



## THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH

The Rt. Rev. Jack L. Iker, Bishop

*For immediate release:*

### The Rev. Jacob Worley called to lead historic downtown parish

A historic downtown parish in the Diocese of Fort Worth has called the Rev. Jacob C. Worley to be its 16th rector. St. Andrew's Church chose Fr. Worley, who has served in Canada, Ireland, and the United States, to lead the traditional 1928 Prayer Book congregation after an international search for the right candidate.

Speaking for the search committee, Senior Warden Stacey Rumfelt said, "We wholeheartedly believe that our collective prayer for 'a good shepherd, who loves God with all his heart, soul, and mind' was heard and fulfilled. We found Fr. Worley to be a man of conviction and grace, who is willing to stand firm for the faith."



*The Rev. Jacob Worley*

Fr. Worley's most recent cure was in British Columbia, Canada, where he served in the Diocese of Caledonia from 2014 to 2017 as rector of three yoked congregations known as Bulkley Valley Regional Parish. In early 2017 he was elected to become the next bishop of the diocese, but his selection was rejected by a meeting of the House of Bishops of British Columbia and Yukon on the grounds of his previous decision to plant a church in Las Cruces, N.M., under the Province of Rwanda (PEARUSA). Subsequent to the bishops' action, Fr. Worley was also dismissed from parochial duties in Bulkley Valley by Archbishop John Privett and returned with his family to the United States, where he became canonically resident in the Anglican Diocese of the Rocky Mountains (ACNA).

Fr. Worley's ministry in the Anglican priesthood has been characterized by church planting and renewal, but it is not his first career. As an undergraduate, he earned a B.S. in Zoology/Botany at Western New Mexico University, where he met his wife, Kelly. He worked as a wildlife biologist in southern New Mexico and El Paso before answering a call to ordained ministry. He graduated from Trinity School for Ministry in 2004 and was ordained to the priesthood the following year. After serving as assistant priest and interim rector of St. James Church in Las Cruces, N.M., Fr. Worley left The Episcopal Church in 2007 to found St. Patrick's Church in Las Cruces within PEARUSA. In 2013, with the parish established, he spent six months in British Columbia before heading to western Ireland for a year to minister in a "union parish" consisting of four village churches and two schools.

Reflecting on the call to a historic downtown parish, Fr. Worley said, "Since seminary, Kelly and I have had the privilege of working in many different places. It might be asked, how can someone who has

been a clergyman in the rural countryside and ministered in a multipoint setting know that he is called to a parish like St. Andrew's in a diocese like Fort Worth? The simple answer is that if we believe that the Lord is really sovereign and providential, we need to be willing to allow him to direct us. As Kelly and I prayed about the future, the Lord began to draw us to the prayer of St. Paul in Philippians chapter one. And we felt the Lord developing an amazing sense of connection to St. Andrew's. We are looking forward to being in Fort Worth and being here a long time."

Fr. Worley will begin his ministry with the morning services on Sunday, Sept. 2.

St. Andrew's, established in 1877, was the first Episcopal church in Fort Worth and remains a leading parish in the diocese, where its "low church" worship tradition stands in contrast to the anglo-catholic practice of most of its sister parishes. St. Andrew's achieved parish status in 1896, and the congregation moved into its current home, at 917 Lamar Street, in 1912.

The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth was established in 1983 by division of the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas. The Rt. Rev. Jack L. Iker is its third bishop. In 2009 the diocesan cathedral, St. Vincent's in Bedford, was the site of the founding of the Anglican Church in North America.

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