



## St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

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August 15, 2016

Dear Members of the St. Andrew's Community,

We have a new rector! We are pleased to announce that the Rev. Shariya Molegoda, currently rector of Grace Episcopal Church in Jefferson City, Missouri, has accepted the vestry's call to serve as our rector.

The Rev. Molegoda has served as rector of Grace Church since 2007. Prior to that she served in a variety of positions in Massachusetts: interim rector at St. James's church in Cambridge, priest-in-charge at Church of St. Mary of the Harbor in Provincetown, associate rector at Christ Church, Harvard Square in Cambridge, assistant to the rector at St. Anne's in the Fields in Lincoln, and pastoral associate at Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston. She received a Master of Divinity degree from the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale in 1993, and spent her first five years after graduation as a sister and novice at the Society of St. Margaret in Roxbury, MA, a convent now located in Duxbury.

The Rev. Molegoda grew up in Sri Lanka, the large island country off the southeast coast of India, once known as Ceylon. Many of her family members live there, and she returns to visit every year. Her early years in the United States were spent in Georgia. Shariya graduated from Agnes Scott College in Decatur in 1981 and did graduate work in forestry at the University of Georgia in Athens. She has a masters degree in environmental science from the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka.

Shariya was drawn to St. Andrew's by our Parish Profile, so ably prepared by our Transition Team. In her initial letter of interest Shariya wrote:

*my imagination and curiosity are sparked. I am inspired by your engagement in the community around you and by your efforts to reach out globally to those who are far away. I am moved as well by the faithful manner in which you have faced the challenges you encounter in the form of a diversity of opinion among your own congregation.*

About herself she wrote:

*I offer myself as a priest who is deeply rooted in the love of God, and yet versatile and adaptable – and as one eager to journey as a fellow pilgrim with a community of ardent disciples.*

The Rev. Molegoda has twice visited St. Andrew's, meeting first with the Transition Team and then again with the Vestry. All of us who have met her were immediately struck by her warmth, thoughtfulness, and profound spirituality.

Shariya has asked for some time to help her current church digest the news of her departure and prepare for a transition there. We expect her to arrive here in Madison in early November. She will live here in the rectory. We are working with the bishop's office to arrange an interim priest for the months of September and October. We should have further word later this week.

We rejoice in this good news. The Lord has blessed us mightily!



Gary Naegel  
Senior Warden



John Armstrong  
Junior Warden