

The Falls Church Anglican

The Reverend Samuel D. Ferguson



Sam grew up in the beautiful countryside of Chester County, Pennsylvania. While in college at Drexel University he heard a distinct call from God to life as a pastor. Upon graduation he went on staff with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes in inner city Philadelphia, leading Bible studies on high school campuses and coaching basketball in the Philadelphia Public League. These early experiences deeply shaped Sam's convictions about our common need for Jesus, and the importance of strong churches for reaching out to communities.

Sensing God calling him to ordained ministry in the local church, Sam completed a Master of Divinity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, near Boston, and a Master of Philosophy at Cambridge University in England. His calling to the Anglican Church solidified during these years and in 2011, Sam was ordained in the Anglican Church of North America.

Sam joined The Falls Church Anglican in 2011 as part of our Timothy program, and in 2015 became Associate Pastor for Research and Teaching. In this latter role he began a Ph.D. in New Testament at Southeastern Seminary in North Carolina. Supervised by Dr. Andreas Köstenberger, Sam is writing a dissertation in the area of biblical anthropology.

In July 2018, The Falls Church Anglican's Vestry voted to call Sam as our next Rector, a role he'll transition into in spring 2019. Sam is humbled by such a calling, but equally excited about God's plans for TFCA in years ahead. Convinced God made people for community and mission, Sam longs to see people continually drawn into the Family of God through TFCA then sent into the world on mission.

Asked about heroes, Sam said, "Saint Paul, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, John Piper, and my dad; men whose lives are worthy of imitation." As a lifelong Philadelphia sports fan, he's tempted to add Nick Foles!

Questions and Answers

What process was used to select Sam Ferguson as John Yates' successor as Rector? Why did it take so long?

In late 2016, John Yates informed the Vestry of his intention to retire. In early 2017 the Vestry appointed a Succession Committee¹ to conduct a search and recommend to the Vestry a candidate for our next Rector.

The committee worked prayerfully and diligently for nearly 17 months to complete their task. The names of potential candidates were solicited from respected leaders in the Anglican Church and from members of our congregation. In response to both personal networking and posting on the web, the committee received a significant number of applications from clergy in North America and around the world as well.

Committee members read materials submitted by the candidates, listened to their sermons, prayed over each application and then discussed each applicant to determine whether the applicant should be advanced in the process. The committee sought to set aside any predispositions they might have brought to the process and, in the spirit of I Samuel 16:7, not to judge outwardly but as the Lord would have them see things.

After interviewing the strongest of the applicants, a short list was given written questions to answer, and then invited to a second interview. After the second interviews were completed, the committee agreed that there was only one candidate for whom there was unanimous consensus to continue.

The committee then conducted several forms of due diligence to ensure that there were no undiscovered issues about the final candidate that should be investigated further and no disqualifying problems. No such issues or problems were identified. At

¹ Succession Committee: William Barratt, Paul Fitzpatrick, David Gustafson, Katherine Haley, Joel Harris, Steffen Johnson, Whit Jordan, Elizabeth Rice, Steve Ritchey, Kristen Short, and Judy Stokes.

this point, with Bishop Guernsey's full support, the committee voted unanimously to recommend to the Vestry that Samuel David Ferguson be appointed as Rector.

On June 4, 2018, the committee submitted its recommendation to the Vestry, accompanied by a one hundred forty-six page report explaining its recommendation. The Vestry² then prayerfully conducted its own due diligence and interview process and on Sunday, July 1, voted unanimously to call Sam as Rector.

It took this long because those responsible were diligent to make a thorough search to be sure we have found the right man.

When will Sam become our Rector?

We are all eager to have Sam begin as soon as possible. But the Vestry has asked Sam to complete his Ph.D. work in North Carolina before taking up this call. He needs to finish and defend his dissertation in spring 2019 and after a short break he will return to TFCA full time. An exact date will be announced when it is set.

How does John feel about having Sam as his successor?

As John put it, "I could not be more thrilled."

What will John and Susan do after he steps aside?

They expect to take an extended time of rest and travel before they refocus on what's next for them in ministry. They are working with a small team to help them prepare for the transition. But they will remain a part of The Falls Church Anglican.

² TFCA Vestry: Allen Roberts, Sr. Warden; Barbara Andrukonis, Jr. Warden, Anne Bloom, Chris Comeau, Tom Doughty, Kevin Gentry, Katherine Haley, George Korte, Ringo Lanzetti, Carrie Lucas, Trevor McFadden, Marci Nelson, Karla Petty, Steve Ritchey, Chuck Sigman, Andrew Smith, Chris Stallsmith, Tom Yates, John Yates, Rector, and Scott Ward, Chancellor.

What can the congregation be doing to support this transition?

Rejoice and give thanks for the Lord's leading and faithfulness! Pray for Sam and for the church as we look to the future.

Sam is beginning a season of prayerful listening, asking what God is inviting TFCA into in the years ahead. He's dreaming about our future and would like you to join him! In the months ahead, Sam is asking the congregation to email him at NewRector@tfcanglican.org with your responses to the following two questions:

- (1) What do you love about our Church?
- (2) When you dream about our future, what is one thing you sense God calling TFCA into?

As his start date approaches, Sam will take your responses with him on a prayer retreat, as he seeks God's vision for a future teeming with opportunity!



Oh give thanks to the LORD for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!

Psalm 136:1