

The Rev. Peter K. Ackerman

The Rev. Peter K. Ackerman was almost literally born in the Episcopal Church. His mother did, however, manage to make it to the hospital, where Peter was born on Easter Sunday. He was raised in the Episcopal Church and grew up in the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles.

Show business was also part of Peter's life from the beginning. His mother, Elinor Donahue, is an actress perhaps best remembered for *Father Knows Best* and *The Andy Griffith Show*, and his father, Harry Ackerman, was a television executive producer whose long career included such classic programs as *Bewitched* and *The Flying Nun*. Peter eventually worked in the entertainment business himself before sensing God calling him further along the path that would ultimately lead to ordained ministry.

In 2024, Peter published *Mom, Dad, Me, and Classic TV*, his account of growing up in and around the television industry. He occasionally cautions people searching for him online that there are several other Peter Ackermans out there—including another writer and a television producer—and he cannot be held responsible for anything they have said or done!

Peter has been married for 39 years to Marie, a native of Stockton, California. Marie is a sommelier, and at the end of the recent pandemic Peter and Marie moved to the Diocese of Washington so she could more fully exercise her professional skills. They have two adult children. Their son, Harry, lives with them, while their daughter, Amy, lives in Chicago with her husband, Jordan. Peter and Marie recently entered a joyful new chapter of family life with the birth of their first grandchild, a boy named Sacha.

Peter comes to St. James after serving as Rector of Christ Church in Chaptico, Maryland, in the Diocese of Washington. His years there have deepened his commitment to collaborative ministry and his belief that the work of the Church belongs to the whole people of God. His approach to leadership begins with listening: learning the story of a congregation, recognizing the gifts already present within it, and helping people discern where God may be calling them next. He enjoys asking not simply *what* a church does, but *why*—and how its traditions, ministries, and resources can best serve the Gospel and the community around it.

Peter is an avid reader of mysteries, always happy to discover a new author or series. That same sense of curiosity is part of his spiritual life as well. One of the things he loves most about ministry is looking for what God is already doing—in the lives of people, in a congregation, and in the surrounding community—and wondering together where God might be leading next.

Peter is also working on his Spanish, although his current Duolingo score of 19 suggests that St. James should not yet ask him to preach the Sunday sermon *en español*.

When Peter recently visited Paso Robles and St. James, something felt wonderfully familiar. He felt at home. After years away from their California roots, Peter and Marie have longed to return to the state where they both have such deep connections and to make this next chapter of life and ministry here.

Peter comes to St. James grateful for the journey that has brought him here, carrying with him deep gratitude for the congregation he now leaves behind, whose faith, generosity, and companionship have shaped him in lasting ways. He holds them in his prayers even as he looks ahead with hope, excited to become part of the Paso Robles community and eager to discover alongside the people of St. James what God has in store for them together.