

May 22, 2024 // Scott Hayes

*When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.*

John Newton, "Amazing Grace"

As we approach June, it's a signal that things will slow down for all of us. The choir season will conclude on June 2 with a final evensong and choir recognition. The church calendar is looking less packed, and schools are entering their final weeks.

For me, however, this summer will be quite different as I embark on my first-ever sabbatical during June and July. This will be my last writing to you until at least August! June will be filled with wrapping up a few projects at home and elsewhere, as well as attending a choral conducting workshop in New Jersey. July, on the other hand, is completely open, and I am looking forward to a month dedicated to rest and renewal.

Sabbaticals for full-time lay employees are relatively new concepts in most churches, though we've seen priests take them for some time now. Typically offered every six years, these breaks can vary in length and structure. Mine will be a mix of travel, career-related pursuits, and rest.

June 2 will also mark my last day as Interim Youth Director. Over the past three years, our dedicated youth have accomplished a lot! From our local missions week during Vacation Bible School afternoons, where we made a tangible impact on our community, to the unforgettable thrills of roller coaster rides and haunted houses, it has been a joy. I have loved working with these amazing young people. I look forward to being the biggest supporter of our new Director of Youth Ministries when they arrive in a few months and am excited to see what the future holds for our youth at All Saints.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to our rector, Ben Robertson, and our Vestry for the blessing of this time away. Special thanks to our Principal Organist, Daniel Stipe, who will cover for me as needed, and to all who will continue the work of the music ministry during the summer months.

The past eight years have indeed been a wild ride filled with transitions, roof leaks, COVID, and more. However, these years have been some of the most fulfilling of my career. I am thankful for my journey at All Saints, for all of you, and for everything we have accomplished together. I eagerly look forward to the next eight years and beyond. We

surely have “no less days to sing God’s praise than when we’d first begun,” as we look to the future and offer praise for God’s amazing grace