

I'm one of the newer members here at St. Peter's, so my reflections of this church won't cover nearly as many years or as many memories as most of you. To start off, I am a former "St. Philipite" who, over 50 years as a congregant there, became deeply entrenched in the many ministries of life in that loving and caring community.

I sang in choir for 40 years or more. I was an original member of the bell choir which Kathy Flaherty started. I served on several vestries, including a term as Rector's Warden. I was chairperson of the Worship Committee and head of Eucharistic Ministers. At one time I also served as President of the Women's Association.

My children grew up in the Sunday School and were confirmed. My son was an acolyte, and my daughter sang in Junior Choir and was a member of the Girl's Friendly Society. My grandchildren were all baptized there and later they, too, were confirmed. My daughter was married at St. Philips and my husband was interred in the Memorial Garden.

I think you get the point. St. Philips was my spiritual home and second family - where all my lasting and meaningful friendships were formed.

When it became evident that St. Philips would have to close its doors, I was devastated! After many months of discussions on the part of the vestry and many others, the congregation was informed that St. Peter's was most interested in having us join them. Emily came one Sunday and graciously answered our questions. She was most informative and very honest about the process of transition for both parishes. We did hold several joint services which were quite meaningful for us all. Despite all of the preparations for this merger, most of us at St. Philips were quite anxious about how things would go once we arrived.

I agreed to be on the Transition Team and found that to be a beneficial experience. As the days and months went by, life at St. Peter's became more comfortable. I became a choir member and once again a bell choir member. I attended Worship Committee meetings and was an Intercessor. I found myself forming many more friendships and really looking forward to being in church. Emily was an inspiration. Her sermons talked to me on so many occasions - as do Laura's now.

I am most appreciative of St. Peter's incorporating and using so many of St. Phillip's precious treasures - the candlesticks, frontals, linens, baptismal font, the cross in the Memorial Courtyard where my husband is now, the prayer candle rack and especially the altar in what is now known as the St. Philip-in-the-Fields Chapel. So many familiar items meant so much!

St. Peter's has also adopted several ministries that were important to St. Phillips the mitten tree, the Christmas mailbox and several others.

Most of all, I now feel so welcome here. The blending of people has been amazing and extraordinary. I truly feel that we are definitely one loving and caring parish - united in Christ and spiritually connected to one another. Thanks be to God!