



1419 Pine Street, Boulder, CO 80302
(303) 442-5246
FAX (303) 545-2416
office@stjohnsboulder.org
www.stjohnsboulder.org

April 28, 2009

Dear Friends in Christ:

Last Wednesday I had one of my toughest days ever as rector of St. John's. I had to tell Liz Simmons that we are no longer able to finance her position as assistant rector. This decision was made after meetings with the vestry, the finance committee, and the human resources committee and arose out of the necessity to balance our budget by 2010. You may remember that at the annual meeting last January, treasurer Paul Stapleton told us that the majority of our budget is invested in our clergy and staff, and that any significant budget cuts would mean eliminating positions.

In 2007 and 2008, for the first time in St. John's history, we added a third clergy person to expand our ability to minister to the people of St. John's. Those were optimistic times, and we used the Lois Starr gift to fund the position ahead of the necessary growth in pledges, faithfully believing that pledges *would* grow. Now, in the face of economic downturn and market losses that have cut the value of our reserves by 40%, we realize that we cannot afford to maintain staffing at current levels.

We all know the economy is in bad shape, and there is speculation that it may get worse before it gets better. That is why I, and the governing bodies at St. John's, believe that it is absolutely essential that we arrive at a balanced budget as soon as possible. (*Please see pages 2 through 5 of this issue of the Eagle for more information on St. John's financial situation.*) We weighed all of our options, and finally determined that it was necessary to eliminate the assistant rector position. This tough decision, made in tough times, will enable us to make significant progress toward a balanced budget.

Liz, affectionately known as Madre Liz, came to us from Oro Valley, Arizona, with 14 years of experience as an ordained priest and a passion for pastoral care. In the year she spent at St. John's, Liz has earned a special place in all of our hearts, and we thank her for blessing us with her many gifts. We will be doing all we can to help Liz through this transition, both by assisting her with her job search and by providing pastoral care for her. We will wish her well wherever life takes her.

This Sunday, May 3rd, will be Liz's last Sunday with us. We will honor her and thank her for her year of ministry here at St. John's with a reception after the 10:30 a.m. service. Please join us on Sunday and take this opportunity to say goodbye to Liz and wish her well. We'll also be collecting for a purse for Liz as a way to show her how much she means to all of us.

Liz's departure, like all change, will be disruptive until we are able to redefine roles for our remaining staff. Please know that our youth and children's programs will remain strong, our office staff will not change, our property will be beautifully maintained as always, our marvelous music program will continue to inspire us, and we will be able to fund our curacy position to ensure sufficient clergy support. We operated for years on the rector/curate model, and I know we can do it again.

There will be other changes coming, too. We will not be able to maintain our adult school at its current level, so we will have a more modest approach to adult education in the fall. In addition, our smaller clergy staff will not enable us to continue the Celebration Eucharist in the parish hall on Sundays. The fall 2009 schedule will be simpler, with Sunday school happening at the same time as our main Sunday service. Throughout the summer months, our clergy and staff will

continue to work hard on the details of our fall programming to ensure that we meet the needs of our parishioners to the best of our ability.

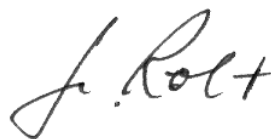
I also want to assure you that eliminating the assistant rector position is not the only money-saving step we're taking. If you read Pam White's article in the April *Eagle*, you know that we're making drastic reductions in our paper consumption in an effort to save our natural resources as well as cut our office budget. This is the last paper copy of the *Eagle* that will be sent to parishioners' homes via U.S. mail. Beginning in June, the *Eagle* will be sent via e-mail, and — for those without computer access — a few copies will be available in the narthex and in the rotunda. *Of course, if you are homebound (and without a computer) and need to receive a paper copy, please let Pam know, and we'll arrange to mail one to you.* Also beginning in June, our Sunday service bulletins will be shortened to fit on one 8 1/2" x 11" piece of paper, and, as in days of yore, we'll be asking people to use *The Book of Common Prayer* to follow along with our services.

We're also trying to go green and save money around our facility, replacing incandescent bulbs with CFLs and reprogramming thermostats, and we're renegotiating contracts with many of our service providers to lower our operating expenses.

Again, the decision to eliminate the assistant rector position was not made lightly, but only after months of painstaking fiscal and personnel planning. Balancing the budget is never easy, but the members of the vestry, the finance committee, and the human resources committee — and your rector — all felt that this action was necessary to ensure the continued health of St. John's. We are not the same church we were in 2007 and 2008, but I know that, with God's help, we will get through this crisis together and emerge stronger, both fiscally and in our faith, than we were before.

Please pray for Liz to find new employment quickly, for our parish as we weather this storm, and for the healing of our nation's financial woes.

Love to all,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. Rolt". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the text "Love to all,".