



January 20, 2019

To all the Saints of St. Margaret's in the Desert:

I give thanks with you as you say farewell to Fr. Hensley after nearly nine years in leadership at St. Margaret's. He has had an outsized influence on this congregation, particularly in its financial health and long-term sustainability. The finances of the parish were in significant pain when he arrived, and his labors in those early years resulted in this congregation having far greater openness to and possibility for an expansive and creative future. He was willing to make difficult decisions concerning a school and thrift shop, in order that you might grow and thrive in this place.

Fr. Hensley has tirelessly supported and encouraged ministry in the wider community, from Neighbors For Neighbors to ecumenical partnerships, and he has built a creative network of relationships with Lutherans, especially Pastor Derek Fossey, with Fr. Andrew Green of St. Paul's in Palm Springs, with Rabbi David Lazar, and with other clergy and lay leaders in these parts. That web of relationship has multiplied efforts to heal and serve God's people, especially in terms of marriage equality, immigration, and gun violence. He and Fr. Green encouraged St. Margaret's and St. Paul's to work together, sharing vestry retreats and forging bonds for shared leadership.

Your departing rector has repeatedly and generously offered his gifts to the wider diocese, and encouraged people here to do the same. He served a term on the Executive Council, and worked with the former Treasurer, Julie Young, on the Finance Committee. He helped organize and host diocesan conventions here at St. Margaret's; and he served on the task force charged with developing diocesan policy for same-sex marriage after the Supreme Court decision. In an earlier season, Fr. Hensley served as Area Missioner for the congregations in this part of the diocese, and has continued to support the life and ministry of St. Anthony's in Desert Hot Springs.

He has been a faithful pastor to many of you here, as he has been to many who have gone on to glory, including former First Lady, Betty Ford. Lane is pretty unflappable when it comes to dealing with that sort of hubbub, and ensuring a deeply pastoral hospitality for all has been his guiding star. Well before I was called to this diocese, I visited St. Margaret's for the funeral of a parishioner I had known in Nevada. She had been welcomed here with open arms in the last years of her life, and he ensured that her final wishes were realized. It had no connection to her

funeral, but the pastor in him made sure that during my visit he took me to Eisenhower to pray with a parishioner who was dying.

I give thanks for that pastoral heart, and for his deep and abiding courage to engage difficult and thorny issues. He is a man of God, who knows that like the rest of us, he is not perfect, and that his questions and frailties are opportunities in which to see God's light and love reflected in encouraging yet one more faithful Christian along the road to glory. God abides, and God does provide.

Give thanks for Lane's insightful preaching, his community leadership, and his creative work with staff and parish leadership, and pray that his next chapter of ministry may be filled with new possibilities and fruitfulness. Lane, we will miss you. We pray that the love of God in Christ will be manifest ever more clearly in you. May the light of Christ shine in and through you, and may God bless your journey and abide in your heart.

I remain

Your Servant In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katharine Jefferts Schori".

The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori  
Assisting Bishop