



ST. DAVID'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
301 E 8TH STREET AUSTIN, TX 78701
STDAVE.ORG



August 21, 2026

Dear St. David's parish community,

In the summer of 2019 I was 25 years old and wandering. So much of my life in that recent season had been new – I'd gotten a new job the previous fall and moved into a new place to live. I was discovering the new grooves in the grain of my life and needed something to hold me up. A new friend to me (Jenny Campbell) at my newish church of St. David's posted a job description for a part-time youth minister that made its way in front of me. I talked to Jenny and applied – something told me to listen to this opportunity.

In the blink of an eye, I find myself over seven years into this beloved ministry and at a crossroads of new again, in a very similar fashion as what brought me to its doorsteps in the first place. I started a new full-time job in January and moved into a new home last fall, and while St. David's has anchored me through all these times, the time has come for me to step down as the assistant director of Youth Ministry.

While this ministry has meant more to me than I ever thought possible, and I would not trade any of my Wednesday night chicken tenders and mac or my Sunday mornings in the youth room for anything, I have been listening to God again, and I feel called to

pursue other lay ministries within the church and devote some time back to myself. I still plan on being a committed and active member of our parish, just with more time on the second and third floors instead of the first.

To the teens specifically: it has been one of the truest gifts of my life to be a part of your lives and be present for their joys and tears. I hope you and your parents know I love you from the bottom of my heart and always will. Thank you so much for trusting me to be your minister, and please keep trusting that you will still have a friend in me.

As my own college minister once said, "remember who you are and whose you are;" and as we say every Wednesday after compline: Let us bless the Lord, thanks be to God!

With deep love and gratitude,
Sara Cannon

Dear St. David's members,

Sara Cannon has been a blessing to us these seven years as our assistant director of Youth Ministry. In a time where youth ministers statistically stay for 1-2 years, her consistent ministry has been such a gift to our congregation. She has faithfully attended Wednesday night youth groups and Sunday morning youth formations each week, leading discussions on our lectionary passages and pastorally ministering to our teens. She has worked four youth lock-ins and spent two weeks out of state on service trips with our teens. That's at least 23 nights spent sleeping not in her own bed! She has hustled many teens at pool in our youth room, and has made it her ministry to remind us often when something just "isn't that serious."

Sara's not going anywhere, and I'm thankful to still count her as a parishioner moving forward. You can celebrate her ministry with us on Sunday, Aug 23, at church and our youth families are invited to celebrate together at the Pool Party that same evening.

We have exciting plans ahead for our Youth Ministry and will be announcing those shortly, but first, please join me in thanking Sara for her years of service and celebrating her ministry on Sunday, Aug. 23.

Blessings,

The Rev. Hope Tinsley Benko
locum tenens

Photo: Assistant Director of Youth Ministry Sara Cannon and Director of Youth Ministry Kelsey Cooper are all smiles with the youth in the obligatory EYC Youth Room selfie from August 2025.



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