

**The Rev. Canon John T. W. Harmon**  
- Sense of Call -

My sense of call is grounded in a deep and abiding commitment to Jesus Christ.

When we examine our sense of call, our abilities, experiences, and particularly challenging responsibilities, we discover that a successful enterprise and effective leadership are closely related to the specific community and context in which we are called to serve. The same holds true for the church, given the major role it plays in leading, influencing cultural norms within communities and society at large.

I had the unique opportunity of recognizing and answering my call at a very early age. I bring significant skills to my ministry. My gift as a pastor and preacher, teacher and mentor, a visionary servant-leader who is open to incorporating the wisdom and input of others is often referenced as strengths.

I serve as a leader of leaders with the innate ability to perceive and crystallize ideas, bringing them into fruition. I get things done without compromising core values, integrity, and the community. I seek to cultivate relationships that are life-giving and transformative. Consequently, our outreach ministry provides of breakfast to women at a homeless shelter, distribution of sleeping bags to the homeless, training and supporting young musicians for ministry in the church.

I feel blessed with a pastoral sensitivity that allows me to listen and be present with others. It is a blessed privilege to be invited into the personal space of parishioners and others and to wait with them through some of life's most difficult and challenging moments.

I am an experienced fundraiser. Major grants have been secured from local and federal governments, foundations and corporations. Small and large gifts from individual donors also support new and innovative ministries as well as sustain and expand the scope of existing programs.

I have organized clergy and community leaders to support important causes, including initiatives that brought together hundreds of churches to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This effort resulted in a multi-million-dollar grant. I am currently working with a local cancer research center to launch a series of City-wide symposiums on Spirituality and Health to address the unusual rise of cancer among young adults and minorities.

I believe I am a good fit for Southern Virginia because of my experience in strengthening congregational growth and vitality in small and larger churches; my commitment to support, nurture and lead clergy and laity in visioning and creativity; prayerful and attentive listening; managing change, anticipating and resolving conflicts; the capacity to understand situations and lead communities out of crisis with a spirit of healing and wholeness that embrace new possibilities and paths of hope.

The church is at an important crossroad where the essential questions of life, community, faith and justice remain a crucial task. I will use my gifts as an insightful leader and advocate, especially for children and youth, the elderly, poor and marginalized to provide a sacred space where all are encouraged to attend to their soul's health, seek to build strong and sustainable congregations that are missional-minded and ministry-focused.