In the pages that follow you will find evidence of the major construction project which, as I write this, is well underway in this Eastertide. We have framed this effort as a responsibility that has fallen to our generation, as timely stewards of the great resource that is Saint Mark’s Cathedral. It is an iconic building, perched on the hill for a city’s people to see and to which countless thousands are drawn each year. That is unfinished, and stands as the “holy box” lends to its peculiar character, but it is also the reason for the building's degradation by a confluence of weather, exposure, and deferred maintenance.

Now stripped of its shrubs that gave some cover to the pock-marked walls of concrete, we can see the extent of deterioration to the cathedral, and know that this is the time, this is the project, this is our project—a ten million dollar venture securing the building envelope, replacing the nave windows, and enhancing accessibility to the building with an elevator and new main entrance. This work will serve generations to come, and there is a sense of faithful commitment to them, and to those who have gone before as we etch our mark of faithfulness on the building in our time. I am so very grateful for all whose generosity has made this possible, and to those who have not yet given but will as we continue raising the funds to underwrite this work.

So I invite you to read on, and get a flavor of this cathedral community bearing good fruit. Better yet, join us for worship or some special event to be held here in the coming weeks and months, and know that if you do, you will step into a building and a community that intends a radical hospitality, for you and every person, wherever they are on their spiritual journey. And we will be the richer for your presence.

Blessings and peace,

The Very Rev. Steven L. Thomason
Dean and Rector
SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

8 A.M. Eucharist in Thomsen Chapel
9 A.M. Eucharist in the Nave
11 A.M. Eucharist in the Nave
4:30 P.M. Choral Evensong in the Nave (First Sundays, October-May)
7 P.M. Contemplative Eucharist in Thomsen Chapel
9:30 P.M. Compline in the Cathedral Nave, chanted by the Compline Choir and broadcast live on King 98.1 FM

WEEKDAY SERVICE TIMES

Monday through Friday
6:30 P.M. Evening Prayer in McCaw or Thomsen Chapel
Mondays, 7:15 P.M. Centering Prayer in Thomsen Chapel
Wednesdays, 12 NOON Holy Eucharist in Thomsen Chapel
Thursdays, 7 A.M. Holy Eucharist in Thomsen Chapel

For more information about Worship and Prayer at Saint Mark’s visit saintmarks.org.

ON THE COVER: Scaffolding is erected on the North Wall of the Cathedral Nave. Photo by Liz Bartenstein.
Above: An Aztec dancer at the Palm Sunday liturgy on Sunday April 9. Photo by Kevin Johnson.
Saint Mark’s Cathedral officially broke ground for its major construction project on April 17, the day after Easter. The construction office (site trailer) and staging area now occupy most of the front lawn of the cathedral. Access to the front doors is always available via the new wheelchair ramp from the south parking lot, but the central sidewalk between 10th Avenue and the cathedral is generally blocked off, as is the driveway in front of the cathedral, during construction work hours: M-F, 7 a.m.-3 p.m. (The sidewalk and driveway are open throughout the weekend, for church services and other events.) We have lost access to the parking spaces immediately adjacent to the north wall of the cathedral, and to some of the parking spaces adjacent to the south wall. All the trees and shrubs formerly surrounding the building have been removed, exposing the stained and pockmarked concrete exterior of the cathedral. Some people have commented “the cathedral has no clothes!” The building’s appearance certainly leaves no doubt about the urgent need for this project—cladding the north, east, and south exterior walls in limestone, replacing all the windows in those walls, adding an elevator on the south side, and re-surfacing the front patio and steps.

Scaffolding (both interior and exterior) has gone up already on the north side of the cathedral, and work has begun on the south side elevator addition, next to the office entrance. Exterior work on the walls and windows will progress from the north side to the east side and finally to the south side. To quote from the Turner Construction documents, “Using a Fraco hydraulic scaffolding system, the sequence will progress in lifts. Each vertical section will be complete in succession as we move around the building. Each elevation will take about 90 days to complete. This creates a nice smooth flow of trades that is safe and efficient. Simultaneously, work will begin on the elevator addition. New foundations and exterior structure will be complete by the time that exterior cladding activities have reached the south elevation. Interior finishes and elevator installation will occur in the final phases of the job.” The construction is scheduled to be finished before Christmas.

Windows will be removed and then replaced on the north side, beginning in mid-May. The limestone will begin arriving and being installed in late June. We’ve had some inquiries about salvaging the glass from the windows for ornaments or other uses, but unfortunately, the glass contains lead and is not safe to salvage. The cathedral has calculated the “carbon cost” of transporting the limestone from Indiana to Seattle, and we will be making a donation of that amount to the carbon offset fund established by the Diocese of Olympia with
the Philippines. And, of course, once the construction is finished, we will be planting trees and shrubs to replace those that had to be removed. We are also currently undertaking a traffic/parking study to improve both car and pedestrian circulation around the cathedral campus.

And in Capital Campaign news: the Major Gifts “challenge fund” met its goal of raising $3 million by April 30, 2017. This amount, when added to the $5 million raised during the congregational phase of the campaign, and the diocesan gifts made so far has yielded a total of $8.2 million raised to date for our $10 million construction project. The Diocesan Phase of the campaign, which is being led by Bishop Greg Rickel, is ongoing. Many parishes have made or pledged gifts already, and the Bishop and the Dean are visiting several churches in different parts of the diocese throughout the spring, to lead workshops/discussions about the campaign. We are looking toward a special fundraising event in the nave on Dec. 8 and then a festive Evensong celebration for all at the beginning of January. If you haven’t yet made a pledge to the Capital Campaign, please visit saintmarks.org/living-stones.

Saint Mark’s is now live streaming worship services! Each Sunday, we will live stream the 11 a.m. worship service, and on the first Sunday of the month from October-May, we will also broadcast the Sunday afternoon Evensong services at 4:30 p.m. We began this new venture on Palm Sunday, and on Easter Sunday 75 people watched the live stream. We are also archiving the videos on our web site. Check it all out at saintmarks.org/livestream.

This service is offered especially for people who cannot attend Sunday worship (whether because of illness, vacation, disability, or any reason at all.) It is also useful for newcomers who wish to “check out” what worship is like at Saint Mark’s, as well as for anyone around the Diocese and beyond who might wish to tune in. We will also be live streaming certain special events that are of interest to the broader community. The first event we broadcast was the Sanctuary movement rally on May 1 (which was watched by 166 people). We will also be video-taping some of the Sunday morning and Wednesday evening educational forums that take place in Bloedel Hall.

Our new videographer and live streaming mastermind is Christopher Brown (whose daughter sings with the Senior Choristers and in the Evensong Choir at Saint Mark’s). He has helped us in purchasing and setting up new equipment in the nave, including cameras, microphones, mixers, and new computer equipment. The cost of the new equipment is being shared by the Cathedral and by the Diocese of Olympia, and the first year of production expenses is being supported by a Congregational Development grant from the Diocese of Olympia. Saint Mark’s is extremely grateful for the diocesan support we have received in starting up this important project.
SPRING 2017 AT SAINT MARK’S CATHEDRAL

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 2017. The Palm Sunday Liturgy began with a raucous, exuberant procession on Saint Mark’s front lawn, with special guest players and dancers of Tlkenahuake group, who come from the Navajo, Iroquois and other native tribes.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 13. The Maundy Thursday Liturgy invites us into the intimacy of Jesus’ last meal with his disciples, his loving care for them in the foot-washing, his self-offering for them in the Bread and Wine. These enacted signs reveal sacrificial love and service as Jesus’ desire for the Eucharistic community of his disciples. In addition to foot-washing, the service included Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar.
EASTER SUNDAY, SUNDAY, APRIL 16. Festival Choral Eucharist with renewal of baptismal vows, with an Easter Egg Hunt followed the 8:30 a.m. service. Music by the Cathedral Choir with organ, brass, percussion, and handbells.

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER, SATURDAY, APRIL 15. This service included Baptisms and the First Eucharist of Easter. Saint Mark’s Senior Choristers, Cathedral Schola and Cathedral Choir all sang.
ORDINARY TRAVELERS

SERMON PREACHED BY THE REV. JENNIFER KING DAUGHERTY, ASSOCIATE TO THE RECTOR
SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 2017
JKDAUGHERTY@SAINTMARKS.ORG

LUKE 24:13-35 [Now on that same day two of Jesus’ disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?” He asked them, “What things?” They replied, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him.” Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures. As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!”

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.]
When I travel, I usually plan to arrive at the airport with just enough time to get through security and arrive at the gate in time for boarding. This week, though, my flight was delayed and I found myself in a busy airport terminal, wondering about some of the people around me. There was a young man giving a phone interview for a new job. A woman with a long white hanging bag watching expectancy for someone to join her. A man sound asleep on the floor with a tiny newborn -- also fast asleep -- on his chest. And an older couple who spoke quietly to each other and held a folded American flag on their laps. Ordinary travelers whose lives intersect briefly.

Ordinary people, just like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. We know very little about these two. Cleopas appears nowhere else in the gospels and the other is unnamed; some scholars believe she is a woman. We don’t know why they are going to Emmaus, maybe to put some physical distance between themselves and the horrible events of the previous three days.

We know they are weighed down with the shock and grief of Jesus’ death, analyzing and discussing and trying to make sense of all that had happened. They had hoped Jesus was the one who would liberate Israel and make all things new. But they don’t hope any more. Jesus is dead, the tomb is empty, and the women’s astounding tales of angelic visions are confusing. I suspect that as they walk, these two disciples don’t notice anyone else on the road, they are so full of sadness and fear.

So, it’s no surprise that when Jesus comes near, they are unable to recognize him. He is just a stranger. A stranger who has somehow missed the terrible news of the death of Jesus of Nazareth, but who can nonetheless trace the expectation of a suffering Messiah back to the prophets. This stranger is clearly compelling, since his theological talk distracts them from their grief on that long walk to Emmaus -- but he remains a stranger. Just another traveler whose life intersects briefly with theirs.

Until they invite him to stay with them and they sit down at the table together. When this stranger takes bread, blesses and breaks it, and gives it to them, their eyes are opened and they recognize Jesus among them. It’s a thrilling moment, but mysterious, too. What is it that opens their eyes? The way he blesses the bread and offers it to them might remind them of the Passover meal they shared with Jesus, or how Jesus fed the multitudes with only a little bread and fish. But I think it goes much deeper than that.

There is something about the way these two weary travelers reach outside their sorrow to notice that this stranger may need a place to stay at the end of the day. And so, they invite him in. And something about the way Jesus offers them the bread they hunger for, and the way they extend their hands in thanksgiving. Something about the flow of inviting, and offering, and receiving with gratitude, opens their eyes to Jesus’ presence among them. A presence that has been there all along, but they couldn’t recognize it. A presence that remains with them, renews their hope and sends them running back up the road to Jerusalem to share the good news with the others. “The Lord is risen indeed, God IS with us!” they proclaim.

And two thousand years later and half a world away, we say the same. The Lord is risen indeed! God is with us!

Every time we celebrate the Eucharist, we practice this flow of inviting God’s presence and receiving it with gratitude. We set the table and then discover that God is the host and we are the guests. We pray, “Be known to us, Lord Jesus, in the breaking of the bread,” remembering the experience of the travelers on the road to Emmaus, and claiming it as our own spiritual history. This is our story, too.

We practice this flow of inviting and receiving God’s presence in church so that we are able to do the same in our daily lives. And that’s not always easy, with the preoccupations and distractions that keep us from being fully present to what is right in front of us. The person we are with. The ground we are standing on. The trees that give shelter and the food that nourishes us. This is what spiritual teachers mean when they say “wake up!” Pay attention to our ordinary experience, because it is there we will find the infinite, the holy. It is how we invite God’s presence into our lives.

And we receive God’s presence when we respond with gratitude to all the gifts of being alive. Whether we are happy or sad, rejoicing or grieving, we can give thanks for each day. When we don’t take our lives for granted, but marvel at the generosity and the wonder of it all, we encounter the Giver behind the gift.

Recently, when the trees came down around the perimeter of the cathedral, we could see more clearly the holes and scars in the exterior walls that were never intended to be exposed to the elements and that make the recladding of the building so necessary. It was a little unsettling.

I wondered about the people who celebrated the first Eucharist in Thomsen Chapel in the third week of Easter in 1931; here we are in the third week of Easter 86 years later. And I wondered about all the people since then since who have brought their prayers of thanksgiving and hope, as well as needs for strength and renewal, here to Saint Mark’s. Ordinary travelers seeking God’s presence, receiving God’s gifts, and returning them with gratitude.

We take our place in that spiritual history, too, with the commitment of this community to complete the work that was begun almost 100 years ago. It will be so joyful to see the walls clad in limestone and new trees planted. It is an exciting time -- and change, even desired and expected change, can be unsettling.

Which is why we come together today, celebrating the feast of Saint Mark, to hear the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, trusting that the loving, renewing presence of God still walks alongside all of us -- the new father, the bride, the solemn couple I met in the airport; you and me. God walks alongside us, God’s presence surrounds us, whether we feel it or not, offering strength and nourishment for the journey ahead. Amen.

SERMON RECORDINGS & transcripts are available on Saint Mark’s website at www.saintmarks.org/sermons.
UPCOMING OFFERINGS

Conspire 2017: A live webcast with Richard Rohr and friends
JULY 7-9, 2017, BLOEDEL HALL
Love and justice are not two. Without inner change, there can be no outer change; without collective change, no change matters. Richard Rohr, angel Kyodo Williams, Mirabai Starr, and Ken Wilber explore our misguided attempts to overcome evil. They help us rediscover all beings’ inherent unity and belovedness. Conversion demands immense humility and honesty rather than zeal or purity. The autonomous, egocentric, and separate self must give way to our True Self. Facing our shadow is a breakthrough to grace and mercy. Embracing the parts of ourselves we’ve denied also reveals a “golden shadow”—our goodness, giftedness, and generosity! Fee is $15, which includes refreshments, light breakfast, and post-webcast access to videos. Register at saintmarks.org/wisdomschool.

Enneagram—Beyond the Basics (with Friday evening accessible for beginners)
FRIDAY EVENING & SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22-23, 2017, BLOEDEL HALL
Facilitated by Kaye Bernard
The Enneagram is an ancient personality typing system composed of nine personality styles or “types.” Every style inhabits a distinct worldview and set of motivations that influence how a person moves through the world. Friday evening is accessible to those with no prior experience with the enneagram, but will also be beneficial for those who have worked with enneagram. Saturday, 9:30am-3pm, diving deeper into the Enneagram, this experiential workshop will illuminate how nine personality types relate to each other. Knowing another’s way of looking at the world and the underlying motivations of each type can help us understand how and why we are different from one another. Together we explore each type’s defense mechanism, avoidance, traps, and other dynamics that, when conscious, hold the potential to help us become our best selves in interpersonal relationships. Fee $50 for the two-day workshop includes Saturday breakfast and lunch. Register at saintmarks.org/wisdomschool.

Listening for Life
WEDNESDAY SERIES, FALL 2017 -- DATES TBD
Facilitator: The Rev. Canon Jennifer King Daugherty
How do we know our calling in life? How do we find meaning in times of change? These questions are at the heart of our spiritual journey and relate to our core identity and sense of what we are called to. Momentous choices like marriage or new career, momentous changes like losing your partner or caring for aging parents, momentous searches like crisis of faith or lifestyle reboot... life is always in flux. How do we discern God’s call in the midst of it? In Fall of 2017, we will explore practices for discerning God’s presence and call in our individual lives. We will also learn the skills of holy listening and posing powerful questions in preparation for forming mutual “listening for life” groups. These groups will journey together for several months as each member moves deeper into their own exploration of God’s call.
Any questions or for details as they develop, please contact Canon Daugherty at jkdaugherty@saintmarks.org.

Interpretation of Dreams as a Spiritual Exercise
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, OCT. 25, NOV. 1, 8, AND 15
6:45-8:15 P.M., BLOEDEL HALL
Facilitated by The Rev. Steve Garratt
Does the psychology of C.G. Jung have something to say to Christians? What role does the unconscious play in the Christian life? Can listening to our dreams help us to realize Jesus’ words? These and other questions will be explored in a four-week series on the relationship Jung might play in the Christian faith journey. An examination of the role of dreams in the Bible and the Christian tradition will be included in our study. Particular attention will be given to the works of Morton Kelsey, John Sanford, and Ann Ulanov (all Episcopalians!). Participants are encouraged to purchase and read John Sanford’s book, The Kingdom Within: The Inner Meaning of Jesus’ Sayings, available in the Cathedral Shop. Class is free. Optional dinner is served 6-6:30pm for $7 per person.
The Vestry of Saint Mark’s Cathedral has committed to being a Sanctuary Hub in a program being organized by the Church Council of Greater Seattle. On May 1, at a well-attended kick-off event held at the cathedral and put together by the Church Council of Greater Seattle, Saint Mark’s was joined by St. Matthew/San Mateo Episcopal Church in Auburn and Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Seattle as the first three Hubs in this New Sanctuary Movement. This movement will seek to stand with undocumented people as they seek to make their way through the immigration maze that they face in the U.S.

Dean Thomason asked the Rev. Dr. Peter Strimer to serve as a part-time organizer to help the community design an effective response. He gathered a committee of over 30 people and in two meetings in March and April of this year, developed a structure for the Hub at Saint Mark’s. Four people serve on a Steering Committee and each chairs a sub-committee charged with implementing a portion of the program. Jim Green (Communications), Emily Austin (Hub-Spoke Relationships), Barbara Erickson (Best Practices/Research) and Phillip Lienau (Direct Services) make up the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee and Dr. Strimer presented at an Adult Education Forum on May 21 and Dr. Strimer was the guest preacher at all three services at Saint Mark’s on May 28.

After a third general meeting to be held on June 6, the four leaders will take a formal proposal to the June 27 Vestry meeting for approval. Once confirmed, the plan will call for the recruitment of volunteers from the cathedral and the wider community to serve in various ways including legal services, translation services, accompaniment for families, and attendance at public events and demonstrations.

Once recruited and trained, participants in the Sanctuary Hub will be available for action at the request of a Rapid Response Coordinator appointed by the Church Council. Plans call for the Hub to be up and running early this fall.

FOR MORE INFO

Read the Statement of Commitment and action at www.saintmarks.org/statement.

Saint Mark’s Pledges Support for Immigrants and Refugees www.saintmarks.org/welcomethestranger

View the video recording of the May 1 Sanctuary event at www.saintmarks.org/livestream.

Interested in giving your time to this cause? Contact Dr. Strimer at pstrimer@comcast.net to learn more about volunteering.
About 400 people from around the Diocese of Olympia attended Cathedral Day at Saint Mark’s on May 13, 2017. Included in that total were 80 candidates for confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation, from 16 different churches—from Chehalis to Bellingham—in the diocese. What an amazing sight it is to see them all gathered around the altar platform, waiting their turn for the Laying on of Hands by the Bishop!

After the big confirmation liturgy in the morning, Saint Mark’s held a Ceremonial Groundbreaking on the front porch of the cathedral for its major construction project. Dean Steve Thomason and Bishop Greg Rickel both spoke briefly, and representatives of Olson Kundig Architects, Turner Construction, and Spectrum Development Solutions (project managers) each handed over $10,000 contribution checks—a wonderful gesture of the partners’ support for this important project. Everybody at Cathedral Day was invited to participate in signing the backs of limestone slabs that will be used in the construction.

A variety of food trucks parked in the front driveway supplied lunch for the attendees. In the afternoon, there were activities of all kinds for all ages. The paper airplane contest from the choir loft is always a big hit, with prizes for distance, accuracy, and longest time in the air. “Stump the Bishop and the Dean” quiz show, moderated by Malcolm McLaurin, Canon for Youth and Young Adults at the cathedral, was a down-to-the-wire contest, finally won by the Bishop’s team. Canon Musician Michael Kleinschmidt and Junior Warden Cara Peterson gave a great organ tour and demonstration, with Cara playing the famous “Under the Double Eagle” march. There was face-painting and a scavenger hunt and “Minute to Win It” games. A new hit this year was a life-size cut-out of the Bishop, used by many for taking selfies.

Cathedral Day is co-sponsored by Saint Mark’s Cathedral, the Diocese of Olympia, and the Cathedral Foundation. Master planner for the day was Virginia Lenker, longtime member of the cathedral parish and a Foundation board member. A host of volunteers helped staff the many activities and booths.
I have been a part of Choir Camp at Saint Mark’s since its very first year, and part of the Choir School for even longer. My experience with music at Saint Mark’s has been an essential part of my personal spiritual journey, and at Choir Camp I’ve gotten to see and help younger choristers experience parts of their own musical and spiritual journeys. Choir Camp is, in many ways, like other camps— but for me, at least, the thought and depth put into it by the staff, particularly Rebekah Gilmore, makes it better.

A lot of what makes traditional summer camps fun is also present at choir camp—we play games, we take field trips, we enjoy the occasional frozen treat. The activities are varied enough to keep things interesting for kids of all ages, remain focused around a central theme, varying by year, that ties back to our faith and the music we’re singing. These themes are present throughout the week and encourage us to look at why we sing, and why we sing at church. For example, a theme a couple years back was “God Does Marvelous Things.” Experienced campers may remember that as “the year with the purple shirts.” One of my favorite ever Choir camp field trips was that year, a trip to a planetarium to look at the stars, a beautiful, vast, and truly marvelous example of God’s work. On a surface level, it was just a pretty cool field trip, but what I love about Choir Camp is that we had the opportunity to take this activity deeper. We talked not only about the names of constellations, but about how seeing them related to the week’s theme and our faith. The conversation wasn’t so much pushed in a specific direction as it was allowed to go there on its own. Choir camp is a place where we, campers, counselors, and staff, are able to experience and explore our faith through all forms of expression, through discussion, art, service, and of course, music. It’s definitely the most fun I have all year, but if you’re still on the fence, I have just one more argument in its favor: frozen Yogurt. If that doesn’t sway you, I’m not sure what will.

CHOIR SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP 2017
JULY 10-14, 2017 (& SUN. PARTICIPATION JULY 16)

Saint Mark’s welcomes boys and girls, regardless of church affiliation, who are interested in singing beautiful and exciting music of the Christian faith in the striking cathedral setting, while growing as musicians and children of God. Rising 3rd grade – 8th grade. Camp Hours: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (before and after care available for an extra charge). Tuition: $250 ($200/child if more than one child per family registers)

Scholarships: We want your child to participate! Partial and full scholarships available to those who find full tuition a hardship at this time.

REGISTER AT www.saintmarks.org/choircamp.
At the Easter Vigil, choristers ponder big questions

BY REBEKAH GILMORE, ASSOCIATE MUSICIAN & CHOIR SCHOOL DIRECTOR
RGILMORE@SAINTMARKS.ORG

The Easter Vigil hovers between death and life in the space of Holy Saturday. Beyond our senses, beyond this realm, something big is happening in the time between Jesus’ death and resurrection.

The Exsultet chant, the first proclamation of Easter, is sung in the dark of night, the only light coming from the Paschal Candle and fragrant beeswax candles held by every person in the pews. This year, it was my honor to chant the Exsultet. The words of the chant focus us toward what is happening at that very moment. “This is the night...” the cantor sings. The chant isn’t proclaiming something that happened 2000 years ago. No, this is the night. Time and space are transcended when you deal in eternity.

Of course, when you are an eight-year old chorister up past your bedtime and expected to stand still listening to your choir director chant for minutes on end, eternity could be measured in Exsultets! The Senior Choristers were primed and ready to sing for the three-hour Vigil but anyone would struggle to stand up focused and on display during such a long chant.

For this reason, my Holy Week discipline was to find the right words to bring the choristers into the real drama of the night. Before the Vigil began, the choristers had a pre-service huddle in McCaw Chapel. These young people are focused on the job they have to do, but like us adults, sometimes we all forget to revel in what we are witnessing. Our huddle time was a chance for us, myself included, to open our minds to the in-between space of death and life. Jesus was dead. But he was about to be raised. Here is what we talked about:

At the start of the Exsultet, you are going to hear me talk to some important groups. I will sing:

- “Rejoice now, heavenly hosts and choirs of angels”. Remember the choirs of angels from the Christmas Pageant? Look up in the darkness! They are here. We can’t see them or hear them but I believe they are here.
- “Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth.” All of creation—even the stones are ready to cry out because something big is happening. Winter is turning to spring. Darkness will be overcome by light. Death will be swallowed by life.
- “Rejoice and be glad now, Mother Church”. The whole Body of Christ across time and space is answering. The great cloud of witnesses: our grandmas and grandpas who have died, our family and friends who have died and all those who have lived life before us. They are here now with us. The cathedral is getting quite crowded.
- “All you who stand near this marvelous and holy flame”. All of us standing here with the flame of a new fire reflecting in our eyes. We too want to join in the singing.

And then you will get your chance. I will sing “The Lord be with you.” And you get to sing back, “And also with you.” These words and melodies are some of the very oldest of Christendom. On this night, around the world, millions of people are singing these same words and notes right now. Countless people across time have sung them too. Think of them as you sing.

Again and again I’m going to sing “This is the night.” This is the night that God will work wonders on the earth. In God’s realm, all the stories of creation and deliverance you will hear tonight are things happening NOW. Christ is breaking the bonds of death NOW.

How is that possible? What does this even mean? These are HUGE questions that you should absolutely ask. I’m still asking them. But tonight, open yourself up to wonder at the possibilities, embrace the creepiness, and revel in the truth that the cathedral is super crowded with all of creation singing with us tonight.

“Am I creeping you out?” I asked them.
“Yes you are creeping me out!” replied one of our newest choristers with a grin.

“Good. Being a little creeped out at the size and the mystery of what is happening right now means you are ready. You are ready to sing Alleluia.”

(I didn’t actually say the word “Alleluia” out loud because every good chorister knows you don’t say that word until it is actually Easter. I never would have heard the end of it…)
Staff Changes at Saint Mark’s

Saint Mark’s was sad to say goodbye to Associate Rector Nancee Martin at the end of March. Nancee has retired to spend more time with her children and grandchildren, who are spread out all across the country. Nancee will officially be settling back into her beach cottage in Amelia Island, Florida, where she will be close to her elderly mother. Curate Nancy Ross has increased her hours to full-time at the cathedral, as of May 1. In addition to general preaching, teaching, and pastoral care duties, Nancy will be working with the Faith Formation ministry in particular.

Saint Mark’s recently welcomed the Rev. Pete Strimer and the Rev. Dennis Tierney, as assisting priests on staff. Pete is coordinating Saint Mark’s Sanctuary effort, (article on page 11).

Saint Mark’s also hired a contract videographer, Chris Brown, as part of our launch of the live streaming effort. Collaborating with Communications Director Liz Bartenstein, Chris will help us to produce new videos that tell stories of ministry at Saint Mark’s.

In Saint Mark’s vault, relics from a Titanic passenger and parishioner

BY LIZ BARTENSTEIN, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
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Hugh Roscoe Rood was a parishioner at Saint Mark’s during the turn of the century. Rood and his wife Lena made their home in Seattle, where he was vice president of the Pacific Creosotin Company. They were in Paris when Mr. Rood booked a single passage on the Titanic for a business trip back in Seattle, which he planned to get to by way of New York. Mrs. Rood and her maid were to follow on another vessel. Rood boarded the Titanic at Southampton as a first class passenger. He died in the sinking, and his body, if recovered, was never identified.

Nearly one hundred years later, in February of this year, Rood’s great great nephew Phil, who lives in town, stopped by Saint Mark’s for a visit. Phil had come in search of any information Saint Mark’s might have had about his aunt Lena. As he meandered through the Nave, parishioner and hardworking grounds volunteer Ray Miller greeted him. He offered to escort Phil to see if any names could be found in Saint Mark’s burial register.

Sure enough, Ray uncovered the name Hugh Roscoe Rood, enscribed in the register with cause of death “Titanic steamboat sinking.”

Later, after doing some digging, Ray found a pair of brass vases which had been donated by Hugh and Lena. The vases had been stored with a copy of a Seattle Post-Intelligencer article from April 2001 which told Hugh and Lena’s story.

Ray’s discoveries are a reminder of what treasures lie in our midst, and the surprising connections that can be made between our past and present, for those willing to search for them.
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