The Feast of All Saints' Day 2026
To the good people of St. John's, Royal Oak:



I am thrilled to accept the call to be your next Rector. There are so many reasons for my eagerness to join you all, but I think the one that sums it up the best is what I told the Search Committee in our first Zoom conversation: that SJRO seems like a joyful, hardworking church and I am a joyful, hardworking priest and I think that we will get up to good work together. I am so deeply delighted and honored to step into the stream of this baptized life and work with you all.







A bit about me: I grew up near Nashville, and I love hiking, Dolly Parton, and being from Tennessee. My two dogs, Coakley (11) and Oliver (7), are black and tan coonhounds, and a continual, goofy source of joy! I have walked the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, a religious pilgrimage in Spain, twice, and it was deeply formative for me. I love to travel and hope to go to Ireland next.

As far as my journey to get here, I went to university in west Tennessee at a Church of Christ liberal arts school, Freed-Hardeman University. My religious heritage is that of Church of Christ, from which I had a long journey into the Episcopal Church. I found the Episcopal Church in my first month of living in Abilene, Texas for seminary at the Graduate School of Theology at Abilene Christian University from which I graduated with my Master of Divinity in 2016. My last year of living in Texas, I went through formal discernment and was supported and nominated for ordination by the Diocese of Northwest Texas, and from there went on to do a year of Anglican Studies at Virginia Theological Seminary.

My ordained life up until now has been lived out in Kentucky, in both the Dioceses of Kentucky and Lexington. The first seven and a half years, I had the gift of serving a church of a similar size to SJRO as the Associate Rector and Campus Minister, then I served as Canon Missioner on the Bishop's Staff in Lexington. Much of my work over the last decade has been grounded in a sense of intersectionality. No one issue or topic can be fully understood without paying attention to the places where it intersects with others. This is true with poverty, care for the environment, racial justice, queer rights, disability advocacy, intergenerational community building, or others and it is especially true when our faith is the foundation of that work.

When it comes to the future of the church, I am chronically optimistic, but I have always been more of a "shadow proves the sunshine" kind of Christian. We know the hope of the Resurrection in the dark hours just as Holy Saturday ends, and this is where the Church has something to say. We know, even when hope feels terribly far away and improbable, that death and despair have been defeated at the empty tomb. We know the tenderness of God choosing to be born into this world, despite knowing what this world could and would do. We know that Immanuel means that God so loved this beautiful and brutal world and that God always with us. And on this All Saints' Day, I am deeply grateful that we know that we do not walk this Christian path alone. We stand upon the shoulders of giants, some known by many and some only known by few, but all part of a great cloud of witnesses. They witness to us that even when life is difficult—even when hope is difficult—this path that we choose to walk together is worth what it costs us.









What I am truly excited about is building our ministry together over the next several years, to develop relationships, and to be a witness to the real and tangible gift of Christian community, a life of faith, and the power of prayer in today's world. I can't wait to join you all on December 15th and ask for your prayers in my move and transition. I also want to lift up and name the great hard work of the Search Committee, the Vestry, the Finance Committee, the Staff, the Rev. Maryjane, Canon Susie, and Bishop Bonnie in gratitude and thanksgiving. Times of transition are not easy, and all those serving in those capacities have done much to help make things fall in alignment, and I am so grateful for their work, the joy and love that they have for SJRO that they shared with me, and for the prayers that we have shared over the last few months.
May God the Creator be with you till we meet in person, may Christ the Redeemer's love enfold us all, and may Spirit the Sustainer empower us in the work that has been given to us to do. See y'all in Advent!

Grace and peace,

Becca +

The Rev. Becca Kello