



November 7, 2024

## **An Update on the Development of an Episcopal Community in Brookline**

You may remember that, in September, we published an update about our ongoing attempts, as a diocese, to develop a new Episcopal community in Brookline and, more specifically, about our new initiative to develop this community in partnership with St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon. In this update, we now share that, due to a variety of reasons, the budding partnership between St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, and the Diocesan office, solely in regards to the Brookline Project, has been discontinued. Although St. Paul's will no longer serve as a valued and integral partner in this particular work of outreach and renewal, we, as a diocese, will continue to explore the viability of establishing a new worshipping community in Brookline. To that end, we are sharing the following information to apprise you of how this exploration will continue.

First, since Sunday worship had dwindled to zero in attendance at Church of the Advent, and, in view of starting something brand new in Brookline, Bishop Ketlen thought it best to initiate the closing of the parish with the Standing Committee, who, after appropriate discussion and in keeping with the guidelines of our diocesan canons, approved the closing of Church of the Advent. Hence, the closing of the parish was announced to Diocesan Council on Tuesday, September 10, 2024.

Second, although Church of the Advent is now closed, the building will not be deconsecrated, and there are no plans to sell the building. The numerous community activities that are ongoing in the church building, as well as the arrangements concerning the rectory, will remain in place. What's more, the goal of continuing to explore the potential of starting a new worshipping community in this church building remains a priority.

The proverbial saying "where a door closes, a window opens" seems to be applicable in this case, once again. During the summer, a young priest, the Rev. Miguel Carmona, who had served in the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas, and his wife, Lauren, moved to Pittsburgh to be near family. He is fluent in both English and Spanish, and he has experience with church planting and ministry to Latino/Latina communities. We are happy to announce that Fr. Carmona is joining the diocesan staff on a half-time basis as The Missioner for Ministry in Brookline. His initial role will be to reach out to the Spanish-speaking community in Brookline in view of discovering the feasibility of starting a new Latino/Latina worshipping community in that area. We are excited to welcome him and his wife in our midst as new partners in ministry.

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Fr. Miguel is a native of northern Mexico, raised in Glendale, Arizona, and attended St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Glendale with his family since he was 10 years old. He obtained a special preaching license from Bishop Kirk Smith at the age of 16 to help with the Hispanic community. He worked in all levels of service at St. Andrew's before being asked to start a youth ministry. After his time at St. Andrew's, he joined a small church plant in Central Phoenix, helping mainly to recruit and train youth ministers, as well as holding various positions in the diocesan summer camp. In 2016, he took a leap of faith and moved to Baltimore, Maryland, to become the youth minister at a church in West Baltimore. In

2018, he joined the discernment process for priesthood in the Episcopal Diocese of Dallas. He attended Trinity Anglican Seminary in Ambridge, during which time he met his wife and got married. He was ordained to the diaconate in March of 2021. In June, the Carmona's moved to Dallas to work at a multicultural, multi-lingual church in Garland, Texas, serving a community with members ranging from Senegal, Nigeria, and Sierra Leon, to Honduras, Mexico, and all over Central and South America. Fr. Miguel was ordained to the priesthood in October 2021. Earlier this year, they discerned a call back to the Pittsburgh area to be with family. They currently live in Aliquippa with their dog, Rosie.

