

Update on Carlos Ruano

Beginning with our former Sexton Carlos Ruano's arrest in September 2012 and subsequent 14 months' pre-trial incarceration on what many of us at felt were baseless charges, the All Saints congregation pitched in to help Carlos and his family, through letters to the judge and prosecutor, funding his jail account, court attendance, creation of a defense fund and, in the case of the Church itself, continuation of his full salary and medical benefits.

Last November, when criminal proceedings were completed, Carlos was able to turn his efforts to normalizing his immigration status, and the Vestry, after conferring with his counsel, determined to continue supporting him at half his former salary plus full medical benefits for the four to six months that counsel then estimated would be required for issuance of a work authorization—though Carlos still was not permitted to work for All Saints. At that time we told the congregation, “if Carlos’ work authorization is achieved within the expected time frame, we will have developed a specific job description reflecting our needs and Carlos’ capabilities to review with him then. If not, the Vestry will review this situation in June 2014 based on circumstances then existing.”

Unfortunately, the immigration court mislaid Carlos's file and proceedings were continued from February 12 to June 4, to allow the court time to locate his file. This issue delayed proceedings, and therefore Carlos's petition for a return to his former status including a pre-existing work permit, for four further months.

The Vestry reviewed this issue at its meeting on May 13. It does not appear that the re-issuance of even a temporary work permit is likely within anything close to the originally estimated time, and the Vestry very reluctantly concluded that it is not appropriate for the Church itself to continue financial support beyond the end of June. The Vestry took this decision now to give Carlos and his many supporters as much notice as possible of the cessation of further support. We remain hopeful that his immigration status can be normalized. We of course remain ready and willing to discuss employment with Carlos when that is permitted, and we all hold Carlos and his family in our prayers.

We will inform you all of the results of Carlos's immigration court hearing on June 4.

The Vestry acknowledges that there will be differing responses to this decision. Please contact a Vestry member if you wish to discuss these issues.