

**St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Newton Lower Falls, MA**

**Annual Meeting
January 24, 2010**

Report from the Rector Search Committee

I am pleased to report to you on behalf of the Rector Search Committee that we are making good progress in our efforts to identify the next rector for St. Mary's. We hope to be able to offer our recommendations to the Vestry by early spring and are aiming to have a new rector named by this summer. I would like to provide a brief overview of the work conducted by the committee over the last several months.

As you know, we began our work last June under the guidance of Cynthia Hubbard from the Massachusetts Diocese. Cynthia led the parish in an exercise of "Appreciative Inquiry" and then guided the committee in a day and a half retreat. Through these exercises, we were able to define the key values and attributes of St. Mary's and our vision for a new Rector, and then capture those findings in a brief brochure to help in our recruitment. Attached to this report is the brochure that was developed at that time.

With the help of the Diocese, our rector opening was listed in the Church Deployment Office of the Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Transition Ministry Newsletter, alerting the general Episcopal community about the leadership opening at St. Mary's. By November 15, the close date of our period to receive applications, we were in receipt of over 60 applications from a range of highly qualified people from across the country and abroad.

We have many blessings at St. Mary's and that fact has attracted a strong pool of candidates to consider our parish as they discern their next steps in God's service. Our warm and welcoming community, our rich music program, our lovely and well maintained historical church building and grounds, our engaged youth, and our healthy financial condition are all aspects of St. Mary's that candidates have highlighted in their letters of interest.

In November, we began to gather additional information on the strongest candidates in the pool and to conduct preliminary phone interviews. Based on that information, we launched our interviewing and evaluation of a smaller group of candidates in December and are actively engaged in that activity at this point.

It can be a stressful time in a parish to be in transition, especially after such a long-serving and successful rector as Peter Chase, but we have been well cared for by our interim rector Margaret Schwarzer. She has made our work easier by

providing such wonderful and caring leadership and stewardship during this period and we thank her deeply for all her good work.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee for their hard work, sincere commitment, and considerable time given to this important effort: Tricia Blank, Steve Campbell, Jean Dalton, Jeff Hughes, Martha McGandy, Mike Stevens, Peter Ramsey, Tom Riley, Sarah Williamson, and Ann Wessel. I know you join me in deep appreciation for their contributions and dedication to St. Mary's.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vivian Brocard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "V".

Vivian Brocard
Chair, Rector Search Committee