

Beloved Community of St. Stephen's,

December 13, 2020

On this Advent Sunday when we celebrate Joy, it seems fitting that we're finally able to share our joint good news. I've been discerning my next call for almost as long as you've been engaged in the search process. We'll have to wait a bit longer before we begin our joint chapter of mission and ministry together; but please know I am honored and elated to be called as the next rector of St. Stephen's.

There are so many reasons I feel St. Stephen's is a good fit for me. But at the top of the list are your commitment to social justice, your active investment in local mission and ministry, and your genuinely inclusive welcome of all of God's people. I've felt called to the responsive, multi-faceted ministries of an urban parish, but struggled to find a good fit because my soul needs daily opportunities to be immersed in the beauty of God's Creation. St. Stephen's provides that combination of urban in a greater rural setting, with the perfect mix of challenges and opportunities - everything I've been praying for!



As we are at the beginning of getting to know one another - I thought I'd share a bio of sorts with you. I'm an Army brat and grew up in a multi-cultural, interfaith family. My father is from Mumbai, India and my mother is from Methuen, Massachusetts. I was born in Providence RI, but we moved to Boston so my father could attend Harvard School of Public Health. (Note - I've been a New England sports fan since birth!) My dad was in the US on a student visa, and was drafted into the US Army (he retired 24 years later). Among the places where we were stationed: Edgewood Arsenal MD; Fort Leavenworth KS; Bad Kreuznach, and Augsburg, Germany; Ft. Belvoir, and Alexandria VA.

I went to William and Mary, where I was a Religion and Psych double major. During high school and college, I worked as a student athletic trainer. Which helps explain my switching mid-stream in grad school at UVA from studying Religion (Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity) to a Masters of Education, specifically in Sports Medicine. After a year as the Associate Athletic Trainer at Catholic University (DC), I took a job as the first athletic trainer at Woodbury Forest School in Orange, VA. There, I met my husband, Ken, who was head of the art department. Ken grew up in Bethel Maine; and majored in Art at Davidson, then got his MFA in painting from UT, Knoxville. We've done our share of moving around! St. Mark's School, Southborough MA; St. George's School in Newport RI; The University of the South, Sewanee TN (where I went to seminary); Lookout Mountain TN; St. Paul's School Lutherville MD, and Yarmouth ME.

Ken is a web developer working in higher education. Currently he works for Southern Maine Community College. He's a photographer, cyclist, skier and thanks be to God - a videographer. Which has been incredibly helpful for COVID's pre-recorded worship. We have two daughters Mackenzie (25) and Channing (22). Mackenzie is working on a degree in primary education, she lives with us. Channing graduated with a degree in Neuroscience from Dickinson College. She's working at MGH's neuroscience research lab as a research technician - working on brain tumors. Our other family members are furry rescues: Finn, a Bassett-Beagle mix, and the feline contingent: Ted, Bennett, and Joon.

It is truly my honor and joy to join you; to build on the foundation of all you have already accomplished, and to move forward together - as we continue to meet God in the neighborhood, and live into the next joyful chapter of mission and ministry at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

Faithfully yours,
Nina+

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Pooley

*(Ken, Nina, Channing, Mackenzie
and Finn)*

