

June 22, 2025

Dear Trinity family,

For over a year now, our Search committee has worked tirelessly and prayerfully to discern the next leader for our church. It is with great joy that I announce the Reverend Mark Lee Fitzhugh has accepted the Vestry's call to serve as Trinity's 19th Rector.

While Father Mark comes to us from St. John's of Lattingtown in Long Island, New York, his journey to the priesthood began in our own pews many years ago. He spent his formative childhood years serving at Trinity's altar with the Rev. Ben Meginniss. A graduate of Murphy High School (1980) and the University of South Alabama (1985), Mark has been an Episcopal priest for almost 25 years. He has served in churches of various sizes in Alabama, New York, Connecticut, and in our own Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. What a joy it is to welcome him home!

When I first read Father Mark's Ministry Portfolio, I was impressed by his successful programming and the growth he brought to the parishes he served. However, it was the individual comments from each Search Committee member that gave your Vestry the assurance to make this call. These dedicated parishioners spoke of his sincerity and his desire to get to know each of them. They commented on his gift for prayer and his ability to ensure each person was seen and heard. Their hard work and certainty made the Vestry's unanimous decision an easy one.

Mark and his wife, Cheri Smith, have two young adult daughters, Emma and Ella. I hope that you will join me in prayer for them during this time of transition. His first Sunday at Trinity will be September 7th.

We are especially grateful to the members of the Search Committee for their faithful, prayerful work throughout this discernment process. Their dedication, wisdom, and openness to the Spirit's guidance have been instrumental in bringing us to this joyful moment. Please join me in thanking Beth, Laurent, Allison, Ric, Steve, Mike, and Kate for their time, effort, and deep love for Trinity.

I also give thanks for the priests who have walked alongside us this past year, especially the Rev. LeBaron Taylor and the Rev. Eric Zubler, and for all of you who have been faithful in this season of change. Now let us greet Mark and his family with open hearts and open hands, ready to walk together into this new season of ministry. Thanks be to God!

Yours faithfully,

Anne Gill  
Senior Warden