

June 19th, 2020

My remarks are short this week, and full of thanks: for being the first week of summer for St. Mark's -- after all the fasting and the holidays and the special Sundays -- it was certainly a busy one! Monday evening, Sewanee's panel discussion about Race and the Episcopal Church offered some really helpful insights as well as a primer for Tuesday's all-parish conversation (for access to the recorded webinar, please see <https://bit.ly/3dffzxx>). I'm very happy to say that Tuesday's conversation turned over some very fertile ground for each of the people who were present -- certainly for myself! -- which will bear fruit in an ongoing process of self-reflection, study, and dialogue for St. Mark's as a whole. Look for further information about next steps in coming weeks. Wednesday began formal meetings of the regathering committee -- you may be gratified, if not surprised, to hear that this committee is taking its task extremely seriously, concerned with safety as well as sensitive to the pastoral questions involved in the process of a staged re-opening. They are also a creative bunch! I'm eager to see how this work takes shape over the coming weeks.

At every turn these days, I seem to be coming face to face again with the incredible generosity and commitment of the people of St. Mark's. We have a lot of work to do, and there are a lot of ways for us to grow, as Christians and as a parish; and yet for all that I am humbled by all the gifts of persistent good faith you bring to our life together, and I am grateful for the privilege of being your rector.

One final note before signing off -- this Sunday we'll say goodbye to one of our former rectors, The Rev'd Robbin Clark. She is moving back to Santa Fe, and begins her journey this coming week. I hope we'll still see her for future Zoom coffee hours, now that distance is no longer the impediment it once was; but I'm still sorry to see her go. If we were in "normal times" we'd celebrate her presence with us in as much style as we could muster -- as it is, we'll offer prayers for her Sunday morning as we do for those moving away, and we'll celebrate her at the Zoom coffee hour as well -- you'll just have to bring the "festive" yourself!

With much gratitude--

Yours faithfully,

Fr. Blake+