

The Church of St. John on the Mountain

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August 10, 2011

A Message from the Wardens

By the grace of God, we have called a new Rector for St John on the Mountain! As Bishop Cuncell says in his message to us (see next page), we are *“more than confident that our Lord is the true author of this call.”*

On behalf of ourselves and of the Vestry, we are very pleased to announce that the Reverend Susan Ironside will be the next Rector of St John on the Mountain.

Mother Susan was among the last of the candidates to come to St John on the Mountain to officiate Evening Prayer and preach to the Discernment Committee and Vestry. She did this with her usual flair.... we always knew she could preach! But it was the discussion at dinner after that wowed us all. Everyone there expressed joy and wonderment at the depth and openness of the interchange, and admiration for Mother Susan's keen intelligence, leadership skill, knowledge and sincerity. One longtime parishioner commented that it was the first time in years that she had experienced such a significant and open spiritual exchange with fellow parishioners.

Mother Susan was elected by the Vestry; all its members and all the members of the Discernment Committee have pledged their solid support to our new Rector. Again, we want to express our deep gratitude to Peter Mercer and the committee who worked so tirelessly for the many months of the search.

As Bishop Cuncell suggests, our situation is somewhat unusual. Many of us know Mother Susan and she knows many of us. We know her as parishioner, Rite 13, and J2A leader, mother of Nathan and Caroline, and wife of Dr. Andrew Moore. But we do not yet know Mother Susan who will be the next spiritual leader of this parish. Both she, and we, have grown and changed; Mother Susan through the process seminary, ordination and her recent parish experiences, and we through the challenges of this transitional period.

Although Mother Susan was ordained only last year, her past experiences as well as her record as a seminarian and curate are rather impressive. Her previous nursing training equipped her for pastoral ministry as a Parish Nurse before she attended seminary. While at seminary she was chosen to serve on the Worship Planning Committee of the General Theological Seminary and was appointed a member of the Standing Committee for Liturgy and Music's Blessings Task Force for General Convention in 2010. She was the recipient of the Bishop of Newark Preaching Prize for Preaching Excellence in her graduating class at General Seminary.

In addition to these achievements, Mother Susan exudes a joyful and caring spirit. Her intelligence and her deep love of Jesus Christ and the Episcopal Church, along with her special

love and knowledge of St John on the Mountain, will equip and support her, as we will face “the changes and challenges of being the Church today as we love and follow Jesus together.”

Leading your Church of St John on the Mountain is not the job of the Rector alone, nor even the job of the Rector, Wardens and Vestry, although we recognize the importance of the trust you have placed in us. It is the job of the entire parish to work together to ensure that our beloved Church is a place that our families, friends, neighbors and the entire community recognize – for some as their own spiritual home, and for others as an outward-looking, positive and caring force in this uncertain world.

We are a different community than we were almost three years ago when we began our transition period. The challenges we have faced have helped us to find our identity, and we are much stronger as a group. We have a terrific leadership team, and the experience to work with Mother Susan to make St John on the Mountain what we all want it to be.

Mother Susan will join us on Monday, September 19th. More information will be available in subsequent *This Week on the Mountain* emails as well as on our website www.sjotm.org.

Gratefully,

Bob Courtemanche and Hilary Thomas Dorer
Wardens