



The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

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Diocese Announces Departure of West Newbury Rector

The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, today announced that a priest of the diocese, the Rev. William Murdoch, who has served as the rector of All Saints' Episcopal Church in West Newbury, Mass., since 1993, is leaving the Episcopal Church to serve as bishop suffragan of All Saints Cathedral, Diocese of Nairobi, in the Anglican Province of Kenya. Murdoch was elected as such on June 29 and is to be consecrated on Aug. 30 in Nairobi.

Murdoch has served since 2004 as New England dean of a network of congregations in disagreement with the U.S.-based Episcopal Church, some seeking Anglican affiliations outside of it.

Murdoch will conduct his last worship service at All Saints' Episcopal Church in West Newbury on Aug. 19. He and All Saints' vestry members have been in consultation over a period of months with Bishop Shaw and the diocese's bishops suffragan, the Rt. Rev. Bud Cederholm and the Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris, resulting in a cordial agreement under which the congregation, should it decide to leave the Episcopal Church, will vacate the Episcopal church property at 895 Main Street and its administration will be assumed by the diocese



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“My continuing heartfelt prayers are with Bill, his wife, Sally, and their entire family, as well as with the members of All Saints’ who feel God calling them to this path in their faith journey,” Bishop Shaw said.

He noted that the discussions between the bishops and potentially departing All Saints’ leadership have been characterized by an extraordinary spirit of cooperation through which all have been well served. “This process of discernment has been marked by mutual respect for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ and for the different theological views that have brought us to this pass, and it is in that same spirit that we now make our way forward,” Bishop Shaw said.

No decision has been made about the status of the West Newbury Episcopal church. Diocesan representatives will meet with Episcopalians from the area in early September to discuss the continuing Episcopal Church presence the Merrimack Valley, which is also home to Episcopal parishes in Amesbury, Andover, Chelmsford, Groveland, Haverhill, Lawrence, Lowell, Methuen, Newburyport, North Andover, North Billerica and Westford.

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