

The Right Reverend
ANDREW J. ASBIL
Bishop of Toronto



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To the Clergy and People of the Cathedral Church of St. James,

Grace and Peace be with you.

I am truly grateful for your faithful witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the heart of the city. Your presence and ministry play such a vital role not only in the downtown core, but also throughout the Diocese of Toronto. I am also deeply thankful for the leadership of our clergy in this season of transition, our Vicar, the Rev'd Canon Dr. Stephen Fields and our Associate Priest, the Rev'd Canon Beth Benson. I am particularly grateful for the guidance, care, and spirit of hope that our Interim Dean, the Very Rev'd Peter Wall has offered to us in this time of change. Thank you, Peter!

Over the last number of months the Cathedral Selection Committee, chaired by Mr. David Crawford, has worked prayerfully and carefully in developing a profile, identifying potential candidates, and conducting interviews. A number of highly gifted people were considered for the role of Dean and Rector. You have been exceptionally well served by your committee and I am most appreciative for their hard work.

I am delighted to report that in consultation with the Cathedral Selection Committee and with their unanimous recommendation, The Very Rev'd Dr. Stephen Hance, currently the National Lead for Evangelism and Witness for the Church of England, has accepted my invitation to become the 14th Rector of the Cathedral Church of St. James, and the 9th Dean of Toronto. Stephen was previously the Dean of Derby and before that the Canon Missioner of Southwark Cathedral and the Director of Mission and Evangelism in the Diocese of Southwark. He will be installed as Dean of Toronto and Rector of St. James Cathedral on Sunday January 14, 2024, and begin this ministry on January 15, 2024.

Dean Stephen is married to Jacqui and together they have three adult children. Jacqui currently serves as the Evangelism and Witness Priority Coordinator at Lambeth Palace. I ask your prayers for both of them as they prepare to move across the pond. Please welcome them both with warmth and joy as we all begin a new ministry together in this place. May God bless you and keep you in this time of anticipation and joy.

Yours in Christ,

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