

April 8, 2009

Dear Friends,

I wanted to inform you that the Vestry, the Wardens and I have determined that it is best to postpone my sabbatical.

Many of you know that on Saturday March 28th I was hit with sciatic pain. An MRI has confirmed that I have a herniated disc. The pressure on my sciatic nerve is causing pain in my right leg along with numbness and a slight drop foot. I have a great doctor, who advises me that I may be able to avoid surgery with a course of physical therapy. I begin that therapy this week. If we see improvement in the next two or three weeks, I will continue the therapy which normally takes four to six weeks.

If we do not see improvement in the next two or three weeks, I will likely opt for surgery which also entails four to six weeks of post-op therapy.

Most of you know that I was scheduled to leave for the second portion of my sabbatical after Easter. January had afforded me a wonderful opportunity to work on my book project, and after Easter I was eager to get back to my laptop in the quiet of our new Pennsylvania home. I was to be away for the remaining two months of my three-month Sabbath, and a month of vacation, returning mid-July.

As I considered my treatment options this past Friday, however, it was clear that the next several weeks will be a time of experimentation and waiting for me. I will have many decisions to make, and I will need to devote a portion of my time and energy to my own healing. As I talked with both Skip Hooper and Charlie England, it became clear that this is not a good time to leave on sabbatical. I need to stay here while I address this issue with the help of my doctor, and then go on sabbatical when I am healthy again.

Of course I do not feel good about my back problems. But I feel very good about delaying my sabbatical. I did not have lots of travel planned, with reservations and commitments and all. I can just as easily do my work of writing later. Tentatively, we think it may be best for me to begin my Sabbath time in mid-June and return mid-September. We will keep you informed as things progress.

I want to thank the Wardens. Both Skip and Charlie have offered both prayerful support and wise counsel. I'm grateful to the Vestry for approving this postponement, and to the Clergy and Staff who have blessed me with extra help and healing grace. Saint Luke's is a wonderful community and I love you all, very much indeed.

Despite my limitations, I am eager now to share this Holy Week with you—the life-giving liturgies of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Great Vigil of Easter, and then the morning of the Resurrection. In this is our life.

With every blessing,



The Rev. David R. Anderson
Rector