



September 21, 2018

My Brothers and Sisters,

I write to inform you of the intended retirement of the Reverend Canon Deborah Tammearu, Canon for Transition Ministry, effective December 31. This is a poignant moment for both Deb and me, as she was the first person I invited onto my staff after becoming your bishop, and in the years since has helped shepherd the call of new clergy leadership for at least half the churches in the diocese. We have worked closely together, and it has been an enjoyment and a satisfaction for both of us.

Deb has spent her entire ordained life in the Diocese of New York, in ministry with hundreds of fellow priests and lots of bishops. She served parishes first in Wappingers Falls and New Hamburg, and then for a significant tenure as rector of Saint Thomas in Mamaroneck. Recently, Deb has renewed an earlier interest in bird watching, and she is regularly seen in Central Park with binoculars and camera in the midst of a flock of other bird watchers. It is my understanding that she has now made plans for some destination birding trips for her retirement, and I am confident that one who has helped guide many others through this transition will take steps to ensure that her own retirement is fulfilling and happy. I speak for my whole staff, and for many, many across our diocese in saying how much she will be missed, and how very much she means to us.

With the coming on board of the Reverend Canon John Perris as Canon to the Ordinary, we have been contemplating some restructuring of positions and priorities on my senior staff. The responsibilities which the Reverend Nora Smith has had in working with Mission and Strategic Setting congregations will now be redistributed among my staff, and so it is very much with the recommendation of Canon Tammearu, and my own discernment, that I have offered Nora the opportunity to move into the Transition Ministry position. She and Deb have been working together on so many things, and I see a smooth and easy transition ahead. Nora has happily accepted the invitation; over this fall, she will work closely with Deb to learn more fully the processes of parish transition, and will move into the new role on January 1. I am confident that with Nora in that office we will continue to bring the very best that we can to churches and clergy in transition and search.

Nora's current position will not be filled, and those resources will be reassigned to program and mission lines in our budget. I ask your prayers for Deb and Nora in the coming transitions, and for the Diocese of New York and our common ministries. With every good wish, I remain

Yours,

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
Bishop of New York