

Dear Grace church,

I'm delighted to be joining your community as your next Rector. I have really enjoyed all the people from Grace whom I have met so far (including an "incognito" visit my spouse and I made to Sunday worship at Grace). I believe God is bringing us together for ministry in the Galena area.

I have enjoyed the mutual respect and kindness your leaders and search committee have for one another, the thoughtful parish profile they wrote, the variety of experiences each brought, the values you practice, and your adaptability to the new circumstances in which we Christians find ourselves. I deeply value your practice of varied people bringing their gifts to God in the faith community. Fr. Richard Rohr from the Center for Action and Contemplation wrote: *"I really think Christianity in general has been weak on practice. We attend services but note the word "attend." "Attending" is not really participating with our active, embodied selves."* I look forward to practicing our ancient and life-giving faith together.

In a year or two, my beloved spouse Guta Cvetkovic and I will move to the Galena area, but our young adult children have moved away to bigger cities (which are admittedly, quite interesting to visit). My spouse is a chaplain and cook; he likes both growing and making food. In my spare time, I enjoy reading, gardening, listening to jazz, watching the sunset, and I hope to take up kayaking.

Yours in Christ,

Paula+

The Rev. Dr. Paula Harris

Let's pray:

*God of Love,
You are with us in every transition.
As we enter into this new era with excitement and
even some anxiety,
we recall your deep compassion, presence and
abounding love.
We thank you for the gifts, talents and skills with which
you have blessed us.
We thank you for the experiences that have brought us
to this moment.
We thank you for the work of others that gives breadth and depth to our own work.
Be with us as we move forward, rejoicing with you and supporting one another.
We ask this in your Holy Name.*

[Times of Transition, www.xavier.edu]

