

To my Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ at St. Peter's Episcopal Church,

It is with great joy and anticipation that I write you this letter. My wife Sophia and I are being kept quite busy making our arrangements to join your church family. In anticipation of our first corporate meeting I'd like to share some things about us.

I grew up in Ormond Beach, Florida in a Methodist household but attended the Episcopal Church with my friends from time to time. In college I started singing in the Episcopal Church choir and taking snowboarding trips to Utah every year. Upon graduation, I took a job at a ski resort in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany and worked my way up to ski and snowboard instructor. While living in Europe, I received the call to the priesthood. I finished out my contract and moved back to Florida to start the ordination process. I chose to attend Nashotah House Theological Seminary near Milwaukee because of its rich corporate prayer life. While at seminary, I sang in the choir, helped run our daily chapel, and facilitated the Common Room (a social space for students, faculty, staff, and all their families). It was also at seminary where I met Sophia who was obtaining her Master's in Violin Performance and String Pedagogy in Milwaukee when a mutual friend introduced us.

We happened to be graduating within a week of each other. So within two weeks we graduated and moved to Vermont, where we got married in her home church, Holy Resurrection of the Orthodox Church of America, a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church. Sophia grew up in New England and attended Gordon College in Boston for her undergraduate studies. She is currently directing the pre-college string program at Stetson University in Deland, FL, while also maintaining a full private studio. We enjoy rock climbing, hiking, cooking, and reading.

I have professional experience in mortgage underwriting and have worked at a variety of churches within the Episcopal Church both as a layperson and as a clergy person. My favorite aspect of ministry, after the awesome privilege of administering the sacraments, is teaching how our faith integrates the Bible, tradition, and community in order to bless the world.

How fitting it is that I write you this letter in Advent, the season of quiet and prayerful anticipation! We are very much looking forward to seeing you all.

May the Lord bless you and keep you,

Fr. Jesse Lassiter