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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. Thomas, Menasha calls Rector

Appleton, WI – December 14, 2009 – A new priest will soon be serving as Rector of St. Thomas Church in Neenah-Menasha, Wisconsin. The Rev. Ralph E. Osborne has accepted the call to serve as Rector of St. Thomas, an ecclesiastical term meaning a priest that is in charge of meeting the pastoral needs of a congregation. The call to serve was made by the Vestry, the governing board of the church, and affirmed by the Rt. Rev. Russell E. Jacobus, Bishop of the Diocese of Fond du Lac.



Fr. Osborne comes to St. Thomas from the Diocese of Central New York where he has served as Rector of the congregations in Greene and Oxford, New York. He obtained a Masters of Divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri and also holds a Master of Arts degree in Counseling and a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Literature.

Fr. Osborne was ordained as a Deacon in the Episcopal Church in 1994 and as a Priest in 1996. Prior to ordination as an Episcopal priest, he was an ordained pastor in the Church of the Nazarene from 1985-90. In addition to his duties in serving the congregations, over the past decade he has served on a number of diocesan committees and commissions, including the Diocesan Board, Deputy to the General Convention, Cursillo for adults and Happening and New Beginnings for youth. He has also been active in a number of community activities, serving as Chaplain for the Greene Fire Department and a member of Rotary.

"I was drawn to St. Thomas' use of the word 'partner' in its search process," Fr. Ralph stated during interviews. "Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs. I am looking to partner with believers to encourage, confront, celebrate and pray for each other as we do our best to follow Christ."

St. Thomas Church has its historic roots in two congregations founded in Neenah and Menasha in the mid-1800's that came together to form a new congregation in 1914, physically spanning the border of both communities. Its Vision: "We are a Jesus-centered, Spirit-filled community of diverse followers working to transform the world." Its Mission is "To know Christ, to make Christ known, and to serve others in Christ's name".

Fr. Osborne is married to Cindy. They have four children ages 18-27 and a brand new daughter-in-law. He will begin his official duties on February 14th, 2010.

The Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac is composed of over 6,000 baptized members worshipping in 38 locations covering the northeast third of the State of Wisconsin.

For information episcopalfonddulac.org or diofdl.org

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