him or her at once. The PICUC period is set for a limited time, like a probationary period. If the relationship simply is not a good fit, then at the end of that period, the PICUC leaves right away. The probationary period (it is not the priest on probation but the relationship – no one is blamed if it does not work out) usually lasts for 3 years. However, we do not name someone PICUC unless we presume that they are likely to become the rector. At the end of the PICUC period, the person is either called as rector or politely told "no thank you."

The vestry unanimously (one member absent) chose the alternative model. While the choice was the vestry's, the Bishop believes that the alternative model is the best way to enable Grace to move forward. Grace must grow its evangelism and stewardship in order to fund a full time rector. An interim period of depressed attendance and income, during which Grace has to fund a \$20,000 search process, would make calling a new rector all the more difficult. The alternative model allows for a less expensive, more expeditious, equally effective search leading to a safe time for the priest and congregation to gradually get to know each other.

We look forward to making our last year with Fr. Dale a happy one, continuing the good trajectory of spiritual growth and congregational development that Grace has charted these past four years. Please pray for the search process and all those involved in choosing new priestly leadership for Grace in the Desert.

Yours in Christ,



The Rt. Rev. Dan Edwards  
10<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Nevada

Wayne Adams  
Senior Warden.

